Chapter-5
DEPLOYMENT IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Yugoslav crisis signified a change in the nature of conflict in Europe. During the Cold War days struggle in Europe was for supremacy between two systems, where the balance was maintained by the nuclear deterrence. Détente and Ostpolitik were used as political instruments to ease the tension between the rivals and the procedures were institutionalised under OSCE. Successful resolution of Cold War proved the usefulness of this approach. The Yugoslav crisis on the other hand was marked by bilateral and intra-state conflicts limited to the Balkan region of Europe. It affected Germany most directly, but the degree of German involvement did not indicate any fundamental change in its policy towards UN peacekeeping or out-of-area operations, though there was a considerable widening of its role and a limited military dimension was added to it.

Civil War in Yugoslavia

The situation in Yugoslavia took a dangerous turn after the rise to power of President Slobodon Milosevic. In autumn 1990 the Serbian-dominated government in Belgrade suspended the autonomy in Kosovo and Vojvodina resulting into a violent break-up of the country. The poor shape of the Yugoslav economy worsened the political relations between the republics. Unfortunately the economic reforms announced by Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic also could not bring any change in the situation. In fact the transition from a centrally planned to a free market economy in Yugoslavia was one of the factors, which caused collapse of the state and the conflict between the
republics of the federation. Germany had underwritten a major part of the Yugoslavia's public debt during the 1980's with the intention of keeping the country stable.

**GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS YUGOSLAVIA**

Germany was alive to the dangers posed by the "war of dissolution" in former Yugoslavia right from the beginning. There were three distinct phases in German policy towards Yugoslavia from 1990 to 1995.

The first phase of German foreign policy lasted up to summer of 1991. During this phase Germany pursued a low-key policy through the European Community. Initially all the European institutions and states supported efforts to keep Yugoslavia together. During a meeting of European Foreign ministers on 13 May 1991 the main plank was preservation of the Yugoslav federation as a state on the model of European community. 1 Western powers failed to see the symptoms of disintegration and wanted to save the old Yugoslav federation. This encouraged the federal army and the Serbs to prevent secession forcefully. 2 Germany nevertheless went along with the European approach, which was in consonance with its policy preferences for multilateralism and European integration.

This common front broke down in the second phase when in July 1991 Chancellor Kohl announced that the right of self-determination demanded recognition of the Yugoslav republics. Several factors were responsible for this reversal in German policy.

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In Germany a domestic political pressure was building up and a press campaign was launched in the conservative daily newspapers. An internal German debate was taking place on the handling of the two ex-Yugoslav republics, Slovenia and Croatia. Gradually the opinions of Conservatives and Social Democrats grew closer as a result of this debate. There was also a substantial change in the view of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher due to the changing political scenario at home. Moreover, Genscher personally experienced Serbian aggression during his visit to Yugoslavia in early July 1991. He wanted to stop its further expansion. By July 1991, he was convinced that the internationalisation of the conflict was the only way to solve it. Escalating violence in Croatia, expedited this reversal. German public opinion and the foreign policy establishment blamed Serbia for this.

Germany also had a close historical relationship with Croatia. On 12 July, Chancellor Kohl received Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. France did not like this. But Kohl still insisted on a common EC approach. He recommended exploring possibilities of a confederation.

Germany's policy reversal on Yugoslavia was completed by the end of July 1991. Henceforth, both Kohl and Genscher began to push EC for common recognition of Slovenia and Croatia within the EC resulting into serious tensions within the Community. Relation became bitter also with France. Though Germany increased the pressures for recognition, it continued to seek effective international efforts to halt the fighting. Support for European Community efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement remained Bonn's preferred choice.

\[\text{\footnotesize 3 Ibid., p. 9.}\]
Chancellor Helmut Kohl promised to President Tudjman in early December that Germany would recognize Croatia before Christmas. The EC Arbitration Commission was in favour of recognition for Slovenia and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) but was against recognising Croatia. Without waiting for the Commission’s report Kohl recognised Slovenia and Croatia by 23 December. However, this decision was to be implemented by 15 January.

The unilateral German recognition led to mixed results. It was widely believed that the recognition accelerated the outbreak of fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bonn’s new assertive foreign policy behaviour evoked a critical response from the international community.

It raised questions about EC foreign policy decision-making processes and Germany’s commitment to common decision-making. However, some also argued that Germany had a more accurate perception of the political realities once the Yugoslav crisis unfolded. Whereas the policy of the European Union and some of the major member states was based on untenable assumptions of maintaining the political and territorial status quo in Yugoslavia. Another major inconsistency was the position taken with regard to Macedonia, which despite the recommendation of the Badinter Commission was denied recognition by the EC because of objections from Greece.

In the third phase Germany reverted back to its low profile and France and United Kingdom took the lead. It continued with its diplomatic efforts to stop the fighting and find political solutions. It gave emphasis on humanitarian interventions. Economic sanctions and selective military actions were also used to secure an end to the conflict. As the European Community failed to solve the crisis, focus shifted to UN and the North
Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and their help was sought to mandate and implement economic and military sanctions.

The process of negotiation continued but could not achieve much. The initiative was taken by the EU to settle the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. With the full support of Bonn, the EU set up a separate conference for Bosnia. Lord Carrington developed, on its behalf, a plan for the cantonisation of Bosnia. The plan failed to gain the Muslim leadership's support and was abandoned. Recognition of Bosnia followed and led to a rapid escalation of hostilities. By the beginning of June 1992, some 200,000 combatants were involved in fighting on about three-quarter of Bosnia's territory. It made several hundred thousand people refugees and tens of thousands were killed. This plan was followed by Vance – Owen Plan, Owen-Stoltenberg Plan and EU Action Plan, but without much success.

In April 1994 a Contact Group was created which also involved the United States and Russia. Russia's good relations with Serbia was expected to boost the negotiation process. France, the United Kingdom and Germany were also part of the Contact Group. Germany took a keen interest in the formation of the group so that it could play an active role in the diplomatic process. The Contact Group also came up with a plan for the future of Bosnia based on the territorial division.

All these plans failed because they did not meet the war aims of Bosnian Serbs. They wanted to establish the borders of a Greater Serbia to secure the territorial contiguity of Serb areas. They also wanted to make them ethnically pure.
GERMAN INTERESTS

German interests were also at stake in the Yugoslav crisis though they were never talked about openly. But in Yugoslav crisis German economic interests did not play any major role. Its trade and investment stakes were minimal. Yugoslavia was heavily indebted to the FRG. In fact, Germany stood to lose from the dissolution of the Yugoslav state. 4

Germany was concerned about additional large inflows of refugees from Yugoslavia. It was a major country of destination for migrants. German government was concerned about regulating the inflow of refugees. But its attempts to limit migration from Yugoslavia and its successor states failed. As the international community failed to manage the Yugoslav crisis and War, it resulted in mass displacement and migration. Most of the time German policies were in consonance with the international community’s effort to solve the crisis they also could not have been expected to produce any different result.

