CONCLUSION

The subject discussed in this study has been seen in the background of post-Cold War international politics. The Soviet state had collapsed in the early 1990s and soon thereafter a verdict was pronounced that the communist ideology which sustained multi-ethnic states had also suffered the mortal blow. The Yugoslav disintegration was looked upon as a logical next step. The Western media was portraying the Yugoslav crisis as a fallout of the loss of charisma of Josip Broz Tito after his death and the so-called 'age-old rivalry' among the warring groups which led to the galvanisation of atavistic passions among the warring groups. Here the Western powers had a stake in the crisis as they wanted to have their slice of influence which had, till then, been denied to them by the socialist and non-aligned leadership of Tito.

Initially the Western world was trying to downplay the secessionist nationalist movement among the warring republics of Yugoslavia. They were working on the simplistic hypothesis that it was purely a civil unrest which would soon subside. But the differing perception among the Western powers had started to play its role in the crisis. Some countries like Germany and Italy openly supported the parties in dispute for secession, whereas few others like U.K.,
France and U.S.A. an adopted ambivalent attitude towards the whole affair and tried to downplay the crisis until media started depicting the horrors of the dispute. It is here the attitudinal difference in favour of active intervention into and solution of the crisis through mediation started taking shape on the part of Western powers.

The study begins with a discussion of the theory of mediation. The elements of this theoretical postulation remain as permeating themes through the successive chapters. Mediation as a dispute resolving mechanism has been in existence from the time immemorial. Mediation is often done by a nation or an individual or an organization who have some stake in the resolution of the conflict. It is invariably a peaceful process. The Bosnian crisis presented a formidable challenge to mediation theory. It was for the first time in the post-Second World War history that something which started purely as a civil war soon turned out to be an issue of international concern. The U.N. was caught in a piquant situation; it seemed as if it was not set up to deal with such a crisis. The U.N. was designed to deal with inter-state disputes and not intra-state disputes as it happened in Yugoslavia.

The mediation theories which were developed in the 19th and early 20th centuries stressed on the role of individual players. The major international organisations during that
period such as Concert of Europe or the League of Nations had not been very successful. In the second half of present century mediation theorists such as I. William Zartman and Jacob Bercovitch have stressed on the bilateral resolution of the conflicts wherein the individual mediator has to play a major role. This aspect of mediation process ultimately brought out a semblance of peace among the warring parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina led by Richard Holbrooke which ultimately resulted in the Dayton Peace accord and the resolution of the conflict which had inflicted an incredible loss of human lives and property along with unprecedented social and economic dislocation on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslav disintegration was not the result of a single factor. It was, on the contrary, the result of various forces and events that were working at that time. Neither the West European countries and the U.S.A. nor Russia knew initially that the ongoing conflict in Yugoslavia would result in the eventual breakup of the socialist republic. Thus the bloody war which preceded and followed the breakup was completely unforeseen by all the powers.

The Slovenian declaration of independence and its instant recognition by Germany and later by the rest of the countries started the eventual breakup. Tito had estab-
lished a very adroit balance of nationalities in the Yugoslav polity. But after his death, the Serbs who were numerically the largest group in the country and had almost complete control over the Yugoslav National Army, utilised it with ruthless determination in order to perpetuate their supremacy within truncated Yugoslavia and hegemony in the region. Hence, the army was used by Serbs to resist the nationalist movements with the objective of keeping Yugoslavia together with force. This was obviously resented by the other groups in the dispute.

Bosnia-Herzegovina was a mini Yugoslavia within Yugoslavia. Though Islam formed the basis of the formation of this 'National Republic' within Yugoslavia in 1971, the creation of Bosnia-Herzegovina added another new ethnic community, the Muslims, who asserted themselves in the region apart from the existing ethnic identities, e.g., Serb, Croats, Slovenes and Albanians. Bosnia had an ideal mixture of all these ethnic groups. But Serb plan for a 'greater Serbia', started the bloody conflict in Bosnia. The Muslim who were likened with a Turk aggressors were initially at the receiving end of the bloody struggle and in the process suffered most. The U.N. tried to intervene in the Bosnian crisis, but its hands were tied because of the differing perception and policies among the five permanent members of the Security Council.
In March 1992 ethnic Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina began a secessionist movement against the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina led by its Muslim leadership which had recently voted for independence from Yugoslavia by referendum (boycotted by the Serbs) and had been granted recognition by the U.N., E.U. and most of the international community. Fighting against being absorbed into a state dominated by other ethnic groups, the Bosnian Serbs embarked on a project of carving a 'greater Serbia' from the constituent republics of the former Yugoslavia and merging it with Serbia proper. The Bosnian Serbs felt betrayed by the international community, which they believed had consigned them to minority status and possible genocide in the newly independent republics. Initially with the help of the Yugoslav National Army, they were able to quickly seize and hold 70% of Bosnia, and link these areas with Serbia and the Krajina region of Croatia. In the areas they controlled they carried out widespread policies of ethnic cleansing, to rid them of Muslim, Croats and also 'undesirable' Serbs.

