Understanding the Balkans Today
Through the Eyes of Two Writers

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Zlata Filipovic, About the Author

Zlata became renowned internationally when her teenage diary, published in 1993 and chronicling life in war-torn Sarajevo, was an instant bestseller. Published in editions by Viking and Puffin Books, it has since been translated into thirty-six languages. She holds a BSc. in Human Sciences from Oxford University (2001) and MPhil in International Peace Studies from Trinity College Dublin (2003-2004). She has spoken extensively at schools and universities around the world about her experiences and has worked on many occasions with different organizations such as the Anne Frank House, the U.N. and UNICEF, and has also been a three-time member of UNESCO Jury for Children’s and Young People's Literature Prize for Tolerance. Her written work includes contributions to several books and newspapers, including a foreword for *The Freedom Writers Diary* (Doubleday, 1997), and the English translation of *Milosevic: The People's Tyrant* (Tauris, 2004), for which she has also written a foreword and more recently a contribution to the *Prentice Hall Literature, The Penguin Edition: Grade 6* (Prentice Hall, 2007). She has recently worked within the U.N. Children in Armed Conflict Division in New York under Olara Otunnu.

Originally published in 1994, *Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Wartime Sarajevo* has sold over 600,000 copies in the United States alone and was an international bestseller. Now twelve years later, Penguin will publish *Zlata’s Diary* with a new introduction by the author, Zlata Filipovic. Frequently compared to the voice of Anne Frank, Zlata’s recounting of her terrifying experiences awoke the conscience of the world. The book begins before Zlata’s eleventh birthday. During this time there was peace in Sarajevo and her life was that of a typical bright, carefree, happy young girl. Her early entries describe her friends, her new skis, her family, her grades at school, and her interest in joining the Madonna Fan Club to which any young person could relate. But soon after, as blasts of gunfire destroy this happy world, *Zlata’s Diary* becomes a record of the horrors and brutality of the war that Zlata witnesses, the deaths of friends, food shortages, and days spent seeking refuge from bombs and artillery in a neighbor’s cellar.

Confined to her family’s apartment, Zlata spends the nights in her neighbor’s cellar, as shells rain down above her. The war raging outside slowly invades her life and creeps into her diary; no more school, living without water and electricity, and food in short supply. The onslaught destroys almost everything she loves, and her parents are visibly changed. And yet, with indomitable courage and a clarity of mind well beyond her years, Zlata perseveres, and in a voice that is both innocent and wise, she tells the amazing account of a childhood interrupted by war.


For a deeper look into how teachers used diaries such as Zlata’s to encourage students in high-risk neighbourhoods to keep journals and diaries of their own, check out the book, *The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*. More information can be found at the end of page 13.
Peter Lippman, About the Speaker

Peter Lippman is a life-long human rights activist with a special interest in Southeastern Europe and the Middle East. He is a graduate of the U.W. School of International Studies. Between 1981 and 2004 he visited Yugoslavia over a dozen times, living in Serbia and then Bosnia for a total of more than four years. While in Bosnia after the recent war, he worked as a translator, in relief work, and then as a researcher for the Washington D.C.-based Advocacy Project. He is currently preparing a book on Bosnia.

The following are links to Mr. Lippman’s most recent writings on the Balkan situation:

“BIG CHANGES IN BOSNIA, OR JUST ANOTHER DRAMA?” SEPTEMBER 2004
In the summer of 2004 Bosnia was refused membership in NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, generally a precursor to entrance into the transatlantic organization. This denial was due to the Serb refusal to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

“BRIDGE CAN’T HEAL BOSNIA DIVISIONS” JULY 2004
The reconstruction efforts of the historic Old Bridge in Mostar was heralded by the director-general of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, as “a symbol of reconciliation.” According to Lippman, this is a naïve hope given the nature of the cavernous ethnic divisions that still exist.

