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MEETING THE BURDEN OF STATEHOOD: IS KOSOVO READY?

The International Community is being asked whether it should consider recognizing the sovereignty of the Serbian province of Kosovo. But first it is necessary to ask whether Kosovo meets the criteria for sovereignty. Unless it does, the new so-called state would be an artificial entity subsisting on aid from the world community. And — as with all dependent societies — it will merely continue to nurture frustrations and resentment of its benefactors, causing a growing source of criminal and terrorist behavior damaging to its region and to the world.

Some of the major points I make in this regard are that:

1. Kosovo does not meet any historical standards for sovereignty. The territory of Kosovo was seized *for* the present majority of the area only by external powers, and cannot even be defended in the normal sense by the proposed new state itself. Moreover, it is not economically viable except through criminal activities, and has been created solely as a dependent of the international community.

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2. For Kosovo to be recognized as a legitimate sovereign state, the international community must violate the sovereignty of another recognized state, the Republic of Serbia, bypassing a variety of treaties and understandings, such as the UN Charter and the Helsinki Accords.
3. Kosovo is already a territory run as a criminal enterprise, with links into *jihadist* movements. As a result of this and other factors, Kosovo is not run along lines which have historically been proven to be viable from the standpoint of national management.

There is nothing mystical or pre-ordained about statehood and sovereignty. To be valid and lasting, statehood and sovereignty are conditions which are earned and defended, not dispensed by other, more powerful societies. Even Yasir Arafat said that any state given to the Palestinians by their enemies was a state not worth having.

In my new book, *The Art of Victory: Strategies for Personal Success and Global Survival in a Changing World*, I deal specifically with how societies form and prosper. I noted: "Few people today are familiar with many of the countries which existed only, say, 300 years ago. ... Italy did not then exist as a sovereign state; nor did the United States. And more countries will appear or disappear in the next few decades. The wars of secession, and the re-shaping of boundaries — largely suppressed by the Cold War — begin anew. The wars to break up Yugoslavia are still unfinalized. And in many of the new wars we will see savagery abound as groups 're-discover' old identities, and seek to capitalize on the permissive climate of change and chaos."

In the book I go on to say that in many respects, the "*al-Qaida*" phenomenon owes its success to the financial links with what we are calling the Albanian mafia, just as the Albanian criminals owe their success to the logistics and networks of *al-Qaida*. The chaos of changing borders— such as we are seeing today in the Balkans, and elsewhere — is fertile ground for criminality. In the coming decades there will be more and more "no go" areas in the world. In many respects, the terror has just begun. Criminal states, such as the proposed Kosovo Albanian "state", will profoundly change the sense of security of all peoples around the world. Already Kosovo is becoming like Afghanistan under the *Taliban*. And like the *Taliban* destruction of the ancient Buddhas of Bamiyan, the Albanian Islamist process of destruction of the Christian Churches will be complete if Kosovo is granted independence, and Western civilization will be gone from a large part of the Balkans. In its place will be a criminal-terrorist state, leaching into the heart of Europe. And it was made feasible by the short-term policies of many European and US politicians of the 1990s.

We are now at a watershed. The World community does *not* have to continue with the errors of the 1990s. It does *not* have to willingly accept — and pay the price in economic and security terms — that Kosovo should be granted the status of a sovereign state. Kosovo does not meet any of the criteria for a modern nation-state, either in terms of the structure developed since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, or of the post-Westphalian structure now emerging. Because of globalization and the free movement of people, ideas, and capital, 21st Century statehood will demand, at least, certain conditions of economic and structural sustainability and multi-confessional and multi-cultural composition. Attempts to define sovereignty in terms of the antique tribalism of mono-ethnicity and single belief societies flies in the face of the realities now emerging with a globalized society.

Kosovo and Narco-Trafficking

Kosovo is now the principal center of narco-trafficking for all of Europe, and this has enabled the Albanian mafia to displace other criminal enterprises throughout most of Western Europe, and to expand criminal activities into other, non-narcotic areas. Two points in this regard are important: firstly, the Albanian mafia is essentially what we can loosely call the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), although it now goes by various names; and secondly, the KLA exists, and is able to access much of its narcotic product, because of its close interrelationship with *jihadist* movements and foreign state sponsors.

As an example, three major heroin production laboratories, run by the KLA, are operating within the area of Kosovo which has been under the control of US Army units operating from Camp Bondsteel. Ironically, to support the KLA which the former US Clinton Administration had deemed an ally, some US authorities operating in the area specifically protected the laboratories from inspection by other NATO forces in the area. There is also evidence that, over a period of years, US military and possibly intelligence elements have actively engaged in relations with, and protection of, the narcotraffickers. Since the withdrawal of Serbian control over its Kosovo province, there has been an increasing amount of opium grown in the area, and this is a major supply source for the heroin laboratories, although some raw opium may also be fed into the laboratories from, or via, Turkey (possibly including some raw opium from Afghanistan and Iraqi Kurdistan).