Migration has been a controversial issue in Germany and a large section perceived migration negatively. Politicians are also aware of this expanding critical attitude towards immigration. Some even argued that the Germany’s decision to recognise Slovenia and Croatia was motivated by a desire to prevent a further increase of migration to Germany from the former Yugoslavia. However, early recognition could not moderate the flow of the migrants. Germany remained the main country of destination for migrants. The war in

Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina led to the largest wave of migration since World War II. The refugee's issue did not figure promptly in the public statements of the key leaders.⁵

In 1994, Germany wrote the safe third country principle into its otherwise liberal constitution. By the new rules, virtually all Bosnians in Germany would have been turned away at the border, since every land route to Germany went through a 'safe country'.⁶ But Germany was not generally harsh to the Bosnian refugees. It only wanted to give them a message that they ought not to count on staying forever. Germany was criticised for this though the situation was worse in other Western European countries. Besides Germany bore a hugely disproportionate portion of the refugee burden. It complained justly about the incoherence of Europe's overall policy. It was also feared that the violence might erupt between the different ethnic components of the large Yugoslav community in Germany. However, despite the tension between the different Yugoslav ethnic groups, there were no major incidents.

The most important German interest in the Yugoslav crisis was to maintain European security and stability. Germany's security and prosperity, according to its foreign policy establishment, depended on European stability. But this was seen in danger by developments in Yugoslavia in several ways. Yugoslavia had undermined the credibility and effectiveness of Western institutions. It revived the threat of renationalisation and remilitarisation of European politics. And it had brought war back to Europe.

Historical Taboos

The Nazi past of Germany was an important factor in Germany’s foreign policy towards Yugoslavia. A wide consensus prevailed among the political elite that history ruled out any participation of German soldiers in peacekeeping or military operations in the former Yugoslavia. Chancellor Kohl also favoured this line (it became known as the 'Kohl doctrine') along with other leading politicians. In July 1994, German Defence minister ruled out a deployment of federal armed forces in Bosnia saying that there German soldiers would be “part of the problem” and not solution.7 Threats from Serbia against the lives of any German soldier who might step on Serbian soil underlined the sensitivity of this issue. Bonn feared that any German participation might complicate and further influence ethno-nationalist tensions.8 In the immediate aftermath of the Karlsruhe decision there was an increased use of the “history” argument against German involvement in out-of-area operations especially in the former Yugoslavia. This argument grew for sometime and for many it became a substitute for the constitutional prohibition argument. But it lost its force afterwards.

Shift in Public and Political Opinion

As the conflict continued, however, this position began to weaken and a new consensus emerged.9 The events in Bosnia caused shift in public and political opinion.

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The constant exposure to images of the atrocities and total failure of non-military means to check the violence caused a change in the opinion of German public and political elite. When the Serbs began to shell UN safe areas and take UN soldiers hostage many believed that only the creation of a Rapid Reaction Force can save the Bosnian peacekeeping mission from ending in total failure.

This change was also facilitated by the discussion about a possible withdrawal of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) under fire which would have necessitated a large-scale NATO operation to cover the removal. In December 1994 announcement was made that Germany would provide Bundeswehr forces to assist in a NATO-led evacuation of UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) in case that became necessary.

German Defence Minister Volker Ruhe was prepared to send Germans to help with the logistics of any UN withdrawal if Bundestag approved but was against sending any combat troops. He asserted that an important task for NATO was to extend stability to the East Europeans. The Social Democrat Karsten Voigt feared that unless Germany and its neighbours were fully integrated into multilateral bodies such as NATO, Germany would have to deal with them bilaterally and they would be tempted to build coalitions against it.10

After a long discussion the government recognised that Germany could not stand aside in such a situation.11 It gave a carefully circumscribed approval for Bundeswehr

participation in an eventually hostile withdrawal operation.\textsuperscript{12} Afterwards, it also decided to send troops and aircraft to the region to help support and defend the rapid-deployment force established by a NATO decision on 9 June 1995, although German ground troops were not to be introduced to Bosnia.\textsuperscript{13}

Helmut Kohl's decision to send troops to ex-Yugoslavia with orders to fight if they had to was a clean break from the Germany born in war's wreckage nearly 50 years ago.\textsuperscript{14} Until then the German Government held that it could not send German peacekeeping troops to the Balkans because they might arouse angry memories of the wartime wehrmacht. But that would apply; it was pointed out, to sending them almost anywhere in Europe. The step removed certain hollowness about the German governments insistence on the need for a European Security policy. While calling for a common policy, Germany has been declining to make any serious contribution because of its "historical guilt".

**GERMAN PARTICIPATION**

Germany contributed both men and material to the region. It provided financial aid as well as able staff. Germany was a member of the Contact Group and it helped in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords. German financial aid was used to rebuild the economy and to meet the needs of returning refugees.


Financial Commitment

Germany provided a large part of the humanitarian assistance right from the beginning of the crisis. From July 1991 to February 1993, Germany gave about 8 percent of total Western aid and was after the US the second largest individual donor country. Of the total German contribution, the Federal Government gave DM 379.1 million in official aid. DM 243.7 million came from the Laender (states) for helping the refugees in Germany and DM 35.4 million from private funds provided by NGOs. Germany also absorbed the largest single group of refugees from former Yugoslavia. The cost of taking care of those refugees was estimated at about DM 195 million to February 1993.

It gave roughly $12.4 billion in financial aid to Bosnia. Germany accepted about 350,000 refugees over the course of the Bosnian war. By mid 1999 there were still approximately 85,000 refugees living in Germany. Since 1991, Germany spent more than $10 billion on taking in Bosnian refugees.

Germany committed $142 million in reconstruction financing for Bosnia (bilateral and 28 percent share of EU aid). Besides emergency and refugee assistance, German bilateral aid is now concentrated particularly on stimulating the economy, creating jobs, developing a market economy, and promoting social pluralism. This included programmes to ease the return of the refugees, especially in the housing sector and to promote business start-ups.

Germany's military commitment to Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilisation Force (SFOR) comes to well over $900 million by mid-1999. In addition, Germany had co-financed the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Brussels and Sarajevo, the elections in Bosnia and
Herzegovina monitored by the OSCE, the European Community's Monitoring Mission which continuously reports on adherence to the peace treaties, the World Bank and IMF reconstruction programs, the arms control activities conducted by the OSCE mission in Bosnia, international support for the government of Prime Minister Dodik in the Republika Srpska (one of the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina). 15

Staff Commitments

In addition to German troops in Bosnia maintaining the peace and securing a safe environment, Germany sent police officers, diplomats, members of parliament and technical experts.

