The main cause of non-resolution of the Bosnian crisis was the differing perceptions and policies of the parties in dispute and the US and other major European powers who thought they had their stakes in the resolution of the disputes. The nature of the dispute was such that mediation without the active support of these powers was not possible. The American and Russian perception never matched with the ground realities and both sides blamed each other of taking sides.

The attitude of Western European countries such as Greece, Italy and Germany had an obvious tilt towards one group or the other which made the impartial mediation by either U.N. or CSCE difficult.

The parties in dispute obviously had their limitations. Their leaderships were more rhetorical and less statesman like in their behavioural pattern. Instead of resolving the conflict they were adding fuel to the fire and here all the three warring groups - the Serbs, Muslims and Croatians - were to blame.

The mediation process presented a challenge to both the International community and the ethnic communities of erst-
while Yugoslavia. The Slovenian declaration of independence caught the international community unawares. It did not expect the event to unfold in such a manner. Both the Western powers and Russia concurred with each other on the principle that Yugoslavia should remain intact or else it would trigger a chain reaction of the ethnic separatism on a much wider scale as it had happened in the erstwhile U.S.S.R. Moreover, it had not been expected that the disintegration of Yugoslavia would generate civil war, bloodshed and social dislocation on such a scale with not too many parallels in history.

The Yugoslav conflict(s) have been a complex problem for the United States. Washington policy-making - messy at the best of times - has emerged from a constantly shifting and complicated milieu of interests and imperatives. Domestic politics, changing perception and the dynamics of events on the ground have at times driven the decisions. Yet policy at bottom has been founded on an identifiable understanding and definition of American national interests. A sound analysis of America’s Yugoslav policy must, therefore, comprehend and understand the debate about its interests and the appropriate role of its military forces in furthering those interests.
Interests remain central to explaining security policies. Unfortunately, the Yugoslav dissolution came at a time of transition in which America had begun to reassess its post-Cold War roles and missions. Neither a serious debate nor a sound government assessment of developing European security had emerged till June 1991.

The American debate on Yugoslavia since the wars began, both within and without government, had emphasised the two themes: discrete U.S. interests and systemic interests (that is norms of state behaviour shared generally by the international community). It was always easier to justify military intervention when clear, demonstrable and desirable national interests were said to have been threatened. Since 1991 several American interests had suffered. The least important was economic. The American investments and financial exposure in Yugoslavia, though sizeable, could not be safeguarded. The weightier interests reflected political strategic/considerations. During the Cold War a Balkan war would have been gravely dangerous, threatening to entangle the U.S. and the Soviet Union. But even before the Soviet collapse Washington understood that a more relaxed approach was warranted. Fighting in the Balkans no longer automatically constituted a threat requiring the use of military force. Nevertheless, America retained a strong national interest in peace and security in the region.
Political interests loomed large and among the most important had been the objective of facilitating continued security with old allies in NATO and new friends to the east. America has sought wisely to protect its European interests through NATO, to secure its continued role in ensuring European security and protect its own credibility.

The American Interests in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Bosnia's particular ethnic mix and population distribution left the weak multi-ethnic state between the hammer of the Serbs and the anvil of the Croats. It was the relentless display of ethnic cleansing, devastation and victimisation of innocents which stimulated domestic pressure for America to go beyond economic sanctions. Many argued in frustration that Europe demonstrably lacked the leadership and power to handle the crisis effectively; America should therefore take the lead by default. Pictures in August 1992 of emaciated Bosnian prisoners in Bosnia's Serb concentration camps only demonstrated the pathetic inadequacy of the E.C. and the U.N. Yet, President Bush was unmoved, in spite of the increasing threat of conflagration which the intensified fighting represented.

The policy of the Bush administration reflected a set of conclusions about the American and international interests generally in Federal Yugoslavia that resulted from the
military analysis pointing to the inappropriateness of force as a solution. Bush's inclination was clearly against intervention irrespective of military advice. Nevertheless, his own, and the Pentagon's military thinking reinforced his caution about the American participation in any sort of military intervention in Yugoslavia. Stated simply, the nature of civil war, Yugoslav geography, topography, weather and other military factors left the Pentagon convinced that nothing short of a massive intervention on the ground and in the air would produce meaningful results. Any such intervention should entail serious political and military risks and costs which would, the administration believed, be out of all proportion to America's interest in the region.¹

Given this military logic, the main stand of the American Policy reflected the government's intention to 'accept any resolution arrived at peacefully, democratically and by negotiation'.²

Coercive measures such as the arms embargo and economic sanctions were adjuncts to a negotiating, not preliminaries

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to a military intervention strategy. President Bush's ideas for a Bosnian settlement mirrored earlier preferences for an overall Yugoslav deal: support for a negotiated agreement backed by all the constituted groups which would preserve a unified Bosnian government with existing Bosnian borders.