The determination of the KLA to defend these facilities is now well-known locally. A Russian unit, some four years ago, engaged the KLA in a firefight in the area, at night, after which the KLA forces were sufficiently strong and well-armed that they surrounded the Russian camp and essentially prevented the Russian forces from leaving their camp.

The KLA's use of Kosovo as a criminal clearing-house extends to a wide range of other activities. Stolen cars from all around Europe, but particularly from Italy, are "re-processed" in Kosovo, and given new papers, before being re-exported to places such as Albania. One such car was used for some time by the Albanian Interior Minister, until a few years ago, before, on a visit to Greece, it was identified because of an Interpol alert, and seized by Greek authorities and taken from the Albanian Interior Minister. As well, electrical goods and household fittings removed from the homes of Kosovo Serbs, who have been driven from the area, are on sale through a major network of retail outlets in Albania.

Little of this gains international attention, although the use of roadblocks by the KLA reached such a level that the United Nations and NATO leaderships in Kosovo have issued warnings to their personnel. [See *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, October 20, 2005: *KFOR Claims "Criminals" Active in Western Kosovo; Linked to KLA and Narco-Trafficking*. See Appendix i] US involvement with the narco-trafficking has gone beyond merely turning a blind eye to the activities of the KLA in the area. US military vehicles, several years ago, were known to have actually transported narcotics from Kosovo, into Western Europe.

Kosovo and Jihadist Links

Our organization, the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA), has for some years identified the growing links which the KLA has with the *jihadist* movements which are largely identified under the rubric of *al-Qaida*. It is important to note, however, that labels such as "*al-Qaida*" are misleading. These KLA-*jihadist* links have been well-documented, and some recent intelligence material supporting the KLA-*jihadist* links is attached as an appendix to this paper, merely as a small example of the vast amount of information which is known on this. Moreover, the KLA, and the territory of Kosovo, forms the basis of the territorial link for *jihadists* moving into and out of Europe, seamlessly interacting with *jihadists* in Bosnia, and in the southern Serbian area of Raška, as well as in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and the newly-independent state of Montenegro, and so on. See Appendix ii.

Significantly, as we know from a wide range of information, Europe is a major target for the global *jihadist* movements, and not only those under the *al-Qaida* label, but also those financed and logistically made viable by the Iranian Government.

We know that a number of foreign governments support, either directly or indirectly, *jihadist* activities which are based in Kosovo and Bosnia. These state sponsors include the Turkish and Iranian governments, and both governments

do so for nationalist reasons or, often, because of corruption, rather than for ideological or religious beliefs. Indeed, even secular officials in Turkey who are concerned over the rise of Islamism in their own country support the KLA, for example, because of historic links into the Balkan territories and communities which once formed an integral part of the old Ottoman Empire and which still are seen as being within the orbit of pan-Turkism. In this regard, although it is not the topic of this presentation, we see a major spread of *jihadist*, criminal, and intelligence activities into FYROM, Montenegro, and these activities are often dependent on the support of the Albanian Government. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is actively engaged in the area, as well, using its old Cold War contacts in Albania.

Illicit Weapons Trafficking

It is axiomatic that narco-trafficking and terrorism are interdependent with the illegal traffic in weapons. We have strong evidence, which is touched upon in *Appendix (iii)*, that the entity which we are, for the sake of expediency calling the KLA, is heavily engaged in arms trafficking not only to support its criminal and *jihadist*-linked activities, but also as a profit-center in its own right.

It is significant that international financial controls have meant that the terrorist-criminal movements have been forced to adopt new means of handling and funding their activities, and in organizing their command and control. We're seeing the use of bartering, or commodities and services exchanges, replacing wire transfers of funds in the financing of acquisition of weapons and explosives throughout Europe, for example. The KLA has been able to operate an illegal weapons exchange with impunity, having the "safe haven" of Kosovo, protected by the international community.

The man who has been at the center of this activity has been a second-ranking KLA leader, Niam Behzloulzi, also known as "Houlzi". That may not be his real name, but we know he carries (or has until recently carried) ID under the name of Niam Behzloulzi.

In Conclusion:

There is ample evidence that Kosovo has no legitimacy in the normal sense of a sovereign state, and that, if it was to be recognized as such, it would further erode the credibility of the international system. Indeed, the United Nations is a body based on the membership of sovereign states, fewer and fewer of which can actually meet the criteria for real sovereignty. The Cold War bi-polar system

sustained, for 50 years, many non-viable, so-called "states" within the ambit of the superpowers, but that world is gone, and now we are increasingly seeing "failed states" for what they are.

Kosovo would emerge as a "state" at a time when it can no longer expect the long-term protection of the global system. This will only force it to turn increasingly to the criminal-terrorist enterprises which have been the hallmark of its birth.