“10TH ANNIVERSARY OF DAYTON ACCORD: ARE CHANGES REAL OR RHETORICAL?”
This article investigates the present day realities ten years after the 1995 Dayton Accords that set up the Serb-controlled Republike Srpska and the Muslia-Croat Federation. This system seems to be functioning “well for those who led the war and are still leading the country” but not for the “ordinary people of Bosnia.” This article is included in this resource packet.
GENERAL INFORMATION
Some information found here is excerpted directly from the web.

WIKIPEDIA: BALKANS
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans
Wikipedia contains information on the definitions and boundaries of the Balkans, the origin of the “Balkans,” ambiguities, controversies, and related countries. There is information on natural resources, history, geopolitical significance, ethnicities, languages, religions, and the composition of the countries.

BBC MAP OF YUGOSLAVIA
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/map/yugoslavia/
This site contains a BBC interactive timeline on the Balkan region from 1900-2003. The timeline contains specific events and people who have changed the Balkans’ boundaries, politics, and society. The maps show the formations of new countries and territories so students may see how complex the changes were.

EDUCATION WORLD
http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson108.shtml
A resource for teachers and students who are interested in clearing up the confusion around the Balkan conflict. This site contains many links to Kosovo resources, background information, timelines, map resources, a “who’s who” quiz, communication from Kosovo, weather, and other web resources. Note that some links may not work.

NEW YORK TIMES: KOSOVO: A BITTER STRUGGLE IN A LAND OF STRIFE
A general website on the Kosovo Crisis. Contains links to specific articles during the crisis.

WHO’S WHO AND WHAT’S WHAT QUIZ
http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/quiz/kosovo.html
This is a six question quiz for students to answer on basic knowledge of Kosovo. Each question contains a resource link for students to find the correct answers.

FOCUS ON KOSOVO: EMAILS FROM A 16YR OLD ALBANIAN
This is a series of email from one 16 year old American student to a 16 year old Albanian living in Kosovo. The chain of emails describes some of the horrors and fears that this young lady experienced while trying to be an ordinary teenager. It is a touching story of how two people with completely different lives can communicate with one another.
BOSNIA: UNCERTAIN PATHS TO PEACE- A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNAL
This is a photographic journal by French photojournalist Gilles Peress. It contains the photographer’s own narratives and it documents the last weeks of the siege of Sarajevo from the perspective of people in the suburbs.

STATE DEPARTMENT: ARTICLES RELATED TO THE DAYTON PEACE ACCORDS
http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/bosagree.html
This is a link to the Dayton Peace Accords and other related documents that ended the conflict in the Balkans.

STATE DEPARTMENT: U.S. POLICY TOWARDS BOSNIA
http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/boshome.html
This is a link to articles, speeches, and other government documents that describe the U.S. position on Bosnia.

WASHINGTON POST: BALKAN SPECIAL REPORT
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/balkans/overview/overview.htm
The site contains a Q&A that answers basic questions regarding the conflict, who was fighting, why the U.S. and NATO attacked, and how the conflict was related to that region of the world.

STANFORD: WEB LINKS
http://www.stanford.edu/dept/CREES/links-balkan.html
Weblinks to the Bosnian and Kosovo crisis. This site contains an exhaustive list of information on Kosovo and Bosnia, but not all the links will work.

TIME LINES

CROATIA 1918-2005
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1097156.stm

YUGOSLAVIA 1918-2004
http://www.infoplease.com/spot/yugotimeline1.html

BOSNIA 1389-1999

ZLATA’S DIARY LESSON PLANS

DISCOVERY CHANNEL: CHILDREN OF WAR
Discovery piece on teaching about the Balkan conflict. This lesson plan incorporates Zlata’s Diary as a supplement to the lesson plan. In this lesson students will read, analyze, and
discuss excerpts from children’s war diaries. Then they will create a storyboard for a public service announcement on children’s rights in wartime.