Public pressure for military action only became serious when fighting worsened markedly in Bosnia, bringing the bombardment of Sarajevo with its destruction and civilian deaths vividly to public attention. The 1992 election between President George Bush and democrat candidate Bill Clinton is a case in point, wherein the latter ridiculed George Bush’s foreign policy for its ambivalent attitude towards Bosnia-Herzegovina. On Bosnia President Bush had said that:

...the application of limited amounts of force by the United States and its traditional friend and allies would have had the desired effect given the nature and the complexity of the situation. 3

In reply the Presidential candidate Clinton said:

A year ago last June, Mr. Bush sent his Secretary of State to Belgrade, where in the name of stability, he urged the members of the dying Yugoslav federation to resist dissolution. This would have required the peoples of Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia, to knuckle under to Europe’s last communist

strongman. When instead these new republics asserted their independence, the emboldened Milosevic regime launched the bloodiest war in Europe in over 40 years. 4

Clinton clearly implied that as President he would be more forceful in supporting democracy-seeking states fighting for independence from a communist Yugoslav federation. He specifically called for air power to be used to protect humanitarian aid convoys.

As the U.N. increased its involvement in Bosnia during Summer 1992, deploying troops to Sarajevo and organising humanitarian aid, Washington still offered only political and humanitarian aid. Few opposed generous humanitarian assistance, but the administration refused to risk American personnel as part of U.N.'s deployment in Croatia or Bosnia. Deployment of British, French and other nationals as the U.N. contingents changed the array of possible policy options. In October 1992 the American and other NATO forces began monitoring flights in the airspace of Bosnia-Herzegovina in response to the U.N. Security Council Resolution 781 which requested member states to monitor the ban on military flights.

4. Democratic Presidential candidate Governor Bill Clinton's Address 'on Democracy in America' at an event sponsored by the University of Wisconsin, 1 October 1992, in Stephen Engelberg and Michael R. Gordon, 'Use of force in Bosnia: When a President faces a Candidate's Rhetoric', International Herald Tribune, 1 April 1993.
Leadership Change in America Clinton as the New President

The new President had to tackle a new problem. The Bosnian Serbs had captured 70% of Bosnian territory; the UNPROFOR forces were vulnerable to retaliatory attacks, the civilian population required humanitarian aid simply to survive and the military geography was a nightmare with isolated Muslim enclaves surrounded by Serbian troops and not protectable with limited applications of force. Worse, initially the warring sides indicated willingness to accept Vance-Owen Plan whose conception of Cantonisation (within a weak unified government) the administration had claimed rewarded Serbian aggression. Clinton was as opposed to the ethnically based mini-states as Bush had been. 5

President Clinton’s purportedly more muscular swing at the war constituted six steps: (1) America to engage actively and directly in peace negotiations through a special envoy; (2) communication with all parties that war will only end through negotiations, (3) tighten sanctions and increase pressure on Serbia, including the U.S. commitment to respond

5. Although there were a few lonely dissenters in the public debate John Mearsheimer’s views in April 1993 looked ruthlessly realistic then, they have largely become fact now. John J. Mearsheimer, ‘Balkan Peace: Shrink Bosnia to Rescue it, and threaten force’, International Herald Tribune, 1 April 1993.
to Serbian aggression in Kosovo or Macedonia; (4) steps to alleviate humanitarian suffering; (5) commitment to share the burden of enforcing a peace agreement. "If there is a viable agreement containing enforcement provisions, the U.S. would be prepared to join with the U.N., NATO and others in implementing and enforcing it, including possible U.S. military participation and (6) closer consultation with Russia. 6