With approximately 2,900 troops, Germany provided the fourth largest contingent of SFOR international peacekeeping forces, after the U.S., the U.K. and France. SFOR is safeguarding the peace process militarily (U.S.: 6,100; EU member states: 14,100; total: about 31,000 troops). It has contributed 165 police officers to the International Police Task Force in Bosnia, which is supporting and overseeing the local police. Germany's national contingent is second in number only to that of the U.S.; IPTF totals 2,000 police officers from 40 countries. In the Office of the High Representative, which is coordinating the civilian aspects of the peace process, Germany is represented at a high level. Michael Steiner served as Deputy High Representative from January 1996 to June 1997 and was followed by Dr. Gerd Wagner, who tragically died in a helicopter crash in Bosnia on September 17, 1997. Dr. Hanns-H. Schumacher assumed the position in November 1997. A German, Dieter Woltmann, was the first deputy chief of the

15 "German Aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina," http://www.germany-info.org/gic/version1/content/gp_2b.html, German Information Center.
Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission, which in particular plays a critical role in conducting elections in Bosnia. The chief of mission is U.S. diplomat Robert Barry. From July 1994 to April 1996, the former mayor of Bremen, Germany, Hans Koschnick served as EU administrator in the city of Mostar, which is a focal city for peaceful coexistence between the Bosnian Croats and Muslims.

Germany has large contingents of personnel at the European Community Monitoring Mission in Bosnia, which continuously monitors adherence to the peace accords, at the OSCE Mission, and in the Office of the High Representative. Member of German Parliament Dr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling was appointed International Mediator for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the Office of the High Representative, B"rbel Bohley, launched a program to restore "a thousand roofs for Bosnia." Germany had seconded staff to the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. Hundreds of German election supervisors and observers contributed to the effort of conducting free and fair elections in Bosnia in 1996, 1997 and 1998.16

**Military Participation**

The most intense German military participation has taken place in the former Yugoslavia in its post-war history. In March 1993 the UN Security Council, through Resolution 816 of March 1993, authorised use of military force to enforce the no-fly zone over former Yugoslavia. NATO was asked to police the no-fly zone. It was empowered to shoot down aircraft violating the flight ban but pre-emptive strikes on Serb airfields was prohibited. NATO decided to use its airborne warning and control systems

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16 Ibid.
(AWACS). The Bundeswehr contributed 162 out of 620 AWACS crewmembers and up to one third of total personnel in some functions. When NATO began its enforcement operations in April 1993, the government decided to leave the German AWACS crewmembers in their places.

In December 1994 the German government announced that it would provide Bundeswehr forces to assist in a NATO-led evacuation of UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) in case that became necessary. The Bundestag approved the despatch of Tornado fighters to Bosnia as part of a Rapid Reaction Force (RRF), after months of highly emotion-charged debates on 30 June 1995.17 The RRF was to back up the UN mission in Bosnia. But Germans declined a French request to send ground troops to Bosnia. In July, Germany became the seventh participant in Operation ‘Deny Flight’ by deploying 14 Tornados for SEAD and reconnaissance, two Atlantics for electronic intelligence gathering (ELINT), and 12 C-160D transports. Luftwaffe reconnaissance and suppression of enemy air defence (SEAD) Tornados flew Germany’s first operational missions since the end of the Second World War. Operating in support of the multinational Rapid Reaction Force (RRF), the Tornados flew over 30 sorties.18

Germany was involved in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord. It gave its contribution to the IFOR (Implementation Force). The German cabinet agreed to send a contingent of around 4,000 regular soldiers and provide medical units, air transport, additional personnel for the international head quarters and despatch ECR and reconnaissance Tornados and reconnaissance naval Breguet aircraft. The German

Parliament (Bundestag) approved a cabinet decision to contribute about 4000 German personnel to the IFOR in Bosnia on 6 December 1995.19

On 10 December 1996, the foreign ministers of the NATO member states approved plans for a 30,000-man "Stabilization Force" (SFOR) to carry on the work of the "Implementation Force" (IFOR) that has been safeguarding the enactment of the Dayton Accords whose mandate was till December 20. In anticipation of UN approval for the follow up mission, the cabinet of Chancellor Helmut Kohl approved plans on 11 December 1996 to commit 3,000 members of the Bundeswehr, Germany's armed forces, to the NATO-led operation to maintain the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.20

KOSOVO CRISIS

Unlike other members of Yugoslav Federation, Kosovo was not recognized as an independent state in 1991, because it was not a separate republic. But in February 1998, increase in oppression of the Albanian majority by the Serb Government in Belgrade shattered the fragile peace when the government launched major offensive against ethnic Albanians. It resulted in growing support for the Kosovo Liberation Army.

The war between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Serbian security forces began in February 1998. Germany and its European Union partners, called on the government of President Slobodan Milosevic to grant the Kosovo Albanians a large measure of autonomy. At a meeting on 9 March 1998 in London, the Contact Group

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members, with the exception of Russia, agreed on several possible sanctions in case the Milosevic government proved intractable. Several NATO Defence Ministers also declared the determination of their governments to use all military, as well as diplomatic, steps to halt this latest post-Cold War European conflict. The international community continued to cling to the concept of maintaining the territorial integrity of the remaining Yugoslav federation.

In July 1998, Serbian forces went on the offensive, and diplomatic pressure by the Contact Group on Belgrade to halt its campaign of ethnic cleansing intensified. But there was not much effect on the Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. It forced Western Powers to threaten Belgrade with use of force through NATO. NATO started mobilising for the probable start of air and cruise missile strikes against Serbian forces in the breakaway Kosovo. The outgoing cabinet of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl decided on 30 September that 14 German Air Force Tornados would participate in NATO operations. By October, NATO was ready to move towards air strikes against the former Yugoslavia.

Change of Government in Germany

Meanwhile Germany went through general elections during the month of September 1998. On 27 September 1998, a new coalition government led by Social

Democrats (SPD) Gerhard Schroeder as Chancellor, with Joschka Fisher of Green Party as Foreign Minister came into power.

Contrary to the expectations when the Red Green coalition of SPD and the Greens came to power they declared a continuity in German Foreign and Security Policy. After their electoral victory Social Democrats and Greens signed a coalition agreement which was in line with this policy. It appointed a “defence structures commission” to review the tasks, structure and equipment of the Bundeswehr.

The new government felt pressure of their NATO allies for approval and participation in air strikes even before they had assumed office forcing German Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schroeder to stress continuity with the previous government’s foreign policy. To reassure allies about Germany’s future foreign policy Joschka Fischer, the most prominent of the Greens' leaders, visited the US capital with Gerhard Schroeder, the Social Democratic chancellor-designate. As Russia and China were against a UN Security Council resolution invoking Chapter VII of the UN Charter for the use of force against former Yugoslavia, it appeared that the NATO would have had to act without Security Council approval. Schroeder and Fischer gave in to the pressure exerted by the Washington on 12 October 1998.

Developments in Kosovo confronted Germany with momentous decisions. Schroeder urged the conflict parties to take up peace negotiations as called for by the Contact Group and avoid any further violation of human rights. At the same time he also warned that if need be the process will be shored up militarily and assured German

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25 Seigle, n.23, p. 3.
contribution towards this effort.\textsuperscript{26} This was a significant change in the stance of SPD. Earlier citing the History argument Germans had refused participation in Eastern Europe. They had said that German presence there would only make matters worse because of its Nazi past. But now SPD interpreted Germany's past in a new way and Schroeder said, "this very responsibility also obliges us to prevent another mass murder like the one we have seen in Bosnia with all the means at our disposal." It indicated a subtle change in German foreign policy.