TEACHING FROM A STUDENT’S PERSPECTIVE
This lesson plan will help students learn about the background of Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl and Zlata’s Diary. They will relate to the experiences and events in both diaries, be involved in discussions about specific diaries entries, and have complete a project that relates to what they have learned or how they feel about the two diaries.

JOURNAL WRITING
Students will learn to write personal journal entries to explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences using Anne Frank and Zlata’s diaries as examples. Students will also edit their personal entries to sharpen their grammar and spelling skills. They can share their entries with other peer editors to build collaboration skills.

LESSON PLANS

LESSON PLAN: CNN CONFLICT IN THE BALKANS
In this lesson plan from CNN, students will be able to describe the conflict in the region, create a timeline of important events, write a story describing the war from the perspective of a Serbian or Albanian teen, and develop a plan for governing the “ground safety zone.”

LESSON PLANS: NEW YORK TIMES LEARNING SPECIAL ON KOSOVO
This site contains a list of lesson plans about the Balkans.

BRINGING PEACE TO THE BALKANS, PIECE BY PIECE
This lesson plan features multiple suggestions for using the New York Times Learning Network section on the Balkans.

SEARCHING FOR HOME
In this lesson, students examine Internet sites that assist Kosovar refugees in locating relatives and friends and in learning about the current events in their homeland.

THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF KOSOVO
Students begin by reflecting on the range of responses Kosovar refugees might have by learning that the peace talks have been delayed. After discussing the article and various effects that the peace talks will have in Kosovo and internationally, students write an essay analyzing the views of different “sides” in the peacemaking process.

THE PRICE OF RELIEF
In this lesson, students calculate and graph the costs of essential items needed in Kosovar refugee camps on an individual, family, and camp basis. Additionally,
students explore how relief organizations and businesses participate in relief efforts such as this.

**SPEAKING OUT ABOUT KOSOVO**
Students reflect on the responsibility of newspapers to act as a vehicle for “everyday citizens” to voice their opinions.

**A PICTURE CHANGES 1000 MINDS**
Based on a *New York Times* article that explains how photographs of Albanian refugees have influenced NATO’s actions in the Balkans, students choose a photograph and write a brief essay explaining what they think is happening in the photograph and how it makes them feel.

**STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND**
In this lesson, students participate in a round-table discussion about the ethnic Albanian refugee crisis occurring in Kosovo as a result of Serbian persecution. Students will also briefly examine another 20th century refugee crisis and compare its causes and effects to those in Kosovo today.

**STRIKING OUT AT THE SERBS**
This lesson introduces students to the most recent stage of the conflict in Kosovo by allowing them to examine the positions and actions of key people, countries, and organizations.

**CRISIS IN KOSOVO**
In this lesson, students investigate the crisis in Kosovo, Yugoslavia and express their views on whether the United States should have been involved in this foreign conflict.

**OHIO STATE: THE BALKANS**
http://www.coe.ohio-state.edu/globaled/display.cfm?parent=5&child=54
This site contains links and reviews of websites for teachers on the Balkans. It is an excellent resource that contains descriptions and reviews on all the links. The site contains the following articles, lesson plans, and much more.

**25 LECTURES ON THE BALKANS**
http://www.lib.msu.edu/sowards/balkan/
These are twenty-five quality lectures on Balkan history written by Steven Sowards of Michigan State University. They end in the year 1995, about the time that the Dayton Accords ended the civil war in Bosnia, but several years before the NATO attack on Yugoslavia in response to Serbian/Albanian strife. Start by looking at the hyper-linked Table of Contents which gives a list and description of each of the twenty-five lectures. Be aware of the fact that the lectures are quite detailed and were designed for college level students. This site also contains maps and Internet links to sources of news on and from the Balkans.
LEARN ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA’S RESTRUCTURING AND NAME CHANGE
http://cnnstudentnews.cnn.com/2002/fyi/lesson.plans/03/14/yugo.name.change/
This is a complete lesson plan for students to gain a good understanding of the reasons for and implications of Yugoslavia’s decision to change its official name to Serbia and Montenegro. Students analyze a news article, view excellent maps, and respond to questions posed in the lesson plan. It is a well produced plan by CNN Student News.

