

Geopolitical Crossroads: Pentagon and NATO Complete Their Conquest of The Balkans

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Bosnia and Montenegro being incorporated as full NATO members and Macedonia following suit would expand the world's only military bloc to 31 nations, almost twice that of ten years ago when it first began its drive into Eastern Europe. And with Serbia and Kosovo, which even before becoming a member is the world's first NATO political entity, included the Alliance's numbers will have more than doubled since 1999, a decade after the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. All seventeen new acquisitions would be in Eastern Europe, and the majority of NATO member states would be former Warsaw Pact members or Yugoslav republics and a province.

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen visited the capital of Montenegro on November 26 and that of Bosnia the following day.

A Balkans news source wrote of the visits that Rasmussen would “discuss the possibility of approving Montenegro’s action plan for NATO membership” and “discuss strengthening NATO and BiH [Bosnia and Herzegovina] cooperation.” [1]

Ahead of the Balkans tour Rasmussen was in Germany to meet with Chancellor Angela Merkel and recruit more troops for the war in Afghanistan.

The NATO chief has been even busier than usual of late, simultaneously recruiting troops from nations throughout Europe for Afghanistan on Washington’s behalf, working on the bloc’s new Strategic Concept, drumming up support for a continent-wide, U.S.-led interceptor missile system and preparing for a NATO foreign ministers meeting on December 3-4.

The Balkans fit into all the above aspects of what has in recent years routinely been referred to as 21st Century, global and expeditionary NATO, one feverishly seeking new “third millennium challenges” and invoking “a myriad deadly threats” [2] as pretexts for increasing its already widening role in five continents and the Middle East.

Several days before Rasmussen arrived in the world’s newest (recognized) nation, Montenegro, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Alexander Vershbow was in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo to preside over the fifth meeting of defense chiefs of the US-Adriatic Charter, set up by Washington in 2003 to fast-track Balkans nations into NATO.

The first three members enlisted by the U.S. were Albania, Croatia and Macedonia. The first two were formally inducted into full NATO membership at the bloc’s sixtieth anniversary summit this April and Macedonia also would have been dragged into the Alliance except for

the lingering dispute with Greece over its name. Bosnia and Montenegro were added to the Charter last year and Serbia – and breakaway Kosovo – are to be next. With Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia becoming full member states at the Istanbul summit in 2004 and Greece and Turkey members for decades, all of Southeast Europe has been transformed into NATO territory, from the Adriatic to the Black and from the Aegean to the Ionian Seas.

The November 17 meeting in Bosnia was attended by, in addition to the Pentagon's Vershbow (who was U.S. ambassador to NATO during the 1999 war against Yugoslavia), the deputy defense minister of Albania and the defense chiefs of Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro. Also present were the defense ministers of Serbia and Slovenia, Dragan Sutanovac and Ljubica Jelusic, the last two nations in a category labeled "guest and observer countries."

"Vershbow reiterated US support for the early approval of BiH and Montenegro's applications for the Membership Action Plan (MAP). He also said full NATO membership for Macedonia will be backed, as soon as the issue of its name is resolved." Additionally, the defense chiefs "agreed to sign a joint statement on enhancing co-operation through regional centres in the Western Balkans." [3]

An Associated Press dispatch at the time of the Adriatic Charter meeting mentioned of the December 3-4 assembly in Brussels (which will also be a forum for enlisting thousands of more NATO troops for the Afghan war) that "An upcoming meeting of NATO foreign ministers will provide a boost for Bosnia and Montenegro to become the 29th and 30th members of the trans-Atlantic alliance." [4]

Bosnia and Montenegro being incorporated as full NATO members and Macedonia following suit would expand the world's only military bloc to 31 nations, almost twice that of ten years ago when it first began its drive into Eastern Europe. And with Serbia and Kosovo, which even before becoming a member is the world's first NATO political entity, included the Alliance's numbers will have more than doubled since 1999, a decade after the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. All seventeen new acquisitions would be in Eastern Europe, and the majority of NATO member states would be former Warsaw Pact members or Yugoslav republics and a province.

