

North Korea is playing dangerous games !

CBRNE Newsletter Terrorism

Volume 47, 2013

Original Papers

www.cbrne-terrorism-newsletter.com

Southeastern European organized crime & extremism review

By Ioannis Michaletos

The following research is a review around the theme of Southeastern European organized crime, mainly in the period 1995-2007, highlighting the emergence of powerful regional "Mafias" with an actual global presence. The main focus is the Albanian criminal syndicates centered on Kosovo. The research is composed by previous material of the writer, some of which was presented in international workshops. Moreover the issue of radical Islam is being overviewed in a second part, for the same period, along with information regarding the state of affairs of the Muslim communities in the region.

Narcotics and the emergence of crime syndicates in the Balkans

The main threat to the Balkans nowadays, is the existence of well organized criminal groups that to an extent are an integral part of the world wide "Crime Syndicates" that for the most part control the narcotics trade in our époque. The infamous Balkan drugs route^[1] is the main path by which narcotics and specifically heroin; are smuggled to

European countries. It is actually a network of contrabands, corrupted public officials and war lords that make sure that the heroin produced in Afghanistan is smoothly transferred to the European addicts.

According to the Council of Foreign affairs^[2], Afghanistan has almost tripled its heroin production and in 2005 32,000 acres were reserved for poppy cultivation, out of 12,000 acres in 2004. This fact shows first of all failure by the NATO Forces in that country to create the necessary framework for the reconstruction process. As far as the ramifications for the Balkans are concerned, the increased profits by criminal gangs have boasted them with tremendous riches and political influence.

There are mainly two organized ethnic groups that deal most of the arrangements concerning the organized crime in the Balkans. The so-called Albanian mafia^[3] and the Turkish crime syndicates^[4]. The Albanian organized crime is very active since the collapse of the Communist rule in this country that opened the way for various indigenous gangs to spread their wings further and take part in one of the most profitable commerce of all times, namely drugs. A leading French criminologist Xavier Raufer^[5] has extensively dealt with the issue of the Albanian mafia. He considers the Albanians as the only true "Mafia" in the



Balkans due to the peculiar social structure of their society in the Northern parts of the country "The land of the Genghis".