The new position of the government was supported by a vote in the Bundestag. However, the threat of western countries launching air strikes in the Serbian province of Kosovo without specific United Nations approval created serious qualms in Fischer's party.\textsuperscript{27}

\textit{Spurt in Crisis}

Increased diplomatic and military activities followed after Belgrade did not fully comply with the UN Security Council resolution. Allies started considering a NATO strike force for a possible attack on Yugoslavia as tension continued in the Kosovo crisis. However divisions continued within the alliance over such an attack and its legal requirements. The allies kept searching for an adequate legal basis for air strikes other than a UN Security Council resolution, which was bound to face a Russian veto. It

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.,
delayed the NATO Activation Order (ACTORD). US special envoy Richard Holbrooke made a last ditch effort to ward off a possible military strike by NATO.28

But the compromise negotiated by Richard Holebrook with Milosevic fell apart, when fighting on the ground intensified. A gruesome massacre in the village of Racak, forced the Contact Group to undertake another desperate diplomatic effort to pressure Belgrade and the KLA into accepting a temporary truce monitored by the NATO peacekeeping force. West expected a humanitarian catastrophe and did not want to repeat the mistakes in Bosnia. The effort conducted for two weeks at Rambouillet near Paris failed and the agreement signed by the Kosovar delegation was rejected by the Serbs. When all the diplomatic means were exhausted NATO decided in March 1999, to use military force as a last resort in order to prevent the political leadership in Belgrade from continuing its policy of ethnic cleansing. On 24 March NATO launched its long-threatened air attacks.

**DEPLOYMENT OF BUNDESWEHR IN COMBAT OPERATIONS**

The participation of four Luftwaffe Tornado aircraft in the NATO air bombardment of Yugoslavia during the Kosovo crisis represented Germany’s first battle deployment of soldiers since 1945.29 It was a culmination of German efforts to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with western allies. This NATO’s policy came as a shock to a country, which had forgotten war as an instrument of foreign policy. At this juncture Germany was led by a generation of leaders who had no personal memories of World

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War II. Leaders like Schroeder, Fischer or Scharping were not averse to Germany playing an active role in preventing conflict a short flight from its borders. Rudolf Scharping, the 51-year-old Defence Minister, thought that Germans were obliged "to give the whole of the Balkans a European perspective."\(^{30}\)

Germany had a limited participation in this military operation. It supplied some 14 Tornado aircraft, of which ten were equipped for electronic reconnaissance and countermeasures against enemy air defences, and four for optical reconnaissance. A major part was played by the Bundeswehr to improve the conditions of Albanian refugees. It organized refugee camps in Macedonia and Albania, and airlifted some 2500 tonnes of material in over 250 transport flights.

After the air strikes were finished, the government increased its participation in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) by 2,000, to 8,500. German contingent became the second largest, significantly exceeding the number of US military personnel. Overall Bundeswehr had committed 13000 soldiers in UN peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. It stretched the military capabilities of the Bundeswehr crisis-reaction forces to their limits.

**DEBATE IN GERMANY ON GOVERNMENT’S KOSOVO POLICY**

While Germany's support for NATO in Kosovo won plaudits from its European partners, the signs of greater assertiveness were not universally acclaimed. Its military participation in Kosovo crisis led to an intense debate in Germany. Most importantly, Bonn's support for NATO strikes against Yugoslavia divided SPD and

\(^{30}\) Ibid.
Green voters. The Chancellor's Social Democratic Party (SPD) was rocked by the Kosovo crisis because of its strong anti-military wing. Some members of the SPD, which has a powerful left-leaning, anti-military wing, decried the government's decision to send Luftwaffe aircraft into combat - the first time since 1945.31

For Foreign Minister Fischer, the fighting in Yugoslavia prompted some bitter soul-searching and some of the pacifist Greens were positively convulsed. But the party overall remained divided. Fischer was convinced that the actions of German government had been right from the start. Alluding to the country's heavy historical burden of fascism and genocide, he said that Germany couldn't have acted any other way. And if taking action carried grave responsibility then so did remaining aloof.32 Mr Fischer tried to stress the benefits for the Greens of staying in government as a lever on policy. He warned that the Greens opposition of the government line would trigger a different coalition in Bonn - but not a different policy.33 Fischer emphasised that he was against war but also against Auschwitz.34

In the Bundestag debate, representatives of most of the parliamentary parties spoke in support of the government's Kosovo policy. Besides few Greens, the major dissenting voices came from the Party of Democratic Socialism. PDS parliamentary leader Gregor Gysi had met Milosevic in Belgrade. He defended Milosevic and denounced the NATO mission as a war of aggression that was in clear violation of international law during April 15 debates. Foreign Minister Fischer retorted this by saying that the Milosevic's policies amounted to "raw fascism" and cannot be tolerated

by a democratic Europe.\textsuperscript{35}

Though Gerhard Schroeder managed to get the approval of Bundestag for the use of Military force in Kosovo crisis, he still had to deal with important pockets of resistance not only among the Greens but also among his own party members. The war in Kosovo and Germany's participation in the NATO air strikes had caused deep doubts among many Social Democrats just as with many citizens.\textsuperscript{36} There was widespread unease among the SPD's rank and file.\textsuperscript{37} This sentiment was seen during the election of SPD chairman. Schroeder was looked at rather mistrustfully but was still chosen as the new chairman of SPD because of lack of alternative candidate.\textsuperscript{38} He could also manage support due to the external pressure of Balkan war.\textsuperscript{39}

Still the support of over 80 percent of the delegates on the crucial issue of the government's Kosovo policy fundamentally solidified the chancellor's position within the alliance and within the governing coalition.\textsuperscript{40} Criticism within the SPD remained confined to voices on the left; the centre-right opposition parties promised full support.\textsuperscript{41} This muted public and political reaction underlined the distance, which Germany had

\textsuperscript{35} "Fischer Puts Forward Kosovo Peace Plan; Bundestag Backs Use of Military Force," \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Handelsblatt} (Düsseldorf), 13 April 1999 as quoted in \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Offenbach-Post}, 13 April 1999 as quoted in \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Rheinische Post} (Düsseldorf), 13 April 1999 as quoted in \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Freie Presse} (Chemnitz), 13 April 1999 as quoted in \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung}, 13 April 1999 as quoted in \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_du_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\textsuperscript{41} "Action by Luftwaffe Points up a Foreign Policy Transformation," \textit{Financial Times}, 29 March 1999.
covered in its foreign and security policy in the post-Cold War era. Chancellor Schroeder received strong backing from Joschka Fischer, the Green foreign minister. Fischer's standing within the Green party helped, to avert potentially fatal splits in the governing red-green coalition.\textsuperscript{42}

Schroeder said that the NATO's goal in using military force was to make it possible for the Kosovo Albanians to live in their homeland in peace. He made clear that unless Milosevic withdrew his troops from Kosovo, allowed the refugees to return to their homes and agreed to the stationing of an international peacekeeping force, stopping of NATO air strikes will not achieve its goal.\textsuperscript{43} It was a new determination of Germany to tackle crises with all means.