Despite the hype, this initiative represented only marginally more American engagement. Washington would, however, invest more political prestige and capital. Clinton's policy boiled down to two basic points: no unilateral actions, and no U.S. ground troops 'except to carry out a peace agreement that had been entered into a good faith between the parties.' 7 It quickly became clear that only serious application of military force would provide effective influence; in this Clinton had no more interest than Bush. So the administration began soon to describe Bosnia as a quagmire once more and speak less about moral impera-


7. See Warren Christopher, 'Need for American Leadership said greater than ever', European Wireless News Alert, 1 June 1993; Also 'Clinton shies from solo intervention in Bosnia', International Herald Tribune, 24-25 April 1993.
Torn between the moral urge to intervene and a rational temptation to keep out, the new American policy moved only slightly towards the former: nothing like the distance that a thoroughgoing interventionist policy would have required. The American policy remained extremely important on the ground, however as Washington's noisy debate constantly influenced the warring parties, particularly the Bosnian government, which resisted serious negotiations in the naive belief that Washington would employ significant military force on its behalf against the Serbs.

Within the context of limited military commitment, the U.S. did harness together a number of incremental initiatives in the first three months of Clinton's Presidency to push the Serbs in Serbia and Bosnia to reach an acceptable settlement. President Clinton evoked leadership but the new rhetoric exceeded the policy reality which was bound by the same constraints perceived by President Bush.

President Clinton evoked 'leadership', but the new rhetoric exceeded the policy reality which was bound by the

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8. Thomas L. Friedman, 'Clinton's Volte-face: Bosnia as Quagmire', International Herald Tribune, 8 April 1993. The administration carefully avoided calling Serbian policy in Bosnia genocide, in the knowledge that it would trigger legal and model obligations which they were to avoid.
same constraints perceived by President Bush. In spite of a desire to demonstrate leadership Clinton would only act multilaterally.\(^9\)

Without the administration’s desire, or public pressure, to intervene seriously in the conflict by deploying ground forces much of the debate gravitated towards arguments about what could be achieved by low risks, cut-piece method of using air forces alone. This reflected an implicit consensus that air power would be proportionate in cost and risk to America’s interests; and was to anyway to America’s comparative military advantage. Stimulated by the Gulf War experience, many argued that a judicious use of smart bombs could provide the incentive that the Serbs needed to stop their attacks on innocent villages and agree what Washington would consider a just peace.\(^{10}\) Although, the administration received considerable domestic political criticism for its Bosnia policy in 1993, few supported

9. Clinton believed that a primary American mistake in Vietnam was to conduct the war unilaterally rather than multilaterally. The lack of allied willingness should have told Washington something – a lesson he kept in mind when considering Yugoslavia. See Clinton’s remarks in a radio interview on 12 March 1993.

anything more than the use of air power. Some however opposed air strikes as tokenism or pure gesture.

**CHANGED AMERICAN PERCEPTION**

After the failure in April 1993 and May 1993 to reach an agreed peace in Bosnia, the administration began to use different language, emphasising the broad goal of containment, the inherent complexities of civil wars, the conflicts 'European nature and President's belief that the public would appreciate his clear disciplined restraint' in the use of American military power. Long acknowledged constraints on American interests and commitments were reiterated by President Clinton: "while we have clear reasons to engage and persist, they do not obliterate other American interests, involving Europe and Russia and they do not justify the extreme costs of taking unilateral responsibility for imposing a solution."  

This discord again allowed military and political developments in Bosnia to change the policy content. The Bosnian Serb attacks on Sarajevo subsequently increased


steadily as did the U.N. pressure on Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia which the U.N. eventually declared safe areas. Once again, in late summer 1993, Washington stepped up its vigilance in response to public outrage at the massacre of innocent civilians in Sarajevo and other safe areas, and gave another go at assembling international support for the limited use of air power.

By Autumn 1993 the Vance-Owen plan was effectively dead. The warring parties had determined that Western threats were idle and that they would carry on with their war. Henceforth, any American threats or military intervention would have to be even greater to achieve any effect. The facts on the ground made the administration's goal of a unified Bosnian state more and more unrealistic. The Serbs became more uncompromising, and the Bosnians less confident of international rescue. Without firm American determination to defend specified interests, employing military power in support of a well articulated strategy, the European allies defended their own particular interests, ensuring NATO's effective impotence in the face of its first real post Cold War test.