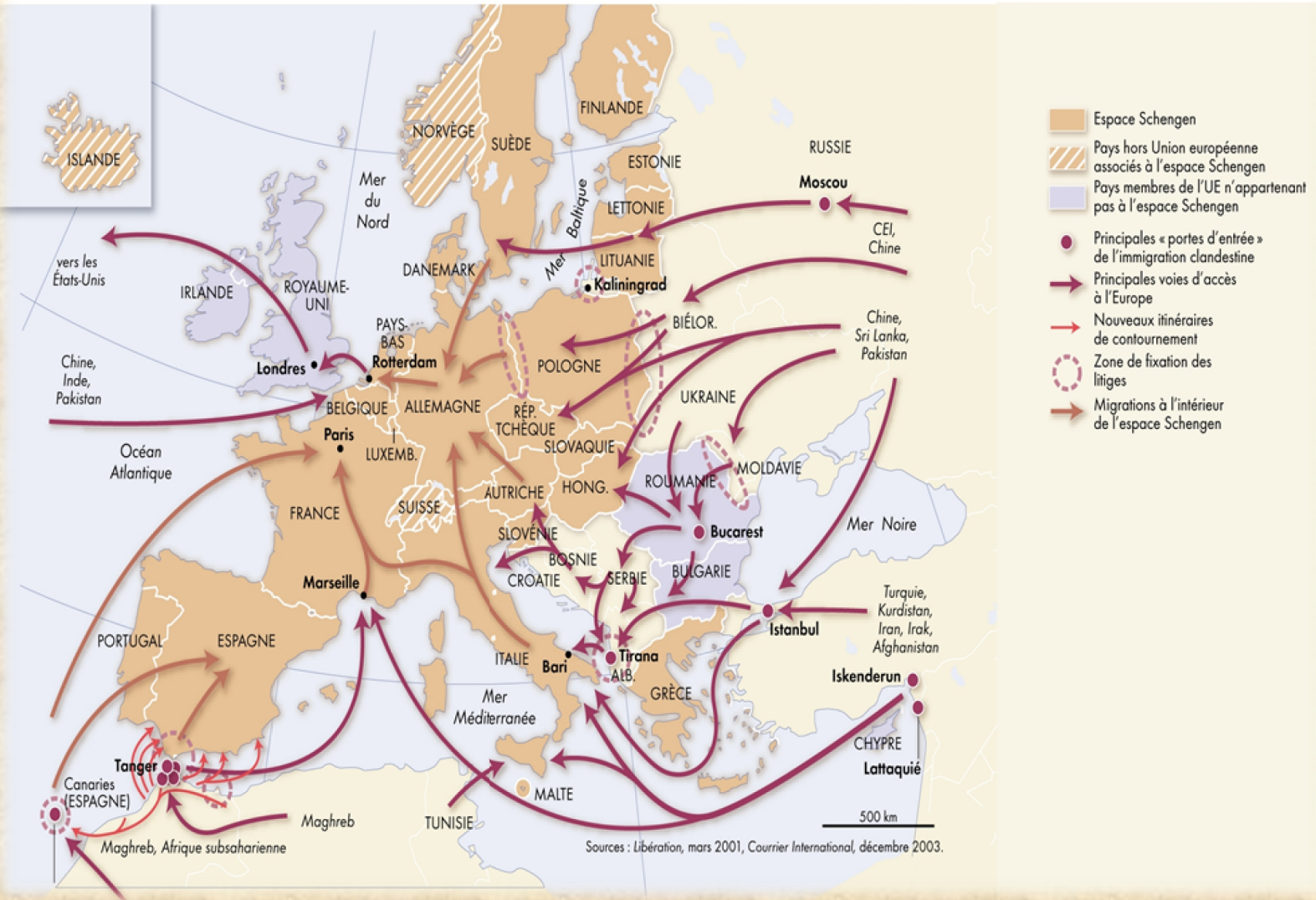
An isolated society with very firm beliefs in issues of honor and manhood pride coupled with severe social problems and a culture of vendetta; has been transformed into a huge international crime network. Various reports^[6] indicate that roughly 70-80% of the heroin distributed in European is under Albanian control, a really impressive percentage for a nation of just 6 million people. Moreover in the Balkan route –In reality three distinct routes-, the Albanian mafia plays a vital role in safeguarding the interests of the world drugs trade by having its "Soldiers" and "Capos" along the way and protecting shipments from police and official interruption.



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Furthermore Albania as a country is a major producer of Cannabis[7], which is mainly exported to neighboring Greece and Italy. The narcotic traded is placed along the trafficking and illegal immigrant smuggling[8] operations that have seen the Albanians gaining the fame as the most powerful and dangerous criminal group in South Eastern Europe. In Greece alone the revenues from prostitution run at around 7.5 billion USD[9], a large portion of that being controlled by Albanian criminal groups. Trafficking of women from Albania is one of the main ways to establish a “War chest” for the organized crime, in order to invest its wealth in the drugs trade.

LES LIEUX DE PASSAGE CLANDESTINS



In essence the first stage for every respectable organized crime unit, is to establish a prostitution ring, make easily large amounts of cash, and then invest them for the drugs trade by constructing the expensive logistics bases, fake companies, pay corrupted officials and so on. Therefore when looking into the different aspects of organized criminal activity, one should note that all forms of that activity are interconnected and that each one leads to the other. That actually is one of the differences of organized crime from the other forms of criminality[10].