Note: The appendices attached to this report represent only a small fraction of the reporting by the ISSA's Global Information System (GIS)/*Defense & Foreign Affairs* group on the subjects covered.

Appendix (1):

Jihadist Terrorist Leader Returns to the Balkans as Actions Intensify to Promote Kosovo Independence

From *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, October 25, 2006

Exclusive. From GIS Station Priština. Sources within the NATO force command in the Serbian province of Kosovo have indicated that there is concern with the organization that the murder of four Serbs in Kosovo at the beginning of September 2005 was part of a greater plan by KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) Albanians to begin to exacerbate disorder as part of the agitation for the interdependence of the area from Serbia. The riots in March and June 2004 resulted in 19 Serbian deaths, 900 injured and more than 4,000 people displaced from their homes. Many Serbian villages were destroyed. See, particularly, *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, March 19, 2004: *New Kosovo Violence is Start of Predicted 2004 Wave of Islamist Operations: the Strategic Ramifications*.

NATO fears have been strengthened by intelligence derived by Western countries on the existence of a strong Islamist network in Kosovo and Bosnia. Specifically, the German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) confirmed that the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London were organized by Islamic cells in Bosnia and Kosovo. The German press agency DDP (*Das Deutschland-Portal*) reported that the BND forewarned about the new terrorist attacks in London, which were carefully organized in Kosovo.

The secret service of a Balkan country, which works actively in the area, reported to GIS that one of the most dangerous Islamist terrorists in the world, who was involved in the bombing attack against US and German soldiers in the

beginning of 1990 in Germany, has returned to the area from Pakistan in early September 2005.

His name is **Abdul Qadir Mukhtari**, whose Bosnian passport identifies him as **Abu al-Ma'ali**. He is often also referred to as Abu-Ma'ali, a *nom de guerre* which he adopted during the 1990s². He rose rapidly through the ranks in Bosnia-Herzegovina ending up as the commander of the *Mujahedin* Brigade (3rd Bde). Until 2001-02 (at least), he was also a prominent member of bin Osama Laden's/ Ayman al-Zawahiri's *shura* (consultative high command council) dealing with remote *jihadi* theaters. In this capacity he held extensive correspondence with Khattab in Chechnya (until the Russians killed him). GIS Senior Analyst Yossef Bodansky noted: "Abu-Ma'ali is a senior and nasty guy. His presence on-site should be taken most seriously."

Abu al-Ma'ali was involved in the Bosnian war in the early to mid-1990s, and he had founded the terrorist organization HUA (*Harkat ul-Ansar*), with some 200 Pakistanis of British nationality, who were trained in Pakistan by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). [*Harkat ul-Ansar* (later known as *Harkat ul-Mujahedin*) was heavily involved in *jihadi* operations in Indian-controlled Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), operating from bases in Pakistan, and had undertaken training during the Taliban rule in Afghanistan at Khost and Jalalabad with the objective that combatants would subsequently be deployed in J&K.]

The second-in-command was the British-Pakistani, **Haroun Rashid Asouat** (as heard; correct spelling not known), who is wanted in the United Kingdom by Scotland Yard. According to former US Federal prosecutor John Loftus, Haroun was recruiting volunteers for Kosovo. Mr Loftus also accused the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI-6) of protecting Haroun because he was allegedly an SIS agent.

According to an interview given by a British Labour Party member of the Parliament, Michael Meacher, to the UK newspaper, *The Guardian*, SIS recruited Muslim British-Pakistanis in Britain for terror training in order to fight against Serbia in Bosnia. The MP also reported to the research foundation, The Observer Research Foundation, based in Delhi, India, information that 200 Pakistanis from Great Britain were sent to Pakistan in order to be trained on terrorist activities. This information was also confirmed by sources in the Dutch Government,

² See also, Bodansky, Yossef: *Offensive in the Balkans*, published by the International Strategic Studies Association, Alexandria, Virginia, 1995. On page 72, it noted: ... [T]he leadership of the Armed Islamic Movement (AIM) was formally notified in mid-May 1995 that the "*Mujahedin* Battalion is an officially-recognized army battalion of the Bosnian army; it is comprised of non-Bosnian volunteers, called *Ansar*, along with Bosnian *Mujahedin*. The formal name of the unit is *Armija Republike Bh 3, Korpus Odred el-Mudzahidin*". The commander, an Egyptian "Afghan", was identified as "*Ameer Kateebat al-Mujahedin Abu al-Ma'ali*": a religious/military title and a *nom de guerre*. The Islamist force is based in the Travnik and Zenica areas in central Bosnia.

which reported that Great Britain and the United States had permitted terrorist organizations to operate in Bosnia and later in Kosovo.

Sources from the area report that Haroun transferred many members of the terrorist organization *al-Muhajiroun* group into Kosovo during the Summer of 2005 and these were integrated with the members of HUA.