Once the Somali fiasco of September 1993 made clear that American ground troop deployments were virtually impossible in Bosnia, Washington's influence atrophied, virtually
ensuring that no serious U.N. peacekeeping force could be fielded to support an overall Bosnian settlement.\textsuperscript{13} As a result, developments on the ground led inexorably to a three-way partition of Bosnia reflecting the realities of military power, the consequences of conquest, and the results of ethnic cleansing. Rather than face difficult choices, the new U.S. envoy to the peace talks, Charles Redman, began participating directly in support of the Bosnian government. The objective, he said in 1994, was to produce the kind of results the Bosnians have been looking for. Washington sought 'a good negotiated solution and one surely that take accounts for the Bosnians.'\textsuperscript{14}

Unable to arm the Bosnians and unwilling to intervene military on their behalf, Washington finally began to take more realistic negotiating steps which would facilitate a settlement, however far removed from the Clinton administration's original goals. This involved America's brokering of a renewed alliance between the Bosnian government and their erstwhile Croatian allies thus isolating the Serbs.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Joseph Fitchett, 'U.S. and Europe Signal Bosnian Muslims to seek Peace now', \textit{International Herald Tribune}, 22 July 1993.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Daniel Williams and Thomas W. Lippman, 'Muslim: Croat Pact Aims to Isolate Serbs', \textit{International Herald Tribune}, 3 March 1994.
\end{itemize}
Since mid 1994 the fundamental bases of American policy have not changed. All that has varied is the widening gap between what Washington sometimes said and what it was willing to do. The new Defense Secretary William Perry, spoke out more honestly and realistically than many of his colleagues:

What are our national interests in Bosnia today? First of all, and I want to emphasise this point strongly. We have a compelling national security interest in preventing that war and its consequence from spreading beyond Bosnia. Indeed beyond the Balkans. At the same time, we have humanitarian interest in trying to limit violence and relieve the suffering while we are working for a peace settlement. These are real interests, and we take them quite seriously, but they are limited interests and our actions need to be proportional to our interests. 16

Frustration and belated realisation that nothing useful could be achieved while the major powers pursued moderately different politics led Washington to establish the 'Contact Group' of high level diplomats from the U.S., Germany, Britain, France and Russia. They in turn shifted goals to a four-months ceasefire in the hope that a settlement would follow a ceasefire rather than vice-versa. By May 1994 America and the Contact Group had moved far enough to coun-

tenance a Bosnia settlement giving the Serbs 49% and Bosnian Croat federation 51% of the Bosnian territory.\textsuperscript{17}

Though this would still require considerable Serbs withdrawals, it reflected the crude realities of power on the ground and a significant backtracking from all earlier U.S. goals. The Congressional pressure to allow arms to the Bosnian government further indicated that political pressure for tougher measures was directed towards helping the Bosnians to help themselves rather than intervening directly with U.S. forces.\textsuperscript{18} Decreasing American commitment to Bosnia was mirrored by the British and French desires to withdraw their own forces. Even the U.N. Secretary General had come to believe that the UNPROFOR should be withdrawn.\textsuperscript{19} These weak threats to pull out of the UNPROFOR left the arms embargo or use of limited air strikes to protect the U.N. forces in safe areas - and the positive incentive of limited lifting of sanctions against Serbia constituted the entire diplomatic leverage of America and the allies.


CONTACT GROUP’S ROLE IN MEDIATION

The Contact Group of countries established in April unveiled a new package of peace proposals on 6 July 1993, embodied in a map. Agreement between the Contact Group’s five members (U.S.A., U.K., Russia, France and Germany) had been achieved or 24 June after months of argument. The Contact Group’s map envisaged:

i) that the (Muslim-Croat) Federation should be awarded 51% of Bosnia Herzegovina’s territory;

ii) that Bosnian Serb forces would cede to the federation about one-third of the territory which they currently occupied including strategically crucial land on the Bosnian/Croatian border;

iii) that many towns "ethnically cleansed" of their Muslim population by the Serbs would remain under Serb control, including Banja Luka and Prizedor;

iv) that the U.N. and European Union (E.U.) would place under their protection (and administration) key adjacent areas, which together included Sarajevo and disputed enclaves such as Srebrenica and Gorazde in Eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina and also the towns of Doboj and Breko in the north the north.20