Back to the activities of the Albanian criminal groups, the recent history illustrates the existence of a hybrid criminal form[11], meaning the interconnection between criminal activities and terrorism. The Albanian groups that are mostly active in the North of the country have been associated with the



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

preparations of the U.C.K guerilla forces in the late 90's, as well as, with their arming and training[12]. The troubling 90's in South Eastern Europe saw the convergence of the drugs trade along with the formation of radical Islamic groups and the pervasion of corruption in the upper echelons on the countries involved. In the Albanian case the past decade it is assumed that the country is facing a virtual take over of its institution by the organized crime that in its turn has been linked with international terrorism, with Al Qaeda withstanding[13].

The main role of the Albanian Mafia in the narcotics trade is the one of wholesale distributor of Afghan heroine. Along the Balkan route and especially the one passing through Southern Bulgaria, FYROM; the Albanians import heroin and then dispense it to Italy, or Bosnia- Croatia to Austria and Central Europe. After 1999 and the consequent Albanian dominance in Kosovo, Pristina has become the unquestionable narcotics capital of Europe[14]. A traditionally provisional city in the midst of the Balkans is nowadays the epicenter of all drugs deal of an area encompassing Central Europe, Balkans, and Middle East.

The lack of law coupled with the existence of a society reluctant to pursue organized crime, has created a "black hole" in the centre of the Balkans that primarily lives on criminal activities and the remittances of the Kosovo-Albanian Diaspora[15]. The latter is strategically located in countries such as Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Denmark and dominates the European heroin trade. Despite the fact that Albanians are relatively newcomers to the European organized crime scene-Like the old-timers Sicilians, Corsicans – they have already taken over the entire European heroin market and make large advances in the sectors of trafficking, racketeering, arms smuggling and illegal gambling[16].

The infamous Albanian mafia is a formidable criminal network, but the existence of another one, influential as well, should be added in order to examine the whole spectrum of drugs trade in the Balkans. The Turkish crime syndicates are the undisputable partner of the Albanians. It would not be possible for the Albanians to become distributors in the first place if they weren't able to acquire their goods from the East, and that is where the role of the Turks begins.

Turkey is a country strategically located between the East and the West. Apart from its importance in political and military level, it is also an integral part of the international narcotics smuggling. It would just be very hard for heroin to travel from Central Asia to Europe without being able to trespass Turkey, the only Asian country bordering with Europe. Turkey is a state traditionally producing Opium[17], for pharmaceutical purposes. In the early 70's international pressure –Mostly from Nixon administration in the USA- obliged Turkey to enforce stricter rules for Opium production in 1974. Up until then heroin was produced in Turkey as an Opium derivative and quantities were sold to the West with the assistance of the Sicilian[18] and Corsican mafias[19].

The heroin to be sold was transported with ships to Sicily, and then to Marseilles where the Corsicans had created labs for the fabrication of the commercial product. From then onwards it was transferred to New York and other USA ports where the American-Italian mafia would assure its allocation in the end-users, the heroin addicts. The forceful USA administration at that time declared a war against narcotics and obliged the Turks to seek other sources of the lucrative opium. Soon enough Turkish operational production bases were established in Afghanistan and Northern Pakistan. The war in the former during the 80's, as well as, the resurgence of the Kurdish guerilla fighting after 1984[20] and the Iraq-Iranian war[21] the same period; created a convergence of political, criminal and military operations based in heroin trade.

Events such as the Iran-Contra[22] scandal illuminate how far the heroin trade has penetrated the higher echelons of the world's decision-making process and how it interacts with the international affairs. Moreover the effective destruction of Beirut during the 80's collapsed the cities ubiquitous reputation as the prime port for narcotics trade and this role was overtaken by Istanbul[23]. The situation after the end of the Cold War in 1989, found the Turks financially strong from their trade in the previous decades and also ready enough to pursue stronger ties with the countries of Central Asia.