Two young Pakistanis of British nationality were blown up recently in Kosovo, while they were testing the linkage of a cell phone to a remotely-controlled bomb. The two young men participated in seminars organized by an institute – Renaissance of the Islamic Heritage – which is based in Sarajevo and which has a branch office in Priština. Abu el-Maali was recently moved from Kosovo to Sarajevo, where he installed a cell for recruiting Islamists in the “King Fahd” mosque in the suburb of Dobrinja.

Abu el-Maali is one of the very well known *mujahedin* leaders, and he has returned in the Balkans from Pakistan, where, according to very reliable Islamist sources, he was meeting members of *al-Qaida* in order to organize their activities in the area and also in Europe.

New Kosovo Violence is Start of Predicted 2004 Wave of Islamist

Operations: the Strategic Ramifications

From *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, March 19, 2004

Analysis. By Gregory R. Copley, Editor, GIS, with input from GIS Stations in Priština, Belgrade and elsewhere.

The major wave of violence instigated in the Kosovo region of Serbia on beginning on about March 14, 2004, and escalating dramatically through March 18, 2004, is the start of the forecast series of unrest, guerilla warfare and terrorist activity planned by radical Islamist leaders in Bosnia, Albania, Iran and in the Islamist areas of Serbia, and directly linked with the various *al-Qaida*-related *mujahedin* and terrorist cells in the area.

Attempts have already been made to blame the violence on the very small Serbian population which remains in Kosovo, but this is not credible, and nor has the Serbian Government shown any enthusiasm to get involved in the situation. Sources confirm that the violence, which began on March 17, 2004, and

continued to escalate through March 18, 2004, is not an isolated expression of frustration, but, rather, part of a planned “season” of unrest designed explicitly to pull US and Western strategic focus away from Iraq, and to ensure that US and Western peacekeeping forces — which have been progressively diverted to Iraq operations and away from Kosovo and Bosnia — will need to be held in the Balkans. The purposes are multifold:

1. To remove US and Western focus on Iraq, thereby relieving pressure on Iran’s clerical leadership and helping to ensure the retention of Iranian capability to link, via Iraq, with Syria;
2. To demonstrate the failure of the Western “war on terror” and specifically to discredit those Western leaders who supported the war in the run-up to elections in the US and Australia;
3. To create a climate of instability around the Olympic Games, scheduled for August 2004 in Athens, and which feature as a major target for unrest and terrorism;
4. To consolidate Islamist control over parts of the Balkans, specifically the so-called “green transversal”³ belt which links the Adriatic Coast through Albania, FYR of Macedonia, the Serbian Kosovo and Metohija region, the southern Serbia/northern Montenegro Raška (Sandzak) region, through the Gorazde Corridor into Bosnia, not only as a terrorist corridor but also to facilitate a clear highway for narco-trafficking and weapons shipments. Significantly, the Serbian Government within the union of Serbia & Montenegro, had, until the recent Serbian elections, attempted to ignore the growing incitement to a new outbreak of violence and unrest on the part of the Muslim community of southern Serbia (Raška) and Kosovo because it did not wish to be seen to be drawing attention to the growing Muslim agitation.

However, this action merely allowed the process to continue to build without any major intelligence or policy focus on the problem. The issue was compounded by the fact that two major international oversight bodies — the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and the German-controlled command of UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) — both sided with radical Islamists and known war-criminals also, presumably, to avoid the appearance of being anti-Muslim.

³ The attempt to create a Muslim belt from the Adriatic Sea up into the heart of Europe has been known for many decades by the Islamists as the “Green transversal”, the green standing for the Muslim color (although, ironically, it is also the color of the Orthodox Christians), and transversal meaning a line or path on the ascendant. The Bosnian Muslims, even during the Tito era, managed to inject the name onto sports stadium in Sarajevo, now the capital of Bosnia & Herzegovina. The Zetra Stadium specifically stands for *ZElena (Green) TRAnsverszala*, in Serbo-Croat.

The warnings of this wave of violence were explicitly clearly and starkly forecast by GIS/*Defense & Foreign Affairs* reports over the past year, and specifically on October 15, 2003, *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, in a report entitled *Strong Warning Indicators for New Surge in European Islamist Terrorism*, which noted:

Intelligence sources in the Balkans and Middle East indicate that the Iranian and Osama bin Laden terrorist networks, assets and alliances built up in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Southern Serbia and elsewhere in the Balkans are preparing for significant new slate of operations. Initial operations in this "new slate" have already begun in Kosovo, and are expected to expand in southern Serbia in late October and into November 2003.