20. See Keesing Record of World Events, Vol.41, No.7, p.40110.
The Contact Group warned the Bosnian government that, if it failed to approve the map unconditionally there would be a relaxation of the international economic sanctions in force against the Bosnian Serbs main ally, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and its constituent Republic of Serbia. Likewise the Bosnian Serbs were warned that if they rejected the map, there would be further sanctions against the FRY, and the cancellation of arms embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

But fears about rejection were true and the Bosnian Serb leadership rejected the Contact Group’s proposal which was at the same time accepted by the Bosnian Muslims. The plan was also rejected by Bosnian Serbs in a referendum by an overwhelming majority.

Foreign ministers of the five countries forming the Contact Group (U.S.A., Germany, U.K., France and Russia) agreed a text on 2 December which hinted at future confederation between the Bosnian Serbs and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a possible outcome of the existing Contact Group peace plan.21

The Britain Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and French Prime Minister Alain Juppe met the Serbian President Slobo-

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dan Milosevic in Belgrade on December 4 to present these "interpretations" of the plan. Following the talks Milosevic praised the plan as "a major step forward. The plan also received the backing of 20 Bosnian Serb deputies on 5 December. In contrast, the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadjic was unmoved in his opposition to the plan, according to former U.S. Envoy Charles Redman, who had talks with Karadjic in the Bosnian Serb Capital Pale on 4 December.

Now perhaps everyone involved in the dispute was stressing on the fact that mediation needed to be backed by force, but that was not forthcoming. Airstrike was being undertaken and that too only when Serbs in Bosnia provoked them. This was accepted even by Lord Owen, a member of the Contact Group. As he said:

I have always believed that successful diplomacy needs muscle behind it, and through my tenure as Co-Chairman I was arguing for applying force selectively, sensibly but in support of a specific settlement. Sometimes the Muslims, the U.S. and some critics in Europe would depict my stance as being opposed in principle to the case for air power, which was never the case, as the factual records make clear. But my public and private views could not always be the same in public co-chairman always had to be saying the same thing, and I could not be too far from the centre of gravity of E.U. opinion.22

RUSSIA'S PERCEPTION AND POLICY TOWARDS MEDIATION IN BOSNIA

Russia's policy towards the mediation in Bosnia needs to be analysed within the general framework of the attempt by the ruling elite to adjust the Russian Federation to the post-Cold War international environment and as the expression of severe political struggle over the transformation in Russia waged by different parties, movements and interest groups. In this context, THE Russian policy may be considered in the light of five problems.

1) In the first place, one needs to understand Russia's perceptions of the post-Cold War International order and her place in it. This new world order has two aspects. As Russian adjustment to the Western world existed and developed without the U.S.S.R. first time after October 1917, and as the changing of the structures of the Western world itself.

2) Russia's perceptions of "post Soviet space" and her policy towards the 'near abroad' including Russian speaking minorities. The situation in former Yugoslavia and 'the problem of the Serbian people' was considered as an unsuccessful model of post-Communist transition.

3) The clash of 'reformers' and 'conservatives' over the speed, direction, depth and nature of the reforms, and the disagreements within the reformer's camp itself.
4) The continuation of long resuming Russian debates between 'Westernisers' and 'Slavophiles' under the new cover of 'Atlanticists' and 'Eurasians' and the rethinking of traditional historical ties between Russia and the Slavonic nations; and

5) Perceptions of the political situation in the post-Yugoslav space, particularly the changing attitude of Serbian authorities towards the conflicts there.

The general pattern of Russian foreign policy from 1993 onwards was the continuation of the path towards partnership with the West, yet at the same time the Russian leadership was more vocal on the necessity to reorientate the 'pro-western shift' in its international activity. The predominant mood in the international community was not prepared to provide huge financial assistance to Yeltsin's regime under easy conditions.

23. The Russian Foreign Ministers stressed that despite efforts of some deputies of the supreme Soviet to convert existing disagreements into ideological differences, Russia is emphasising ideas of partnership, not confrontation. See the interview with Andrei Kozyrev, 'Russia is main priority for the USA', in Moscow News (in Russian), 7 March 1993.