Success of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in getting the support of Social Democrats for his Kosovo policy cleared the doubts about Germany as a reliable alliance partner. It removed apprehensions about German political behavior. This new German approach was forged and toughened by the crises facing the former Yugoslavia. Mr Schroeder remained popular in the aftermath of bombardment. Opinion polls suggested about 60 per cent of Germans thought Nato's strikes were justified. The chancellor struck a chord when he argued the country has to be conscious - but not excessively cramped - by its past.\textsuperscript{44}

But the war in Kosovo was not without risk for the ruling coalition. It was feared that the situation could change if a clear victory for NATO remained elusive, or if Mr Schroeder reversed government policy and backed the deployment of ground troops.\textsuperscript{45} It

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
had already shaken the foundations of the government and the risk was growing that prolonged NATO attacks or possible deployment of ground troops could bring the whole edifice down.

**Two Track German Policy in Kosovo**

Germany firmly supported NATO and confirmed that it would fulfill its obligations as a NATO member as long as the use of force remained necessary. But the dissent within the coalition parties especially within the Greens grew as the war progressed. To deal with this situation Germans followed a two-pronged strategy in Kosovo. In an effort to achieve political solution to the Kosovo crisis Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer drafted a peace plan involving UN and Russia.\(^{46}\) Germany's diplomatic efforts to secure a political settlement constituted one important reason why the government was able to maintain its stance. This plan was discussed with the Russian government as well as with the other EU and NATO states. It was directed not only toward Russia and Yugoslavia, it was also at the same time a signal to the coalition parties in Bonn that the West was not trying to achieve its goals only by military means. Ruling coalition had no intention to unnecessarily militarize German foreign policy.\(^{47}\) Fischer successfully achieved his goals.

Fischer's plan was well received by Germany's partners. The EU states continued to support the use of force in trying to halt the killings and deportations in Kosovo.

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\(^{46}\) "Fischer Puts Forward Kosovo Peace Plan; Bundestag Backs Use of Military Force," [http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm](http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm), The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.

\(^{47}\) Neue Westfälische (Bielefeld), 15 April 1999 as quoted in [http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm](http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm), The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.
Schroeder described the West's refusal to tolerate the violence against the Kosovars as a defense of the "European model" of civilization. He also talked of a "Marshall Plan of sorts" for the Balkans to help establish democracy in the region and bring the Balkan nations closer to the EU.\textsuperscript{48}

Both Fischer and Schroeder put NATO's intervention in Kosovo into a broader context. Fisher viewed alliance's engagement in Kosovo as important for defending human rights and to realise the dream of a United Europe. Whereas Milosevic was representing a politics of extreme nationalism, a politics of violence and the past. He could have jeopardised the integration of the Balkan region within Europe. Schroeder saw Kosovo crisis threatening NATO's credibility as a community of shared values. He urged the alliance to make clear that it was not prepared to accept a part of Europe reverting to oppression and barbarism.\textsuperscript{49}

All parties except PDS supported NATO airstrikes in Kosovo. The opposition Christian Democrats also supported the Schroeder government on Kosovo. Delegates at the CDU's spring party conference in Erfurt (Thuringia) overwhelmingly approved a resolution endorsing NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo and its air strategy.\textsuperscript{50} But CDU and the Greens strongly opposed a ground war, which forced Schroeder to adopt this as the official position.

Fischer strongly backed US on Kosovo during a visit to Washington in May and

\textsuperscript{48} "Fischer Puts Forward Kosovo Peace Plan; Bundestag Backs Use of Military Force," \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_16_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 16 April 1999, German Information Center.


\textsuperscript{50} "CDU Backs NATO at Party Conference," \url{http://www.germany-info.org/content/wk_dn_archive/wk_04_30_99.htm}, The Week in Germany, 30 April 1999.
perceived Kosovo crisis as a threat to European stability. Only its resolution could have facilitated the safe return of the nearly one million ethnic Albanian Kosovar refugees. On the other hand a prolonged crisis could have resulted into a resurgence of "aggressive nationalism" ripping the Balkans apart. Though Fischer's main concern was the return of refugees, he also supported updating of the operational plans for the peacekeeping force to be known as KFOR. It included outlines for a scenario in which allied troops would enter Kosovo in a non-permissive or combat environment in case Belgrade did not accept NATO's conditions.

Operation Allied Force compelled Milosevic to yield to international pressure and ultimately led to the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999, which remains the basis for resolving the Kosovo conflict. The resolution brought about the immediate withdrawal of Serbian security forces from Kosovo; the return of the Kosovo-Albanian refugees; the establishment of an international security presence, the Kosovo Protection Force (KFOR), and a civilian administration in the province, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Thus fortunately peace was achieved without a ground offensive and German ground troops were sent into Kosovo only as part of KFOR and participated fully in armed peacekeeping. The decision to participate in KFOR brought up the issue of a Security Council mandate. The opposition, the Greens and some members of the SPD insisted on UN mandate. This demand was finally raised by the Chancellor himself.

Of the approximately 900,000 Kosovo Albanians who had fled the region as of June 1999, roughly 850,000 returned to their country. More than 10,000 of the returning refugees were temporarily offered shelter in Germany as part of the humanitarian
evacuation effort. Nearly all of the returning refugees were provided with sufficient housing to protect them against the winter and with other basic necessities.

**Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe**

In spring 1999 Germany sponsored a southeast European "Stability Pact" to pave the way for post-Kosovo war reconstruction and closer integration of countries in the region into European and trans-Atlantic institutions. The US and its main NATO allies agreed on 18 June 1999 on the need for urgent reconstruction of Kosovo as soon as the last Serb forces left the Yugoslav province. The "Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe" is the main framework for reconstruction of the region in the wake of the conflicts that took place in the Balkans from 1991 to 1999. The pact is a political process intended to bring about improvement of general conditions in the region in all areas by means of internal reforms and increased cooperation and is based on the CSCE/OSCE process. It is the most crucial instrument for promoting extensive cooperation in Southeast Europe, including Kosovo. The strategic aim of the Stability Pact is to integrate the whole of Southeast Europe into the Euro-Atlantic structures, to facilitate comprehensive regional cooperation and to ensure the respect of democracy, human rights and the market economy. The Stability Pact offers the prospect of eventual EU membership to all states in the region, which fulfil the necessary criteria.

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GERMAN PRESENCE IN KOSOVO

The German government has been involved in various ways since the Kosovo conflict (1998/99). It has been providing humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance. German involvement has been concentrated on participation in KFOR and UNMIK. It has also been coordinating with the international institutions and agencies working there on the ground.