The intelligence, from a variety of primary sources within the Islamist movements, points to:

1. Escalation of Islamist terrorist attacks on Serb civilians within the predominantly Muslim region of Kosovo and Metohija in the Serbian province of Kosovo;
2. Commencement during October-November 2003 of seemingly-random bombings of public places, including schools, in Muslim-dominated cities in the southern Serbian/northern Montenegrin Raška *Oblast* (this *oblast*, or region — not a formal substate as in the Russian use of the word "oblast" — is referred to by Islamists by its Turkish name, Sandzak) as a prelude to wider violence in this area, and eastern Montenegro, adjacent to the Albanian border and reaching down to the Adriatic;
3. Coordination of incidents by the so-called "Albanian National Army" — a current iteration of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA, or UCK: *Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves*, in Albanian; OVK in Serbo-Croat) — in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with activities in Raška, led by the Bosnian radical Islamist party, SDA (Party of Democratic Action) of Alija Izetbegovic, and all supported by Albanian Government-approved/backed training facilities inside Albania, close to the border with Serbian Kosovo;
4. Escalation of incidents — including threats, political action, terrorist action — within Bosnia-Herzegovina, designed to further polarize the Serbian and Croat population away from the Muslim population;
5. Eventual escalation of "incidents" to create a "no-go" area for Serbian, Montenegrin, Republica Srpska security forces and international peacekeepers in a swathe of contiguous territory from the Adriatic through Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Southern Serbia and Macedonia into Bosnia-Herzegovina, effectively dissecting the Republica Srpska state

(which is within Bosnia-Herzegovina) at the Gorazde Corridor and isolating Montenegro;

6. Using the extensive safe-haven areas and “no-go” zones created by the actions, undertake a range of terrorist actions against targets in Greece — which is contiguous with Albania and (FYR) Macedonia — during (and possibly before) the August 2004 Olympic Games. Specific intelligence points to the fact that the Islamist groups have already predetermined target opportunities during the Games.

News sources indicated on March 18, 2004, that NATO could dispatch nearly 2,000 additional troops to Kosovo, including 750 from the United Kingdom, to deal with the new unrest. As of March 18, 2004, after only a few days of unrest, it was understood that 35 NATO troops had been injured. Some 350 extra troops were already being sent in, including US and Italians from Bosnia, as well as British forces. The UK Government then announced it was sending 750 new troops into Kosovo. At least 14 people had been reported killed in Kosovo as a result of the new fighting, much of which centers around the divided town of Mitrovica; hundreds have been injured.

A crowd of Albanians, estimated at 3,000 strong, attacked the UN police station in Mitrovica before crossing the city’s main bridge and heading into the Serbian side where there were exchanges of machinegun fire and hand-grenades. The Albanian groups were seen to be in possession of heavy automatic weapons and grenades. It had been claimed that the Albanians had mobilized to attack Serbs who had allegedly chased several boys into a river where three of them were drowned, ostensibly in retaliation for an earlier (and confirmed) drive-by shooting in which a Serbian youth was killed.

However, UNMIK spokesman Derek Chappell said on the night of March 18, 2004, that the survivor of the March 17, 2004, Ibar River drowning had told his parents that he and three friends entered the river alone and were immediately caught up in the heavy current. The boy managed to reach the opposite bank of the river, but his three companions were swept away. It was clear that the Albanian forces were mobilized and ready for the assault and that the story about the drownings was merely used as a convenient claim on which to base the attacks.

But what seemed clear was the the German-run UNMIK forces were totally unprepared for the outbreak, despite the warnings and knowledge of Islamist plans for such actions. As a result, UN forces were known to have withdrawn

rather than protect Serb areas and Serbian Orthodox churches, which were supposedly to be protected as cultural heritage sites. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) units fared somewhat better, using rubber bullets and tear gas, but they, too, were unprepared for the scale of the operations conducted by the Albanians.

A German spokesman had, in recent months, made clear anti-Serbian remarks, highlighting the biased nature of the supposedly impartial international force supposedly administering Kosovo with the support of KFOR military units and police provided by donor nations [a Polish police unit was in charge of the area of Metrovica when the incident occurred]. UNMIK had, additionally, on several occasions, tried to overturn international warrants and criminal proceedings against one of the key Kosovo radicals, known war criminal Agim Ceku, who was now working as the Commander of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), which was, in fact, created out of the narcoterrorism organization, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA/UCK)⁴.

The October 15, 2003, *GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs* report also indicated that Ceku's KPC was directly engaged in support of Albanian-trained Islamist terrorists, noting:

"During the first half of August 2003, 300 Albanian-trained guerillas — including appr. 10 *mujahedin* (non-Balkan Muslims) — were infiltrated across the Albanian border into Kosovo, where many have subsequently been seen in the company (and homes) of members of the so-called Kosovo Protection Corps which was created out of Kosovo Albanian elements originally part of the KLA. In fact, the Kosovo Protection Force seems almost synonymous with the Albanian National Army (ANA), the new designation for the KLA. The guerillas were trained in three camps inside the Albanian border at the towns of Bajram Curi, Tropoja and Kuks, where the camps have been in operation since 1997."