SREBRENICA: A CRY FROM THE GRAVE
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/cryfromthegrave/
Recommended because Srebrenica, Bosnia, the world’s first United Nations Safe Area, was the site of the worst case of genocide in Europe since World War II. In July 1995, the Bosnian Serb army staged a brutal takeover of the small, intimate spa town and its surrounding region. Over a period of five days, the Bosnian Serb soldiers separated Muslim families and systematically murdered over 7,000 men and boys in fields, schools, and warehouses. This website is a companion to the NOVA documentary produced by PBS.

PBS LESSON PLAN
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/classroom/lp3.html
Using Milosevic’s brutal nationalism and the implementation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as a case study, students will consider the question of whether those who commit massive violations of human rights should be held accountable in international courts of law. Are such courts effective in bringing international criminals to justice? Students will examine whether or not international courts of law should be used for holding individuals and groups accountable for large-scale atrocities and human rights violations committed against civilians.

OTHER NEW YORK TIMES LESSON PLANS
Fourteen lesson plans for students by the New York Times. These lesson plans cover issues including NATO involvement, atrocities of the war, the future of the Balkans, relief efforts, the role the media has played, and understanding the conflict

SADNESS IN SREBRENICA
In this lesson, students learn about the atrocities committed during the war in Bosnia from 1992 to 1995 that prompted an apology from the international community.

THE WOUNDS OF WAR
In this lesson, students examine how the lives of civilians who experience war are forever changed. Students read and interpret first-hand accounts of citizens in Sarajevo. Then students consider the priority of the many different types of human needs and how wars affect people’s ability to meet these needs.

OUT IN THE COLD?
In this lesson, students investigate how various international relief organizations could provide aid to previously unaided areas throughout Kosovo in preparation for
the winter months. Small groups then each write a letter to one of the organizations researched, incorporating their knowledge of the aid offered by this organization in the past and suggesting how they may offer relief to meet the survival needs of Kosovars during the winter months.

IN THE PUBLIC'S EYES
In this lesson plan, students examine the views of Serb and American civilians on the sustained NATO air strikes on Serbia. Through class discussion and reflective essays, students focus on analyzing how public opinion affects and reflects the overall morale and attitudes in a country.

A NEW DEAL FOR PEACE IN A LAND OF WAR
In this lesson, students explore the causes and effects of recent conflicts in the Balkans, and learn about the current peacekeeping attempts by NATO and the new Yugoslav government.

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

BALKAN WITNESS: KOSOVO
http://www.glypx.com/BalkanWitness/
This site presents a number of first-hand reports, histories, commentaries, and links to other information sources. This first-hand perspective will give students the information necessary to understand events in Kosovo in their historical context.

BALKAN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING NETWORK
http://www.birn.eu.com/
The Balkan Investigative Reporting Network is a close group of editors and trainers that enables journalists in the region to produce in-depth analytical and investigative journalism on complex political, economic, and social themes.

INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP
http://www.crisisweb.org
The International Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization, with over 110 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. The site contains more up-to-date information and challenges facing areas of potential conflict. In particular, there is an article on creating a stable Kosovo.

HUMANITARIAN LAW CENTER
This site contains news clippings and wires about the human rights violations that have occurred in the past few years.
THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
http://www.advocacynet.org/
The Advocacy Project, a non-profit organization, was formed in 1998 to serve the needs of civil society – particularly community based advocates for peace and human rights. Special attention is given to helping NGOs and networks become self-sufficient in the use of information and communications technologies. This site contains information on the Bosnia and Kosovo from Peter Lippman.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA
http://www.un.org/icty/
This site has the legal documents that define the framework of the ICTY, the statutes of the tribunal, and rules of procedures and evidence. This U.N. body was created to bring justice to the war crimes and criminals in the former Yugoslavia.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT ON BOSNIA
Amnesty International reports on Bosnia, focusing on ethnic discrimination in the workplace.