24. Although the observers mentioned that Yeltsin had shown signs of wanting to change his course, he had proved in economic policy that he was capable of trimming. See The Economist, 4 July 1992.
The beginning of 1993 marked the start of a diplomatic attack in the Balkan direction, and attempts to convince the world of the existence of Russian interests in the Balkan region. After the electoral defeat of Milan Panic a moderate in the sham election, President Milosevic was legitimised in Moscow's view as a leader through democratic elections.

The statement of Mr. Boris Yeltsin on 3 January was the first sign of changing Russian approach. It was indicative of the fact that the Russians wanted to draw the line on the armistice in Serbia, in particular, and in Yugoslavia, in general. He declared that Russia will be 'more active than before'. But failure on the Serbs to say 'Yes' in the referendum for acceptance of the Vance-Owen peace plan, for which Russians had lobbied hard, convinced Russian diplomacy that influence of military extremism among the Bosnian Serbs and of the people's will to fight for their lands had not subsided, but at the same time it stressed the necessity to accept the democratic character of this uncomfortable decision.

An active policy allowed Russia to secure her influence in attempts to regulate the conflict. After Andrei Kozyrev's long trip to Belgrade, Split and Bonn in May, he
signed the Washington accords allowing Russia to go further towards the institutionalisation of her participation in conflict regulation. Kozyrev played a prominent role in facilitating the acceptance by the West of de facto Bosnian partition after the collapse of the Vance-Owen plan. In June 1994, Russia proposed the set of measures which was called Russian plan 2. At the same time the Russian diplomacy resisted pressure to send her own peacekeeping troops saying that Russia was ready to give planes for their transportation to Bosnia but only after the U.N. Security Council decision's. During the summer of 1994 Moscow supported the continuation of the Geneva talks between all three sides of the Bosnian conflict.

The elections in Russia in 1994 saw the adoption of a hard line approach towards the Bosnian issue. The results of the elections to the new parliament led to stiffening of approach to military action by NATO in ex-Yugoslavia. The first action on foreign policy of the newly elected Duma was the statement on Yugoslavia drafted jointly by three powerful factions (LDPR, Communists and Agrarians). The unity of the deputies (even members of Gaider's faction voted for the text) pressured the Russian authorities to undertake a more active role towards the crisis. It reconciled the government's domestic need to appear responsive to pro-Serbian sentiments. The first step was initiated by Prime Minister
Chernomyrdin himself with his criticism of international plans to bomb the Serbs. Russia criticised the United States for not keeping her informed of the NATO decision to bomb the Bosnian Serb position. Later Kozyrev mentioned that NATO’s (February) ultimatum was imposed without Russia and stressed the impossibility and unacceptability of Russia’s exclusion from common attempts to regulate the Bosnian problem.

Washington’s diplomatic response - the signing of a Muslim-Croatian confederation - met with great reservations in Russia. Although Harris Siladzic (Bosnian Muslim Foreign Minister) and Enup Ganic (Serb Foreign Minister) informed the Russian officials of their plans, Kozyrev expected further explanation at a meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. During talks with Ganic, Vitaly Churkin (Russia’s representative in the region) tried to propose some sort of confederation agreement between Serbia and Croatia. Ganic rejected this decisively, whereas Andrei Kozyrev did not formulate his thoughts at all clearly.

Moscow was for converting this group into a new London type

25. Chernomyrdin’s interest may be explained by intentions to work out a foreign policy programme for his prospective presidential election campaign. See Maxim Yusin, 'Victor Chernomyrdin corrects Andrei Kozyrev Position', Izvestiya, 3 February 1994.

conference to try to find a political solution to the crisis. Russia was now more than ever interested in a summit conference on Bosnia. Throughout the period of mediation the Russian attitude towards it can be summed up as under:

i) Opposition to a military decision;

ii) Attempts to separate the various parties; on this ground to lift or ease the U.N. sanctions against the rump Yugoslavia;

iii) Search for a mechanism of influence in managing the crisis besides that of the U.N. (but with the Security Council as the ultimate authority);

iv) Insistence on the equal opportunity of all participants in the conflict;

v) Opposition to any decisive role for NATO. Russia was prepared to allow NATO involvement only under the control of the U.N. Security Council; any other variant minimised Russian influence; and

vi) Attempts to discover a system of solution to the crisis in the former Yugoslavia as a whole, including talent and potential crises (Serbian Krajina in Croatia, the Kosovo problem, minority rights as interconnected issues) rather than focussing on particular flashpoints (the allegedly sensational western approach).
SERBIAN PERCEPTION AND POLICY TOWARDS MEDIATION