All of the warning signs are there for an escalation of substantial proportions, both in Kosovo and in neighboring areas. On March 18, 2004, *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily* highlighted the confluence of Islamist terrorist activities in 2004, in a report entitled *Terrorism, the Olympics and Elections: the 2004 Confluence*. What that report made clear was the fact that the March 11, 2004, bombings in Madrid were a precursor for the "season" of violence, and the success of the actions there in shaping the political outcome of the Spanish general election gave strong impetus to the actions planned for the Olympics, the US and elsewhere.

⁴ See *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, October 23, 2003: *Slovenia Arrests Key Kosovo Islamist, Based on Serbia-Montenegro Indictment*. And *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, March 5, 2004: *UN Mission In Kosovo Continues Protection for KLA Leader Ceku*. See also *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, February 11, 2004: *Report on Albanian Criminal-Terrorist Links Providing Key Intelligence for Olympics Security, "War on Terror"*.

The campaign to paint the Serbs as the aggressors included references, picked up by international media, that Serbia & Montenegrin forces and/or internal security forces from the Republic of Serbia were deployed to move back into Kosovo. Serbian Premier Vojislav Kostunica said on March 17, 2004, that “our military and police units are not deployed along the administrative line with Kosovo-Metohija”. Speaking at a news conference after the Serbian Government’s special session held to discuss the clashes in Kosovo-Metohija, Kostunica said that news about the army and police presence at the administrative line dividing Kosovo province from the rest of Serbia were misinformation spread on purpose in order to justify a further radicalization of the situation.

This was confirmed by intelligence sources on the ground in Kosovo; there were no Serbian military or police deployments in the area. Similarly, reports of the sacking of a mosque in Belgrade by Serbs was also distorted, largely to cover the fact that a significant number of Serbian Orthodox churches had been destroyed by the Albanians in Kosovo: destructions which were witnessed, and not prevented, by UNMIK forces on some occasions. There was, however, an incident at the mosque in Belgrade, and a GIS source witnessed the incident on March 17, 2004, and noted: “Hooligans — and that’s what they really were: drunk kids, 17 to 22 years old — pillaged the interior of the mosque as well as the *madarasa* [Islamic school].” The source said that the teenagers lit a fire in front of the mosque, but did not damage it.

UN Police Director for Information in Kosovo, Derek Chappell, noted on March 17, 2004: “In the past weeks there have been a number of incidents that have escalated tension. We had a hand grenade attack on the residence of President of Kosovo last Friday, we have had four or five hand grenades thrown on the streets of Priština, we had a bomb left on the front of UN headquarters two weeks ago and a Serbian youth was shot in a drive-by shooting this last Monday evening [March 15, 2004]. These incidents have tended to create a feeling of fear and uncertainty and last night we had three Albanian youngsters who drowned in a river, allegedly as a result of being chased into the river by Serbs, and this seems to have been the catalyst that finally drove people into the streets and we saw this violence that erupted today [March 17, 2004].”

However, as noted in repeated reports by GIS since mid-2004, the escalation was planned, and — because of pressures to move US and other forces out of the area to aid Iraq deployments — NATO intelligence and planning officials downplayed the threat.

The matter was not helped when, in recent weeks, former US Clinton Administration State Dept. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke said that the break-up of the former Yugoslavia was not yet complete: it required that Montenegro and Kosovo be broken off to form separate sovereign states. A number

of officials from the region told GIS that they thought that this comment must have reflected official positions in Washington. Almost certainly the statement by Holbrooke gave encouragement and incitement to the new wave of attacks in Kosovo⁵.

Meanwhile, on the night of March 18, 2004, Serbia & Montenegro Pres. Svetozar Marovic convened a special session of the Serbia & Montenegro Supreme Defense Council, to discuss the latest escalation of clashes. The Council issued a statement that which said that it was following with great concern the escalation of organized violence in Kosovo and Metohija, and was calling on, and expecting from, UNMIK and KFOR, as well as from other international institutions, to ensure the protection of the lives of Serbs and Montenegrins and of their property in Kosovo and Metohija and to fulfill other commitments undertaken under resolution 1244.

The Supreme Defence Council supported the contacts of relevant bodies of Serbia and Montenegro, the Serbian Government and the Army of Serbia and Montenegro with international institutions and expressed a readiness of the Army of Serbia and Montenegro to lend assistance to the international forces for stabilizing the situation in Kosovo and Metohija in keeping with resolution 1244, within the mandate of KFOR and UNMIK.

The Supreme Defense Council, along with the existing activities of the Army of Serbia and Montenegro, ordered the Chief of Staff to follow the situation and to suggest to the Supreme Defense Council what measures should be taken next. Apart from the chairman and members of the Council, Acting Pres. of Serbia Predrag Markovic and Montenegrin Pres. Filip Vujanovic, also took part in the meeting, along with Serbian Premier Vojislav Kostunica, Serbia & Montenegro Defense Minister Boris Tadic, Deputy Defense Minister Vukasin Maras, Chief of Staff Gen. Branko Krga and Supreme Defense Council secretary Col. Ljunisa Jokic.