THE BOSNIAN INSTITUTE
http://www.bosnia.org.uk/
The Bosnian Institute is a key organization internationally in providing education and information on the history and culture of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a special concern for the past and present development of its social, economic, governmental, legal, and cultural conditions, organizations, and institutions. Through its programs it actively encourages and supports the growth of a pluralist democratic society in Bosnia-Herzegovina and its neighbors.

OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE
http://www.ohr.int/
The mission of the High Representative (who is also the European Union’s Special Representative) is to work with the people of Bosnia Herzegovina and the International Community to ensure that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a peaceful, viable state on course to European integration.

HUMAN RIGHTS ARCHIVES BY MICHAEL SELLS
http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/reports.html
A plethora of articles and reports on human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH REPORTS ON BOSNIA
http://hrw.org/doc/?t=eur&p=bosher
Human Rights Watch is the largest human rights organization based in the United States. Human Rights Watch researchers conduct fact-finding investigations into human rights abuses in all regions of the world. Such recent reports deal with the newly established War Crimes Chamber and the status of Bosnia and Herzegovina ten years after the Dayton Accords.
OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

ONLINE NEWSPAPERS ON THE BALKANS

FEDERAL NEWS AGENCY
http://www.fena.ba/uk/index.html
Contains news information in English.

BOSNIAN INSTITUTE
http://www.bosnia.org.uk/news/news_list.cfm
Contains news information in English.

DANI NEWS SOURCE
http://www.bhdani.com/
Contains some English.

OSLOBODJENJE
http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/
Non-English website.

NEZAVISNE
http://www.nezavisne.com/
Non-English website.

OTHER WEBLINKS
http://www.creeca.wisc.edu/reeca/regions/balkans.html#newspapers
A link of several newspapers from the region. Note these newspapers are not in English.

VIRTUAL LIBRARY: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
http://www2.etown.edu/vl/easteuro.html
This website offers a great wealth of internet resources and searches for different areas of the world. Specifically the Eastern Europe search will contain many different websites and internet resources that may be helpful for those looking for a more dedicated search engine.

BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village, Tone Bringa
Princeton University, 1996

War and Revenge, Tim Judah,
Yale University Press, 2000

Blood and Vengeance: One Family’s Story of the War in Bosnia, Chuck Sudetic
Penguin Press, 1998
Bosnia: A Short History, Noel Malcolm
Macmillan Press, 1996

Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed, Robert J. Donia and John V.A. Fine
Columbia University Press, 1995

Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica, David Rohde
Farrar Straus & Giroux Press, 1997

History of the Balkans, Barbara Jelavich
Cambridge University Press, 1983

How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed, Slavenka Drakulic
W.W. Norton & Co., 1992

Kosovo: A Short History, Noel Malcolm
New York University Press, 1998

Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War, Peter Maas
Vintage Books, 1997

Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime, Jan Willem Honig, Norbert Both
Penguin Press, 1997

Why Bosnia? Writings on the Balkan War, Edited by Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz
Pamphleteers Press, 1994

The Destruction of Yugoslavia: Tracking the Break-Up 1980-92, Branka Magas
Verso, London, 1993

The Death of Yugoslavia, Laura Silber and Allan Little
Penguin/BBC Press, 1995

Witness to Genocide: the First Inside Account of the Horrors of ‘Ethnic Cleansing’ in Bosnia, Roy Gutman
Element, Longmead, 1993

Broadway Books, 1999
On 10th Anniversary of Dayton Accord: Are Changes in Bosnia Real or Rhetorical?