Kosovo Forces (KFOR)

The multinational KFOR force is acting on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 which contains a mandate for the establishment of an international military security presence (KFOR) as well as an international civilian presence (UNMIK). Among the main tasks of the KFOR peacekeeping mission are monitoring compliance of the Yugoslavian armed forces with the withdrawal agreement, monitoring Kosovo's internal borders with Serbia and Montenegro, as well as its outer borders with Albania and Macedonia, and above all protecting minorities and refugees returning to Kosovo.

KFOR made a major contribution to repairing the infrastructure and supporting UNMIK. It consists of soldiers from NATO and non-NATO states. They are stationed in Kosovo and support areas included in the operational zone (KFOR support lines through Macedonia, Greece, Albania). The KFOR also had a German Commander General Klaus Reinhardt.
Germany's Contribution to KFOR

The KFOR has a total strength of 41,350 men, including 4,870 soldiers from the German Army (figures as of mid-November 1999). A force of 7,900 soldiers, including 1,160 Germans, was stationed in Macedonia and Albania. Kosovo was divided into five sectors and Germans were asked to look after the southern part of the region around Prizren. With 5,800 soldiers, Germany became the third largest troop provider after Italy (6,100) and the U.S. (5,900) and has not unilaterally reduced any of its troops. Germany led the Multinational Brigade in Sector South (with its headquarters in Prizren), one of the five sectors established in Kosovo. The huge German deployment in the Balkans stretched the military capabilities of the Bundeswehr crisis-reaction forces to their limits as the conscription based Bundeswehr has limited capability for this kind of operation.

United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)

The UN mission has assumed de facto responsibility for public life in Kosovo. The main tasks of UNMIK are establishing a civilian administration, providing humanitarian and refugee aid, protecting human rights, helping to develop a democratic civil society and to rebuild the economy in Kosovo. German personnel are involved in all the key areas of UNMIK. UNMIK is divided up into four pillars whose activities are coordinated by UNHCR, the UN, the OSCE and the EU Commission:

With 265 German officers already in the region, Germany provided the second largest police contingent after the United States. The deputy chief of police also comes from Germany.
Table 1

Funding provided by Germany for reconstruction of Kosovo Province with support from various federal ministries (as of December 1999, not counting German shares of EU, World Bank, OSCE and UN funding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian relief</td>
<td>Approx. 87.5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacekeeping measures and</td>
<td>Approx. 15.9 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIK support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free State of Bavaria</td>
<td>Approx. 5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations from the German public</td>
<td>Approx. 150 million euros</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the first 12 months 10 percent of the overall costs of the mission was covered by Germany making it the third largest contributor among the UN member countries. Moreover, Germany is also among the largest donors of voluntary funds. The EU has allocated more than 3.1 billion euros in non-military programs in 1999 and 2000, compared with approximately $900 million in US non-military assistance for the same period. In response to the UN appeal Germany's Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to contribute an additional DM 19 million to the UN Trust Fund for Kosovo. Germany became the largest contributor to all areas of the peace efforts in the Balkans in general and Kosovo in particular.

For the coordination of German assistance in Kosovo the government has established an office in Pristina under the supervision of the German Foreign Office with a branch office in Prizren. A working group on "Reconstruction in South-eastern Europe", established under the supervision of the Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development to coordinate the initiatives of the Reconstruction Loan Corporation (RLC), the German Investment and Development Company (DEG) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), has also established an office in Pristina. The Press and Information Office of the Federal Government is providing planning, organisational, and financial assistance for the media in a number of projects with a view to promoting the development of a free and democratic media scene in Kosovo.54

A good beginning has been made under the framework of ‘Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe’ and the overall situation has improved in Kosovo. However, it would be unrealistic to assume that problems, which have been pent up for decades, could be solved within a matter of a year. This process will require much more time, patience and the sustained commitment of the international community, both militarily and in terms of civil reconstruction.

**MAJOR REASONS FOR GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN KOSOVO**

When Germany agreed to send the Luftwaffe join NATO for air strikes in Kosovo, even without a UN Security Council mandate there were several reasons behind it. This leap was made by the country’s first government coalition of sometimes strongly NATO-critical Social Democrats and broadly pacifist Greens. Probably this shift from a centre-right government to a red-Green one gave Germany a chance to redefine its role into international politics and increase its clout abroad. Once in power these coalition parties substantially changed their position in their effort to be fit to govern and to

demonstrate their reliability as partners of the Western alliance. They also wanted to remove any suspicion of yet another German Sonderweg. By now Germany had resolved the constitutional debate and too a large extent the political debate regarding out-of-area operations. Germany had also taken the responsibility of the EU and G-8 presidency, which had a galvanising effect on the government. It had to show leadership on all sorts of matters especially on Kosovo. Germany did not witness any serious protest against its participation in Kosovo bombings because the people who could have done it were in power. Many argued that had these parties been opposition they would have definitely damned NATO’s bombing of Serbia, encouraged public opposition to the war and made it far harder to send Germans into action and keep them there.

Pressure was applied on Schroeder and Fischer by America even before they had been sworn to office. They were asked to give their immediate support to a ‘military option’ in Kosovo. Moreover it was difficult for the Germans to take the shabby treatment by the British and French over the Rambouillet conference, which began work in February to try to find a political solution for Kosovo. When the big three (America, Britain and France) flew to Belgrade in a last-ditch effort to avoid war Germans were not invited. Naturally a brand-new red-green government in Germany was treated with circumspection by its partners in such a crisis. To remove this environment of suspicion and establish their credentials as a reliable ally Germans participated in the combat operation of Kosovo. Though coalition leaders had to face stiff opposition in their parties’ ranks and they (esp. Mr Fischer) put their jobs on the line. They wanted an equal say at the West’s top table.55

55 “Germany Comes out of its post-War Shell”, The Economist, 10 July 1999, p. 49.
The German perception of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia was that it was a war of territorial redistribution between ethnic groups. The Serbs were identified as aggressors. The behaviour of Serbs characterised by authoritarianism, grandiose ideas about a Greater Serbia and the violent suppression and extermination of other ethnic groups evoked the image of Nazism. Germany was also motivated by the humanitarian objective of ending the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. It reminded them of Nazi atrocities and the Western failure to restore order in Kosovo.

The most important factor behind German participation was the concern in Germany about the stability in South-Eastern Europe. Continuous Civil War had damaged the credibility and the effectiveness of European and international institutions especially NATO, the European Union and the UN. German foreign policy was obsessed with the dangers of European instability and based on multi-lateralism. It wanted to make every effort to keep these international institutions functioning.