While discussing the Serbian perspective one needs to take into consideration the position and perception of Serbs in all three republics, i.e., Serbia proper, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Though a great majority of the Serbs had wanted to unite themselves with Serbia proper, there were still many of them who wanted to keep a separate identity, considering the fact that a Union between them was not geographically possible to ensure. The sanctions imposed on 30 May 1992 by the U.N. Security Council on Serbia27 and reinforced on 18 April 199328 led to a further degradation of the ties between the Serbian and Bosnian Serb leadership. When Milosevic's break with the Bosnian Serb leadership in April 1994 appeared to confirm his pacific intentions, sanctions relating to air traffic, culture and sports were partially suspended,29 although key economic sanctions were still in place. As a consequence the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had become a pariah state in the middle of Europe.

One Serbian perception (that of Serbian President Slobodon Milesevic) clashed with another (Bosnian Serb

leader Radovan Krazdic) while the third one (the Krajina Serbs) went along with Milosevic down the road towards a progressive normalisation of relations with Croatia.\textsuperscript{30} The interface between the three in all directions is complex and makes the search for a solution extremely complicated. To simplify, Milosevic and others originally launched/provoked the 'trans-Drina' Serbs into their 'independence adventure'. Since Milosevic had attempted to reverse the process, abandoning the project of a 'Greater Serbia' which was always more of an instrumental goal, to help him to retain power, though many of his nationalist confederates may have seen it differently. The political problem from Milosevic's point of view was that he had accumulated enemies on every front: not only anti-nationalist, anti-war adversaries, but the nationalist opposition.

The political leadership of Serbia always wanted to play a big brother role in the Serb's relationship with the world community and its leadership had always revolved around the role and 'statesmanship' of President Slobodan Milesovic, and this has been the cause of political apathy among the Serbs which led to the high rate of absenteeism in the elections and hence the one man show in the Serbian

\textsuperscript{30} A comprehensive ceasefire between the Krajina Serbs and Croatia was agreed in March 1994, followed by the re-establishment of certain economic relations in December 1994.
politics. The Serbian perception was that it would act as an umbrella state of a Greater Serbia with occupying the most parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This, however, was effectively thwarted by the western powers.

The Serbian leadership's intransigent attitude was also demonstrated in the recent Kosovo crisis where it was cowed down to submission. This had a telling effect on the polity of Serbia. The result of war is a restricted, crippled polity, citizens without representation, and political life in the waiting. Political parties are bogged down by a single issue agenda (war or peace), their membership is hypothetical; their leadership involved in more inrhetoric than in reconstruction. There is no clear social or political compass for ordinary people baffled by the sudden splurge into impoverishment and disorder. There is a large-ly criminalised and increasingly lawless society.31

Slovene Perception of the Mediation in Bosnia

Slovenia's doubts about Yugoslavia started to be voiced openly in the early 1960's. Various factors, some of them going back over a long time, played a role in this volte face. The stubborn opposition came from Serbia to political

and economic reforms whereas in Slovenia it was a popular cause mainly because of the growing conviction among people that political democracy combined with a market economy was the recipe for prosperity. It was the prospect of European connection that now attracted the Slovenes while the 'Belgrade link' was increasingly seen as a burden. One of the early advocates of a closer European connection was Stane Kovcic, Slovenia’s Prime Minister from 1967-1972 who was purged at the end of 1972. A Slovene central committee resolution of 4 November 1972 condemned Kovcic for advocating an independent Slovenia linked to and relying on 'Central Europe' and for attempts to devalue Slovenia’s connection with the other nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia. 32

With only 8% of the total population of Yugoslavia, Slovenia in the 1980’s accounted for more than 20% of Yugoslavia’s GDP as well as a quarter of its total exports. The Slovenian concern in the mediation process was more economic than political. They were generally sympathetic to the aspirations of Muslim populace as they (Slovenes) themselves had become independent with tacit support of Italy and Germany. They wanted that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be declared a separate republic under the Muslim leadership.