Fewer than 20,000 KFOR troops remain in Kosovo, and the few Serbs who remain there still live in ghetto conditions; very few who fled during the fighting in 1999 have returned to their former homes. Serbs now represent only about 10 percent of Kosovo's two-million population. It would, however, be unwise to focus solely on the Kosovo incidents without seeing them in the light of regional developments and the larger picture, including operations in and related to the ongoing peacekeeping operations in Iraq.

⁵ See *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, November 17, 2003: *New Balkans Islamist Weapons Supply Line Tied to 9/11 Players and Contact of Holbrooke*. And *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily* report of September 17, 2004: *Bosnian Official Links With Terrorism, Including 9/11, Become Increasingly Apparent as Clinton, Clark Attempt to Justify Support of Bosnian Militants*.

Significantly, as the Kosovo operation itself got underway, *al-Qaida* senior leader Ayman al-Zawahiri was reportedly being besieged by Pakistan Army forces in southern Waziristan, in the Pakistani tribal areas. Ayman al-Zawahiri, and his brother Mohammed (currently in an Egyptian prison) organized and led much of the terrorist, *mujahedin* and narco-trafficking arrangements in both Bosnia and Kosovo. And these arrangements remain central to *al-Qaida* and Iranian strategic operations to move from defensive operations against the US-led Coalition forces to strongly offensive operations in the run-up to the 2004 US elections.

Appendix (2):

New Evidence Highlights Albanian Link to Explosives Used in London, Madrid Bombings

From *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, October 25, 2005

Exclusive. From GIS Station Priština. Deeply-placed sources within the Islamist community in Kosovo have identified the source and type of the explosives used in the *jihadist* terrorist bombings in London on July 7, 2005, and the Madrid commuter railway bombings of March 11, 2004.

The man at the center of the provision of the explosives in both instances was an Albanian, operating mostly out of Kosovo (with links into Bosnia), who is a second-ranking leader in the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA/UCK: *Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosove*), **Niam Behzloulzi** (phonetic spelling), also known as “**Houlzi**”. He carries ID under the name of Niam Behzloulzi.

The principal explosive used in the London and Madrid bombs was **CK123** plastic explosive which is similar to, but slightly more powerful than, Semtex.

“Houlzi” provided the Madrid explosives in December 2003. It is known that the CK123 provided for the London attacks, and probably the Madrid attacks, was supplied in Kosovo and then carried to Western Sahara, before being routed to the target cities. The London explosives were routed via Madrid. Significantly, CK123 cannot be detected by most — perhaps all — airport explosives detection equipment operating at that time. It is not at this time known whether the Saharan link was via Algeria or Morocco, but both Moroccan and Algerian Islamists have been extremely active in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Separate GIS intelligence sources, outside the region, noted that there was still debate as to how the CK123 reached London. Earlier in 2005 there were one or more shipment(s) by truck directly from Bosnia-Herzegovina to several destinations in Western Europe. These shipments were stopped when a truck was

captured on the French-Belgian border. At that point, given the imperatives of the "Great Ramadan Offensive"¹ planned for the Muslim month of *Ramadan* in 2005, back-up High-Explosives (HE) shipments were rushed via north Africa into France and Spain. It is not clear from which shipment the London explosives were drawn. Fuses were smuggled directly to London and Madrid from Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Madrid bombings reportedly used a mixture of CK123 and C4 explosive, the July 7, 2005, London bombings used the CK123 and some other additives, according to GIS sources. Some of the CK123 was from Albanian Government stocks, originally provided by the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Albanian sources told GIS that they believed that the CK123 had originally been for the warheads of torpedoes supplied during the Cold War by the PRC for Albania's Chinese-supplied submarines (no longer in service). Significantly, intelligence operatives, or possibly former intelligence operatives, of the PRC — now functioning in a very significant "Chinese mafia" now operating in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) — in the past two years told Kosovo Albanians about the stockpiles of CK123 which remained in Albania.

At that point, according to the sources, some of the material was moved from one of many Albanian military caches into Kosovo by people described by the Albanians as "Chinese mafia", clearly acting with knowledge of the explosives and their whereabouts from the Cold War period of close Albanian-PRC ties. [What is significant is that PRC intelligence and diplomatic officials in FYROM have, during the past three to four months, been paying substantial amounts — \$3,000 to \$4,000 — of money to journalists and others deemed as credible sources for written reports on Kosovo.]

Meanwhile, "Houlzi" is described by GIS sources who have met with him as "the number two man" in the KLA, reporting directly to Hashim Thaci. "Houlzi" is reportedly in charge of a many of the KLA's secret operations, including narco-trafficking and narcotics production, and controls Islamist cells. He is, however, not related to the "political wings" of the KLA. He is described by those who know him as a "fanatical Islamist", who was trained in Afghanistan, and there was some suggestion that he may have taken his present name after his experience in Afghanistan.