By Peter Lippman


TEN YEARS ago, the international community midwifed a peace agreement that ended the three-and-a-half-year-long war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The document, crafted at Dayton, Ohio, brought a halt to the war and established a state with two “entities”—the Serb-controlled Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation. The Dayton agreement has worked well for those who led the war and are still leading the country. It also has worked well for some international officials. The only people for whom the Dayton arrangement has not worked well are the ordinary people of Bosnia.

In this 10th anniversary period, there has been much talk of rearranging the constitutional setup of Bosnia along more rational lines. At the urging of the international community, Bosnia’s leaders over the past few months have promised to integrate their ethnically based armed forces and their police departments, placing the newly unified security forces under state jurisdiction. And there is much talk of “going to Europe,” i.e., eventual Bosnian membership in the European Union. Will anything come of it? And if so, will it help the Bosnians themselves, or just their leaders?

The Dayton agreement was an emergency measure whose most effective component was the imposition of a cease-fire on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina where, over a period of nearly four years, tens of thousands were raped, tortured, and killed, and around half the population of over four million was displaced. This bloody work was sponsored by the regimes of neighboring Serbia and Croatia. The ultimate goals of those who destroyed Bosnia were twofold: self-enrichment on a grand scale through the plundering of Bosnia’s wealth, and the annexation of most of Bosnia, whether through legal means or simply de facto. The first goal has been achieved, resulting in the mass impoverishment of Bosnians of all ethnicities, who once lived quite well. The verdict on the second goal is not yet in.

Although Bosnia was divided into two political entities, it is controlled militarily by three separate forces: Croat, Serb and Muslim. Each force dominated separate, more-or-less ethnically homogenized territories, and each had its own army, police force, and intelligence service. Meanwhile, a million Bosnians had become refugees outside their country, with a similar number displaced internally. The Muslims were by far the greatest victims, but most Bosnians, regardless of ethnicity, lost their livelihoods, their identities, and their future.

In the ensuing period the international community pressured the various domestic authorities—many of whom had been, until recently, enthusiastic participants in the dismemberment of the country—to allow the return of refugees. Eventually laws were imposed that forced the return of some stolen property as well. Along the way, the international community’s High Representative removed a few of the more uncooperative public officials. The main lesson learned by the erstwhile separatists was that, if they wished to preserve their lucrative positions, they must repeat the phrases the international enforcers wanted to hear—such as “multiculturalism,” “tolerance” and “rule of law.” They have learned that lesson well, indeed.

As of today, actual refugee return has been weak, and populations remain relatively homogenized by territory. This situation makes it easy for the extreme nationalists who run
most of Bosnia to maintain an atmosphere of fear, and therefore retain power. These leaders have enriched themselves by legalizing the regime of corruption that flourished during the war, while maintaining an ever-more-polished façade of politeness and cooperation. Most disappointing of all, international officials have willingly played along, pretending along with the nationalist leaders that the latter have “reformed” and are interested in creating out of Dayton’s Frankensteinish contraption a country that operates rationally.

Meanwhile, around a fifth of the Bosnian population lives below the poverty line, three-fifths are unemployed, and two-thirds of the country’s youth say they would leave the country if given the chance.

Young people don’t have many other chances. If they can afford the books, they can go to school and earn university degrees. Earning a living is another matter, however, as the economy remains crippled, with production stagnating at a fraction of the pre-war level. Foreign investment remains low.

In the past year, pressure from the international community has resulted in some tentative changes that look promising. In August the Serb-controlled entity agreed to transfer jurisdiction over its armed forces to a joint state command. In the future there will be no Serb, Muslim, or Croat forces, just one Bosnian army—at least on paper. A potential problem, however, is that Bosnian army structures remain territorially based. Thus, their composition will reflect the ethnic make-up of a given territory. However, the agreement on military restructuring was sufficiently satisfactory to international officials for them to give Bosnia a green light for the next move toward eventual entry to NATO.