The Pentagon has already secured seven new military bases in Bulgaria and Romania [5] which border the Black Sea in the Northern Balkans, including the Graf Ignatievo and Bezmer airbases in the first country and the Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base in the second. The airfields have been used for "downrange" military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Romanian installation now hosts the Pentagon's Joint Task Force – East.

The U.S.'s colossal Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo is now ten years old and the use and upgrading of Croatian and Montenegrin Adriatic harbors for U.S. Navy deployments is an imminent possibility.

The further the fragmentation of former Yugoslavia proceeds, the more thoroughly the region will be transformed into a string of so-called forward operating bases and "lily pads" (Donald Rumsfeld's term) for military action to the east and south.

The 2006 Western-supported dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, itself a transitional mechanism devised by Javier Solana, NATO Secretary General during the 1999 war and since then the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and

Security Policy, completed the breakup of the former Yugoslavia into its six federal republics. The unilateral declaration of independence from Serbia by Kosovo in 2008, not only backed but engineered by NATO and its civilian complements, the government of the United States and the European Union, began the second phase of the dismemberment of the nation: The breaking apart of former republics into mini-states. [6]

Behind Kosovo lie Vojvodina, the Presevo Valley and Sandzak in Serbia, where ethnic separatism, cross-border armed attacks and outright terrorism have raised their heads, respectively.

Macedonia faces the same alarming prospect. Attacks by adjuncts of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army – the National Liberation Army (NLA) of Ali Ahmeti – from inside Kosovo in 2001 placed the new nation on the precipice of all-out war and violent fragmentation.

Last week Menduh Thaci, head of the Democratic Party of Albanians, called on his sponsors in the West to reduce Macedonia to an international protectorate. Speaking of a current political crisis largely of his making, Thaci said “I am convinced that the only way out is an urgent international protection, which will be a preventive measure for possible events.” The next step is for the name of the nation to be changed or adjusted and for whatever it will then be called to be brought into NATO. Both the Greek government and pan-Albanian forces in Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, South Serbia and Montenegro will be satisfied with the result and NATO will acquire its 29th (or 31st) member state. [7]

Montenegro, barely three years old, will soon deploy the first contingent of its armed forces to serve under NATO in Afghanistan. When it arrives it will join troops from Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia. The last seven nations also provided soldiers for the military occupation of Iraq after 2003. Montenegro didn't exist as an independent state at that time, so its initiation as a NATO candidate country will be in Afghanistan.

With Serbia as an observer nation of the Adriatic Charter and with it having joined NATO's Partnership for Peace transitional program in 2006, Washington and Brussels will also soon call on it to prove its right to Alliance candidacy by dispatching troops to the Afghan war front. As the U.S. and NATO are on the verge of a qualitative escalation of the war in South Asia, the Serbian foreign and defense ministries have announced the opening of a mission at NATO headquarters in Brussels. “[T]he point of the mission will be to improve cooperation and everyday communication with NATO, participate in the work of 100 expert committees, and improve...cooperation with '50 member-states' of the 'political' alliance.” [8] Fifty states are almost exactly the number that have provided NATO troops for the war in Afghanistan. Serbia could be the 51st.

Even for the representative of a battered, splintered, demoralized nation, recent statements by current Serbian Defense Minister Dragan Sutanovac are offensive in their shameless fawning and obsequiousness.

He will soon be the first Serbian defense chief to visit the Pentagon in a quarter of a century, a fact he is proud of, and recently said that his trip will be “without a doubt, politically and militarily very important,” as much of the money – \$500 million – Washington has bribed Belgrade authorities with since the overthrow of President Slobodan Milosevic in 2000 “[was] used by the Serbian military.”

Sutanovac, who graduated from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, jointly run by the U.S. Department of Defense and the German Defense Ministry, and who is described as “speaking perfect English,” added these revealing details:

“The Serbian MoD [Ministry of Defense] has stable relations with the U.S. military and we can say that cooperation in defense is the backbone of relations between the United States and Serbia at the moment.”