He has operated in the town of Visoko [Lat. 43°59'N, Long. 18°10'E], near Sarajevo, in Bosnia, but moves frequently throughout Kosovo. Associates say that he has taken "lots of money from Arabs", and is regarded as a key link between the *al-Qaida* networks and the KLA. As well, "Houlzi" had a reportedly strong working relationship with an Albanian in the US, Florin Krazniki (Krasniqi), who is now known to have been engaged in the purchase of weapons in the US and their shipment to the KLA. Since publicity emerged during 2004 on Krazniki's activities, "Houlzi" has reportedly ceased communications with him. But before the publicity,

Krazniki was known to have shipped to the KLA 12.7mm sniper rifles, M82A1 Barrett .50 caliber sniper rifles: in all, some 280 to 300 weapons in 1999 alone.

The GIS sources said that “Houlzi” had sold some 25 of the Barretts to Islamists around Europe. Significantly, the sources reported, since the extensive worldwide crackdown on the use of banking systems to move terrorist funds, the exchange of goods and services between Islamist groups is undertaken more on a barter basis, often involving the exchange of narcotics (usually heroin) for weapons, but sometimes including food or other commodities. The sources said that “Houlzi” also sold at least one SA-7 *Grail/Strela* manpad SAM to an Islamist in Europe.

The sources said that the curbing of the use of banks for terrorist purposes had meant that the *al-Qaida*-linked services were now turning more directly to the use of heroin and opium as currency, whereas in the past the narco-trafficking operations had been conducted as parallel, but separate, operations to achieve cash funding.

The sources also said that the KLA often also sets up phony weapon trades, and then tips off either British or US intelligence officials so that it appears as though there is cooperation between the Kosovo Albanian leadership and the Western intelligence services.

Summary

Gregory R. Copley

MEETING THE BURDEN OF STATEHOOD: IS KOSOVO READY?

There is ample evidence that Kosovo has no legitimacy in the normal sense of a sovereign state, and that, if it was to be recognized as such, it would further erode the credibility of the international system.

Kosovo does not meet any historical standards for sovereignty. For Kosovo to be recognized as a legitimate sovereign state, the international community must violate the sovereignty of another recognized state, the Republic of Serbia.

One should also take to consideration that Kosovo is already a territory run as a criminal enterprise, with links into *jihadist* movements.

Already Kosovo is becoming like Afghanistan under the *Taliban*. And like the *Taliban* destruction of the ancient Buddhas of Bamiyan, the Albanian Islamist process of destruction of the Christian Churches will be complete if Kosovo is granted independence. The chaos of changing borders— such as we are seeing today in the Balkans, and elsewhere — is fertile ground for criminality.

Europe is a major target for the global *jihadist* movements, and not only those under the *al-Qaida* label, but also those financed and logistically made viable by the Iranian Government.

Western fears have been strengthened by intelligence derived by European countries on the existence of a strong Islamist network in Kosovo and Bosnia.

The "*al-Qaida*" phenomenon owes its success to the financial links with what we are calling the Albanian mafia, just as the Albanian criminals owe their success to the logistics and networks of *al-Qaida*.

As far as Islamists are concerned, their goal is consolidation of their control over parts of the Balkans, specifically the so-called "Green transversal" belt which links the Adriatic Coast through Albania, FYR of Macedonia, the Serbian Kosovo and Metohija region, the southern Serbia/northern Montenegro Rashka (Sanjak) region, through the Gorazde Corridor into Bosnia, not only as a terrorist corridor but also to facilitate a clear highway for narco-trafficking and weapons shipments.

Significantly, the Serbian Government within the union of Serbia & Montenegro, had, until the recent Serbian elections, attempted to ignore the growing incitement to a new outbreak of violence and unrest on the part of the Muslim community of southern Serbia (Rashka) and Kosovo because it did not wish to be seen to be drawing attention to the growing Muslim agitation.

Finally, Kosovo Liberation Army still, and is able to access much of its narcotic product, because of its close interrelationship with *jihadist* movements worldwide and foreign state sponsors.

There is no ground for optimism in the future. The wars to break up Yugoslavia are still unfinalized. And in many of the new wars we will see savagery abound as groups "re-discover" old identities, and seek to capitalize on the permissive climate of change and chaos.

However, it not just Balkans that is endangered. Deeply placed sources within the Islamist community in Kosovo have identified the source and type of the explosives used in the *jihadist* terrorist bombings in London on July 7, 2005, and the Madrid commuter railway bombings of March 11, 2004.

Key words: Kosovo, Serbia, Yugoslavia, Al Qaida, Green Transversal, Jihadist movements, narco-trafficking