Germany’s location at the centre of Europe made it vulnerable to the ripple effects of any further deterioration of the situation in the Balkans. There was considerable concern in Germany about the potential influx of refugees from Kosovo. Clearly this was where most Kosovars would have wanted to go if they were unable to return to their homes. Already burdened with a large refugee population from Bosnia and Albania German authorities were alarmed at the possibility of another large influx of refugees. Germany, was also under the burden of reconstruction in East. Re-emergence of neo-Nazis sent the danger bells ringing throughout the administration. To their utter disbelief Germans found that even members of German army (Bundeswehr) were having neo-
Nazis sympathies. Though government never openly acknowledged that, but the influx of refugees and rise of neo-Nazis must have been a major factor behind the change in German asylum law. The crisis in Kosovo was likely to affect Germany the most.

Non-participation in Kosovo crisis would also have resulted in isolation of Germany thereby reducing its influence on NATO policies. This was not a desired course for a major regional power like Germany. The way Kosovo conflict would be settled was bound to have far-reaching implications for European security, European stability and European order.

IMPLICATIONS OF BUNDESWEHR’S PARTICIPATION IN KOSOVO

After the participation of German army (Bundeswehr) in Kosovo, many people jumped to the conclusion that overnight Germany has become a normal country. It has removed the shackles placed on it after the World War II. But the facts point to the contrary.

During the Kosovo crisis, two new aspects were added to the German role in out-of-area operations and with regard to the use of force. First, Bonn accepted the need for Bundeswehr participation in NATO air attacks. Thus, for the first time it seriously involved German soldiers in protracted combat missions. Second, Germany agreed to participate in a NATO operation, which was not explicitly permitted under the international law. NATO air strikes were carried out in the absence of a mandate from the UN Security Council. Many other constraints were still present on the Germany’s use of force. Germany remained reluctant to introduce its ground troops in large-scale combat

56 "German Armed Forces", http://www.germany-info.org/wic/versionI/content/np_3f.html, German Information Center.
operations, involving much greater risks of loss of German lives. The three important conditions set by the constitutional court were also honoured. German military action was part of a multilateral operation conducted by a collective security organisation. This operation was launched to maintain peace and international security. Moreover, it was approved by the German parliament.\(^57\)

One of the primary concerns of Germany in Kosovo was to check the human right abuses and provide humanitarian assistance. Germany tried to emphasize that the participation in Kosovo became necessary to deal with the human rights emergency. The new coalition in Germany also wanted to reassure its partners and allies of its intentions. Multi-lateralism was a revered principle in Germany, which looked threatened by the war in Kosovo. Kosovo crisis also posed the danger of re-nationalisation of European politics.

German leaders took pain to clarify that the Kosovo was not a precedent. Fisher admitted that the question of use of force in German foreign policy was still a controversial issue and there was no consensus over the German involvement in peacekeeping operations. He emphasised the need for a fundamental debate on this whole area.\(^58\) It also did not mean that Germany would now seek to go it alone. On the contrary the talk in Germany was that Kosovo underlined the EU’s crying need for a common foreign and security policy.\(^59\) Germany still preferred a political solution to the Kosovo crisis through the Fisher Plan. It tried to rope in Russia and UN. It showed its clear preference for political negotiations over military coercion.

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59 “Germany Comes out of its post-War Shell”, *The Economist*, 10 July 1999, p. 49.
Surely, it was a significant change in German foreign policy pursued so diligently for last four decades. But it would be a mistake to draw sweeping conclusions from the German participation in Kosovo. Germany was forced to participate militarily as a new red-green coalition was in power and allies were not sure about its behaviour. Moreover, Germans were the ones who were suffering because of the instability in East and were likely suffer in future. German willingness to participate in the combat operations in Kosovo has to be seen in this context.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BUNDESWEHR AND EUROPEAN MILITARY CAPABILITY

In the initial phase Germany tried to deal with the Yugoslav crisis through the European Union. For the United States the Yugoslav crisis was a European problem, and wanted the Europeans to resolve it. But very soon it became obvious that the EU diplomacy was not bearing fruit and a major military engagement was necessary. But the Europeans could not move without the US taking the lead for both political reasons as well as for lack of military resources.

The crisis in the Balkans exposed the limitations of the European Security institutions. It added significant pressure to the development of European Security Cooperation. The conflict in Yugoslavia was a severe test for the multi-lateral mechanisms. It showed the inadequacy of the existing ones. A European system of collective security to deal with such a crisis did not exist which forced Bonn to turn to the existing structures of the Atlantic alliance.
The Kosovo War brought to the fore shortcomings in European military capabilities. The domination of this war by the US forced the European powers to search for a common European Foreign and Security policy. The EU nations decided to build a force of European soldiers, which can be deployed at a short notice. This force was expected to sustain combat operations for one year even without direct American involvement. For this purpose European nations wanted to keep a force of 50,000 to 60,000 soldiers. It was not possible for a single member nation to contribute all the soldiers. As armed forces of several partner countries were undergoing reconstruction a need was felt to have more convergence and cooperation in the reform of these.

The Yugoslav crisis seriously challenged the strongly held German belief that conflicts could be resolved through international negotiations and institutions within a framework of internationally recognised norms and procedures. These instruments proved effective in most of Central and Eastern Europe, but failed in former Yugoslavia. This made the recourse to military instruments increasingly necessary. Germany maintained a high level of involvement through its membership of the Contact Group, but these political mechanism and instruments failed.

The use of Bundeswehr in the Kosovo crisis brought into focus the military capabilities of the Germany. After coming to power the Red-Green coalition formed an independent commission (Weizsacker Commission) on the “Common Security and the Future of the Bundeswehr” to examine the risks and interests of the FRG in the field of security. This commission submitted its report on 23 May 2000. It had considered the restructuring of German forces who were visualized to perform their duties within the framework of an inclusive security and defence policy. The proposals were suggested for
the basic structures of a new Bundeswehr after estimating the need of quantity and quality of military capabilities Germany should preserve, enhance or acquire for its foreign and security policy.60

It was found that the Bundeswehr in its present form is too big, ill composed and increasingly out of step with times. Its present structure had evolved during the four decades of political and military confrontation in Central Europe, which no longer remained suitable after total change in conditions governing Germany’s security and defence policy. It made necessary for Germany to redefine its military contribution towards its own security and that of its allies.

The objective behind Bundeswehr reform was to make it fit to participate in crisis prevention and crisis management operations. It was also expected to fulfil national and alliance defence requirements and meet international commitments. In a new security environment Bundeswehr forces had to change in a way so that it can cooperate effectively with partners in NATO, the EU, the UN and OSCE. Changes in Bundeswehr are planned to take place over a decade. The provision for appropriate budget for operation and maintenance, equipment and infrastructure measure was also suggested.