“Considering the fact that the U.S. defense budget is as large as the defense budget of the rest of the world, it is crystal clear what the most important thing is to U.S. foreign policy and international relations.” [9]

The former Kosovo Liberation Army, then Kosovo Protection Corps (and now Kosovo Security Force) offered troops to the U.S. for the war in Iraq shortly after the invasion of 2003 and the NATO-equipped and trained Kosovo Security Force, a nascent national army in all but name, will offer troops to NATO for the Afghan war as it drags on indefinitely. [10]

During recent municipal elections in Kosovo, the first since its nominal independence, one not recognized by 140 of 192 nations and by few outside the NATO world (the exceptions including Afghanistan, Liechtenstein, Monaco, the Marshall Islands, San Marino, Belize, Malta, Samoa, the Maldives, the Comoros, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru and Palau), supporters of former KLA chieftains Hashim Thaci – the Western-recognized prime minister – and war criminal Ramush Haradinaj were at daggers drawn and “people used rocks to attack a line of cars that transported Hashim Thaci....Thaci’s party accused Haradinaj of directly inciting and organizing [the] attack....” [11]

A Russian report on the Western-endorsed and -celebrated elections placed the West’s Kosovo strategy in a broader context:

“EU officials are the ones forcing the Serbian government to accept several very unpleasant decisions – recognition of the municipal elections in Kosovo, dissociation from Russia and the pullout of joint energy projects with Russia.

“As for democratic values in the EU policy with regard to Serbia, they are hard to believe in, given the EU officials’ open sympathies with the Albanian militants of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Incidentally, the supporters of two KLA leaders, former ‘prime minister’ Ramush Haradinaj and his successor Hashim Thaci, caused a violent clash in one of the Albanian enclaves.

“It is worth reminding here that Haradinaj was allowed to leave the Hague occasionally ‘to rule’ Kosovo during his trial, while Thaci was eventually cleared by the Hague Tribunal of all charges of genocide against Serbs.” [12]

Nevertheless the United States and its NATO allies, the self-proclaimed “international community” and champions of democracy, human rights and so forth wherever and whenever it suits their political purposes, continue to embrace the Kosovo entity as a brother-in-arms in the new global order.

Former U.S. president Bill Clinton was in the Kosovo capital of Pristina on November 1 for the unveiling of a particularly vulgar and meretricious gold-sprayed statue of himself [13], the ceremony presided over by the former head of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Hashim “The Snake” Thaci, the creation of whose pseudo-nation is a cause of great pride in Western

capitals.

The Associated Press reported on the event in Europe's drug-smuggling criminal black hole:

"The statue portrays Clinton with his left arm raised and holding a portfolio bearing his name and the date when NATO started bombing Yugoslavia, on March 24, 1999.

"Many waved American, Albanian and Kosovo flags and chanted 'USA!' as the former president climbed on top of a podium with his poster in the background reading 'Kosovo honors a hero.'" [14]

That Albanian flags were flaunted reveals what NATO mercilessly bombed the length and breadth of Yugoslavia for 78 days to achieve.

Three weeks afterward the mayor of a town in Albania – the distinction between that nation and Kosovo is now a strictly academic one – announced plans to follow suit and dedicate a statue to George W. Bush. Bush and Clinton have jointly sired the Kosovo/Greater Kosovo aberration. "The small Albanian town of Fushe-Kruje plans to erect a statue of former U.S. President George W. Bush to commemorate his June 2007 visit, when he was feted as a hero in an outpouring of love for America."

The town's mayor, Ismet Mavriqi, was quoted as saying, "If I had the final say, I would very much like a three-meter statue, probably in bronze, that captures his trademark way of walking with energy." [15]

The legacy that Washington and Brussels have left the people of Kosovo – those remaining that is, as hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Roma and others have fled for their lives since June of 1999 – was detailed in a recent Reuters report.

It said that although "Over the past decade it has received 3 billion euros in aid, according to the World Bank, and is expecting another billion by 2011," nevertheless "unemployment is 40 percent and average per capita income is 1,760 euros. That compares with average joblessness of just under 10 percent in the European Union and an average salary of about 24,000 euros (\$35,930)." [16]

Ten years of NATO-KLA collaboration have produced this human catastrophe.

This is the stability and prosperity that the West has brought to the Balkans.