The other ethnic groups in Bosnia, the Muslims and the Croats organised a makeshift defence against the ferocity of the Bosnian Serb assault. Heavily outgunned, outsupplied and outrained by the Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) they clung tenuously for over three years of wars to pockets of 30% of Bosnian territory they were able to deny to the VRS. The
Bosnian Muslim and Croat armies slowly mobilized into conscript armies, but their essential vulnerability to VRS's weapons predominance was perpetuated by the UN arms embargo on the former Yugoslavia. This stalemate was to last, virtually unchanged, until the Bosnian Serbs were demolished following sustained NATO airstrikes in September 1995, and suffered substantial losses of territory to a combined Bosnian Muslim and Croat offensive.

The U.N. and other international actors, concerned with security threat and humanitarian tragedy of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the destructive effects of the conflict on the cohesion of the international community, engaged in a frantic effort to mediate a solution from the beginning of the conflict till March 1992.

In the first weeks of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the destructive effect of the conflict in March 1992, the U.N. Security Council initiated the mediation process by requesting the Secretary General to dispatch his special envoy to assist the peace efforts of the E.U. In this capacity, Special UN Envoy Cyrus Vance had already met the Muslim, ethnic Serb and ethnic Croat's leaders in Sarajevo on 6 March 1992, obtaining their agreement to seek a peaceful settlement of their differences. By September 1992, the E.U. and the U.N. had established the International Confer-
ence on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) in London as a formal mechanism to coordinate their mediation efforts co-chaired by the U.N. Special Representative and E.U. Envoy. The I.C.F.Y. consisted of a steering committee and six working groups meeting in Geneva 'to prepare the basis for a general settlement and associated measures, in support of the efforts of the mediators. In this way the U.N. mediators played a collaborative but significant role in efforts to mediate an end to the war in Bosnia.

They were involved in three significant mediation initiatives: the Vance-Owen Plan, the Serb-Croat Proposal and the Contact Group Plan. Each of these failed to gain Bosnian Serb agreement. By late 1994 the U.N. mediation's role was largely moribund, having been largely frustrated by the Bosnian Serb obduracy. Thereafter, the mediation was largely conducted by the Western 'Contact Group' and carried out by the U.S. diplomats. It was the U.S. mediator Richard Halbrooke who finally brokered the peace plan.

There were many impediments to the peace-process due to differing perception and policies among the warring parties and also that of Western powers and Russia. The Western powers and Russia often seemed to be working at cross purposes. This was the major stumbling bloc to the resolution of the crisis. The U.N., E.U. and OSCE and other international actors were caught in a bind while there was contin-
ued escalation in the conflict at the ground level. Among other things this study has also to underline the fact that the lack of use of ground forces by intervening forces in the dispute resolution prolonged the crisis and hence the resultant suffering of the civilians had the ground forces been used earlier it would not have resulted in the prolonged continuation of the crisis. However, the belated change in the strategy of major actors by putting the ground forces in peacekeeping eventually changed the reality on the ground. The process of mediation in Bosnia was unique also in the sense that the resolution of the problem was not the simple outcome of political dialogues, discussions and conferences. Probably, for the first time the political process was massively supported by armed intervention. This indeed added a new dimension to the hitherto known aspects of the theory of mediation. Finally, the international mediation in Bosnian crisis brought out in sharp focus the increasing disability of the United Nations in the post-Cold War era and the emergence of the super activism of NATO in European affairs, even beyond the frontiers of its member states as laid down by its constitution. The recent most bombardment of Yugoslavia in the Kosovo crisis has further reinforced the emerging political-military reality in Europe.