The commission decided that Bundeswehr should have the capability to participate in up to two crisis response operations simultaneously and indefinitely. It also decided the scale of the operational forces. The army was to have two brigade-size operational contingents with a requisite support and command elements (a total of up to 16,000 troops). Similarly, Air Force was to have two operational contingents with a total

of 90 to 100 combat aircraft, 10 ground-based air defence squadrons, as well as aerial refuelling and airlift components. Two operational contingents composed of ships, submarines and aircraft and capable of conducting combined naval warfare operations were suggested for navy. The medical service was to be made up of two operational contingents with mobile hospitals and medical evacuation capacities. Greater emphasis was to be given on Air Force and Navy as the armed forces were being oriented on crisis prevention and crisis management.61

The Commission suggested a largely professional army and conscripts were to be taken in a very small number. In effect it was to be a form of military service based on selection. It suggested an increase in operational force component from around 60,000 at present to 140,000 that would be functional and fit for employment in alliance role. The peacetime strength of armed forces was reduced to 240,000 including an annual figure of 30,000 conscripts on a 10 month term of military service. However, the build-up potential was to be 300,000 troops and a manpower reserve of 100,000 troops. The Bundeswehr Medical Service was to be centralised, geared to the operational tasks. The Commission recommended the modernisation of the existing equipment and acquisition of new ones. It also suggested that the military profession should be made more attractive.62

IMPACT OF KOSOVO WAR ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

The Yugoslav crisis presented several new challenges before German foreign policy. The end of the Cold War brought fundamental changes in Europe. Besides territorial boundary, system of governance was also changing in several states but the

61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
new structure had not fully evolved. Even institutions like NATO and OSCE were trying to redefine their roles and functions. Germany itself was not sure about its responsibilities. The crisis in former Yugoslavia forced Western European states to face many issues and dilemmas in the post-Cold War security environment. The first issue was the nature of the international system that began to emerge. To maintain the stability in Europe Western European states wanted to maintain territorial status quo. But the structure of Yugoslav state of Cold War period was not compatible with democracy and human rights. The German political elite was less obsessed with preserving status quo as a consequence of reunification.

NATO’s military intervention generated a lively political debate in Germany about the relative merits and demerits of military crisis management and preventive policies. Now it seems, there is no going back for Germany from the required military participation at least in European crises especially which have the potential to endanger Germany’s interests besides peace and security in Europe. Keeping this aim in view the Weizsacker Commission has tried to restructure the Bundeswehr to make it more suitable for participation in crisis prevention and crisis management and to take effective participation in alliance responsibilities.

But at the same time equal importance is given to the non-military dimensions of the security policy. A renewed emphasis on conflict prevention has been placed through Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe. It aims at stabilising and in the long run integrating the whole of South-eastern Europe into the EU and NATO through cooperation. 63

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63 Maull, n.57, p.73.
These new responsibilities and commitments have huge implications for the Bundeswehr severely stretched by its commitment in Bosnia and Kosovo. Germany has been curtailing its budget for defence and Bundeswehr is starved for funds. A successful intervention only prepares the ground for future reconstruction work requiring a long-term military presence. This European commitment will keep Germany and other major European powers stuck in Balkans for a long time to come. Moreover, complete restructuring of Bundeswehr is planned over a decade. Hence it will take some time before additional capability becomes available for deployment.

The Bundeswehr participation in Kosovo was kept at a level where it did not pose serious risk to German lives. The German participation in Kosovo could not clarify the extent to which Germany would be prepared to accept the costs of sustained peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, or preventive strategies.

Two different dimensions are likely to constitute German approach to peacekeeping operations. To deal with European crises Germany would like to create and develop a European mechanism and institutional framework. The creation of a Rapid Reaction Force is a step in this direction. For global issues Germany would work in coalitions, always in association with UN, US and NATO.

The Yugoslav crisis left its impact on the process of geopolitical maturation in Germany. It resulted into a reassessment of the diplomatic, economic and military instruments at Germany’s disposal and their deployment. It provided a political context in which use of the military force could be accepted. It also established the limits of the leadership role of FRG.
The future use of force by NATO beyond the defence of vital national interests will be couched in terms of humanitarian and democratic legitimacy. Actions taken on these grounds will require strong public support. Public opinion will also determine to a large extent German policies regarding out of area operations and use of force. Hence the policy on use of force will still be guided by caution and restrain. Use of the Bundeswehr in the future will continue to need exceptionally compelling and emotive reasons, which touch on Germany’s core values. It will only take place within a NATO or EU context and the Bundeswehr will never operate alone.

CONCLUSION

There were two main motives behind Germany’s policies throughout the Yugoslav crisis. The first was to end the fighting in former Yugoslavia, which was endangering European peace and stability. Secondly, Germany sought to work in close cooperation with its allies so that Germany was not sidelined and looked with suspicion. The fighting in Yugoslavia posed a very serious threat to Europe, and hence to German security and stability. Bonn's hasty recognition of Slovenia and Croatia was a means to halt the war, though it turned out to be misguided. The complexities of the situation in former Yugoslavia were not amenable to simple solutions.

The basic elements of Germany’s institutional security policy proved to be very successful in Central and East European countries where it focussed on supporting economic stability. Success in this area was achieved due to the enlargement of the European institutions and spread of Western values of democracy and human rights. But the same approach did not bear fruit in the former Yugoslavia. Here the conflicts were
associated with the dissolution of states and were not interstate. These intra-state conflicts posed new challenges for German foreign and security policy. It exposed the inadequacy of the existing European institutions and made the major Western powers search for new ones.

The crisis in former Yugoslavia hastened the process of enlarging the scope for military action by the Bundeswehr mission outside the NATO treaty area. From the enforcement of sanctions and the no-fly-zone, through steps to support the NATO Rapid Reaction Force, through sending a field hospital to Croatia, and ultimately Bonn's green light for participation of German Tornados in combat missions Germany's military to take part in UN and NATO peacekeeping and peace-enforcement activities widened. However, they did not fundamentally change Bonn's traditional foreign policy orientation. Germany still remained a 'reluctant power'.

Germany participated in the Kosovo air strikes because of its commitment to humanitarian and democratic values. It also wanted to show its solidarity with its Western allies, and was genuinely worried about the future of European order. Though its policies regarding use of force continued to reflect its old culture of restraint. The German contribution in the combat operation was limited to a handful of reconnaissance and ECR - Tornados. They firmly ruled out any deployment of ground troops. Through out the crisis Berlin put special emphasis on the humanitarian assistance. It accepted a large number of refugees from Kosovo. It pushed for a political solution to the conflict with Fischer Plan.

The Yugoslav crisis pushed Germany closer towards full military participation in UN and NATO missions. This in no way suggests a decisive move away from Bonn's
post-war foreign policy orientation. The 'culture of restraint', which Kinkel referred to, is firmly rooted, and Bonn will continue to define its interests, objectives and options against this background of a "civilian power" orientation.

Germans wanted stable peace and return to normalcy in former Yugoslavia but favoured deployment of Bundeswehr in support capacities. They considered combat deployment of German armed forces only in extreme situation. Yugoslav crisis was a big drain on their resources. Germany was already under burden of cost of unification. Hence Germans were the keenest to see this crisis solved as soon as possible.

Serious German military participation is still insignificant in comparison to its logistical contribution. There was near unanimity in Germany against deploying German ground troops and thus posing serious threats to the lives of German soldiers. When it came to the crunch, Germany was found lacking in courage in Kosovo. But Germany has successfully accomplished the transition to a “normal” regional power.