The Croatian Perception

For the Croats, too, Yugoslavia had at one time numerous advantages. At the end of the First World War, the Croats were glad to sever eight centuries old association with Hungary under the Crown of St. Stephen because militant Hungarian nationalism had attempted in the closing decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th to assimilate the non-Hungarians (including the Croats) living in the Hungarian half of the Habsburg Monarchy.

It was the advent of Slobodan Milosevic, with the spectre of revived Serbian hegemonism, allied to a version of populist communism, that turned both the Croats and Slovenes totally against Yugoslavia.

Croatia held its own independence referendum in May 1991, with outcome similar to that in Slovenia wherein an overwhelming majority of the population voted in favour of independence. By the time the referendum was taking place, militant Serbs in the Lenin area, north of the adriatic coast, as well as in western and eastern Slavonia in the north had, with the support of the Yugoslav army, staged rebellion against the Croat authorities which were unable to stop it. It is sometimes said that Slovenia and Croatia had shown neither sufficient patience with or understanding for
the Serbs, nor readiness to take into account the total interests of the Bosnian Muslims and the Macedonians and that to this extent, the two secessionist republics bear a heavy share of responsibility for the war that subsequently followed.

Croatia had a queer combination of cooperating and conflicting relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina and its Muslim populace at different times. Croatia saw among the Muslims a potential ally as they both had been browbeaten by the Serbs, but at the same time had conflicting relations with the Muslims as they eyed the lands that both of them wanted to occupy.

The Washington Agreement made a sort of confederal arrangement and a collective presidency with both the Muslims and Croats getting 51% of the land. The animosity between the Croats and Muslims was somewhat contained with this. Croatia’s President Franjo Tudjman preferred to adopt a soft attitude towards the Bosnian problem, though at one point of time it was speculated that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Tudjman had arrived at a tacit understanding to divide Bosnia-Herzegovina between their two countries. However, this was not to happen because of the deep rooted mutual suspicion between the Serbs and Croats of

Bosnia.

Thus we see that an earlier intransigent attitude towards mediation among the different invested groups was that they wanted to stay intact but the centrifugal forces (warring groups) did not want to reconcile and the intransigent Serbian attitude towards everything, exacerbated the situation and hence the present state of affairs.

The collective efforts of U.N., E.U. and NATO in the mediation and the peacekeeping efforts were adequate under the given circumstances but lack of coordination and overlapping of the actions made the problem of peacekeeping worse. The armed superiority of the Serbs had made the problem much more complicated. The attitude of Bosnian Serb leaders was also not conducive for a lasting peace in the region.

But the Dayton Peace Accord reached among the warring parties were able to tackle the problem to a large extent. But that had been made possible only because the threat of use of force was very real among the warring parties and particularly this time if provoked it would have been fight to the finish. All the warring parties had seemed to recognize this reality.
Perhaps for the first time the concerted efforts of all the parties, the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council (the P-5), the NATO countries, OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and European Union had closed their ranks for a lasting peace in Bosnia Herzegovina.

In this chapter the perception and policies towards mediation of the parties in dispute e.g. the Muslims, Serbs and Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the neighbouring countries directly affected by the dispute like Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Croatia and Slovenia; and major powers such as Germany, France, Britain apart from Russia and USA that claimed to have vital states in peace in Europe threatened by the continuing crisis of Bosnia. There was indeed an incredible divergence between these approaches and strategies which made the task of United Nations and European, the main agencies working on the mediation in Bosnia, extremely difficult and complicated.

In the first instance the American and Russian perceptions and policies towards mediation in Bosnia were as usual not in consonance with each other. Likewise there was differing degree of priority in the approaches of the country like Germany, Britain and France. This reality was sufficiently acknowledged even by the parties in dispute particularly the Muslims who were at the receiving end of
the war. However such wide divergence of approaches notwithstanding there was also a growing a feeling that if mediation had to succeed it must be supported by the military involvement of major powers, particularly the use of ground troops which will make the whole exercise effective. This realisation though belated made the determination of mediating agencies much stronger for action.

The Serbian, Croatian and Muslim perception, parties to the dispute never had the same approach to the problem and never followed a strategy that would result in resolution of the crisis. Their leadership was to blame here who was bent upon creating the war hysteria.

Ultimately the concerted efforts of all western and Russian powers made the difference and succeeded only when the ground troops were used after the Dayton peace accord.