That afflicted part of Europe has been the testing ground for NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe and since into Asia, Africa and the Middle East, starting with Bosnia in 1995 when NATO dropped its first bombs and deployed its first troops outside the territory of its member states.

As early as January of 1996 the now deceased American scholar Sean Gervasi warned that "There are deeper reasons for the dispatch of NATO forces to the Balkans, and especially for the extension of NATO to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in the relatively near future. These have to do with an emerging strategy for securing the resources of the Caspian Sea region and for 'stabilizing' the countries of Eastern Europe – ultimately for 'stabilizing' Russia and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States." [17]

NATO now has solidified military partnerships, conducts regular war games and has

established permanent bases in several countries on and near the Caspian Sea – Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, not to mention Afghanistan.

It has absorbed three former Soviet republics – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – and continues to insist that former Commonwealth of Independent States member Georgia and current one Ukraine will become full members of the Alliance.

Thirteen years ago Gervasi also warned that “The United States is now seeking to consolidate a new European-Middle Eastern bloc of nations....This grouping includes Turkey, which is of pivotal importance in the emerging new bloc. Turkey is not just a part of the southern Balkans and an Aegean power. It also borders on Iraq, Iran and Syria. It thus connects southern Europe to the Middle East, where the US considers that it has vital interests....With the war against Iraq [1991], the US established itself in the Middle East more securely than ever. The almost simultaneous disintegration of the Soviet Union opened the possibility of Western exploitation of the oil resources of the Caspian Sea region.” [18]

Events in the interim have proceeded exactly as Gervasi indicated they would and for the motives he attributed to them.

Having undermined the United Nations, violated international law, humiliated Russia and moved NATO forces into the Balkans, the West was embarked in earnest on its drive for global domination in the post-Cold War world. As NATO’s first war, the Operation Allied Force bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999, was dragging on and assuming ever more ominous dimensions, even before the destruction of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by NATO bombs, then Russian President Boris Yeltsin appeared on his nation’s television and said: “I told Nato, the Americans, the Germans, don’t push us towards military action.

“Otherwise there will be a European war for sure – and possibly world war.” [19]

That Yeltsin was the dependable friend of Washington that he was made the statement even more foreboding. Less than a month afterward the Chinese embassy was in ruins as the war raged on.

Europe and the world avoided a broader war ten years ago. But NATO, using the Balkans as its global springboard, may yet succeed in triggering a conflict that will not be contained and will not remain within the realm of conventional warfare.

Notes

- 1) Macedonian Radio and Television, November 26, 2009
- 2) Thousand Deadly Threats: Third Millennium NATO, Western Businesses Collude On New Global Doctrine
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<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/02/thousand-deadly-threats-third-millennium-nato-western-businesses-collude-on-new-global-doctrine>
- 3) Southeast European Times, November 20, 2009
- 4) Associated Press, November 18, 2009
- 5) Bulgaria, Romania: U.S., NATO Bases For War In The East
Stop NATO, October 24, 2009
<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/25/bulgaria-romania-u-s-nato-bases-for-war-in-the>

[-east](#)

6) Adriatic Charter And The Balkans: Smaller Nations, Larger NATO

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<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/08/28/adriatic-charter-and-the-balkans-smaller-nations-larger-nato>

7) Threat Of New Conflict In Europe: Western-Sponsored Greater Albania

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<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/08/new-threat-of-conflict-in-europe-western-sponsored-greater-albania>

8) Vecernje Novosti, November 4, 2009

9) Politika, November 27, 2009

10) Balkans: Staging Ground For NATO's Post-Cold War Order

Stop NATO, February 9, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/08/26/balkans-staging-ground-for-natos-post-cold-war-order>

11) Tanjug News Agency, November 12, 2009

12) Russian Information Agency Novosti, November 17, 2009

13) Kosovo: Marking Ten Years Of Worldwide Wars

Stop NATO, October 31, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/31/kosovo-marking-ten-years-of-worldwide-wars>

14) Associated Press, November 1, 2009

15) Reuters, November 21, 2009

16) Reuters, November 20, 2009

17) Sean Gervasi, Why Is NATO In Yugoslavia?

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/GER108A.html>

18) Ibid

19) BBC News, April 9, 1999

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