The move to unify police forces at a national level was much more difficult to press through. Serb obstruction was fierce, resulting in strong threats of sanctions from the international community. Only at the last moment did the Serbs cave in and agree to a vague arrangement that would “regionalize” police centers across entity lines. While this agreement satisfied international officials, it is so vague as to be unpromising.

All of these developments threaten Serb separatists who, while improving their civilized façade, have not lost sight of their original war goals. Focusing on what is most important to them—power and riches—they have sacrificed the goal of maintaining an “ethnically cleansed” territory and allowed some “minorities” to return to their pre-war homes, in what is now an apartheid situation. It even is conceivable that, since they no longer need him, they will sacrifice their most heroic fugitive, Radovan Karadzic. The arrest in early December of top Croatian fugitive Ante Gotovina heightens the pressure on Serb authorities for Karadzic’s apprehension.

To be fair, the corruption and political manipulation is not limited to Bosnia’s Serbs. Extreme nationalist Croats continue to promote the creation of a “third entity” for their own beleaguered population—a development that would spell the end of a reunified Bosnia. Nor is corruption foreign to the country’s Muslim leaders. The list of representatives of all three ethnicities who have been removed—or banned from travel to the United States—due to corruption or flouting Dayton continues to grow. It includes former presidents and prime ministers as well as members of the three-part state presidency. One of these, Ante Jelavic, was convicted of corruption and is now on the lam in neighboring Croatia.

Once the hurdle of police force unification was cleared, Bosnia was invited to participate in discussions on a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), the first step toward accession to the European Union. These discussions began in late November. Meanwhile, Bosnia’s
domestic leaders are aware that, if their bid for accession to the EU is to be taken seriously, they will have to reform the state constitution. With a confounding and counterproductive 14 levels of government (Bosnia has well over 100 ministries), however, opportunities for obstruction and corruption are vast. It’s safe to predict that Brussels will turn its back on Bosnia until the country creates something that looks more like a workable government.

For Bosnians, “going to Europe” is something like going to heaven: one doesn’t know what it actually will be like, but it has to be much better than the present reality. For ordinary Bosnians, Europe means jobs, euros, and good passports. For the profiteers who run the country, it could mean the end of their banditry—but they must present at least an appearance of sincerity and unanimity, lest they forfeit the present support and cooperation of the international community.

Thus, at least rhetorically, EU membership is the one thing on which everyone agrees. Indeed, it may be the one issue the outside world can use as leverage to influence the functioning of the Bosnian state—if, that is, the international community has the will. To date, much of the interaction between international and domestic officials has been a charade, with much hot air expelled over small changes. An example is the meeting of Bosnian party officials in Washington on Nov. 21, the anniversary of the Dayton agreement. There Bosnian politicians signed a vague agreement pledging to work in the coming months to redesign the political structure of Bosnia’s state government so as to strengthen the central government’s authority.

Despite the enthusiasm of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, however, there is nothing in the agreement to force the Serb-controlled entity to relinquish a significant part of its de facto sovereignty to the state—because that is where the Serb politicians draw the line.

“Moving to Europe”

The outcome of Bosnia’s move toward the EU depends on pressure from the international community. At this point it is possible that international officials will continue to turn a blind eye to the dysfunctional operation of the state, even though they know full well what is going on, and even though they understand the meaning behind the statements of Bosnia’s political operators. For example, when Croat member of the Bosnian presidency Ivo Miro Jovic says that the current constitution is an obstacle to building a modern country, he means that the constitution should allow for a third (Croatian) entity. When Bosnian Serb leaders state, as they did in Washington, that they will undertake “all possible measures and actions to find and apprehend” Radovan Karadzic, they mean that they will continue to do little more than talk about his arrest.

It will take years—perhaps a decade—for Bosnia to shape up sufficiently to join the EU. On the occasion of the first steps of this process, it would be appropriate for the international officials involved to leave the hypocrisy and self-serving charades behind so as to ensure that Bosnia arrives in Europe as a healthy country, one where young people have hope, and reconciliation has a real chance.