Furthermore the appearance of the Albanians and the civil wars in former Yugoslavia, provided ample of human resources in the Balkans, eager in getting involved in the drugs trade so as to survive financially or gain capital to achieve their political aims. Europe now already hosted considerable Turkish minorities-Especially Germany[24] – and individuals from those Turkish communities were used to act as local retail agents for the heroin distribution in Europe.



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

In 1996 the Susurluk accident[25] revealed to Turkey the extent where the Drug –Lords have penetrated the upper crust of the society and they were able to conduct their businesses untouched by the law[26]. Even the spouse of the then Turkish Prime Minister Tancu Tsiller[27] was accused by the local media for close interactions with notable underworld figures. Furthermore the accusations that the Turkish security forces were conducting drugs trade in South Eastern Turkey[28] were in relation to the civil strife in that region because of the Kurdish fight and that presents once more that politics and criminal groups seem to go hand in hand.

The modus operandi of the Turkish organized crime in drugs trade follows the role of the coordinator and distributor. Large amounts of heroin shipments enter Turkey each month and then delivered through the Balkan route mostly, to all over Europe[29]. It has to be noted that the country with the largest Turkish community-Germany- is being used also as a redistribution centre. That means that when heroin reaches Germany, it is being handed out from there to the other major European markets, especially UK and Scandinavia. Moreover some of the strongest “Capo” of the Turkish syndicates resided in Germany and generally speaking this country has become the centre of gravity for the Turkish drug barons, as far as, their posture in the European narcotics scene is concerned[30]. Further the impact of the Turkish drug lords has alarmed European security agencies due to the importance of their overall contribution in the narcotics market in the Continent. For instances since the 1970s, Turkey has accounted for between 75 and 90 per cent of all heroin in the UK. The key traffickers are Turks or criminals who operate along that route using Turkish contacts[31].

The alliance of Turkish and Albanian crime groups[32] can be explained at first glance by the cultural, religious and ethnic links –A large percentage of Turks in W. Turkey has Albanian ancestry-[33]. Also, the tradition of the Albanians to join and serve larger ethnic groups with whom they feel to have a kind of affinity might have its explanation. The same was the case in USA and New York especially[34] where for decades the Albanian crime syndicates tended to operate under the aegis and influence of the much stronger American-Sicilian crime corporations.

A 2006 article in Balkanalysis revealed interesting facts for the interrelation between USA domestic politics, the role of the Turkish lobby and the American foreign policy[35]. Even though it is extremely delicate to draw conclusive explanations about the real roots of cover the organized crime activities are given; it is beyond any reasonable doubt that in the case of the Balkans the West has dramatically failed to check the narcotics flow. Despite the fact that thousands of troops, intelligence officers and police ones are based in the Balkans assigned by NATO and the EU, there has been no real confrontation with the realities of criminal syndicate pervasion in the Balkans. On the contrary in the areas where the Western presence is more powerful like in Pristina, it is exactly the stronghold areas of the mafias and their collaborators[36].

It is more than certain that if Western societies along with their partners in the Balkans; cannot control the narcotics trade their incompetence will certainly spill over to the overall antiterrorist security framework that they are trying to enforce. The Hybrid forms that modern crime is currently experiencing will most certainly ensure the continuous flow of capital to terrorist enterprises along with the recruitment of loyal assistants and the corruption of public officials in sensitive sectors of the public sectors. The initiatives[37] by the heads of state of the Balkans to curb on organized crime should give the opportunity for further decisive measures. Balkans have already being developed as Europe’s soft underbelly-Not quite as Churchill imagined- and one of the top priorities of the EU has to be the unquestionable joint effort to “close down” the Balkan route, achieving thus a real advance against terrorism in a worldwide level.

Since the end of the Communist era in the Balkans in the early 90’s, organized crime activities have soared, by expanding their activities in fields such as narcotics, trafficking, racketeering and goods smuggling. The civil wars in Yugoslavia and the continuous strife in Albania provided an excellent framework on which crime syndicates became stronger and gained political and societal clout.

The first and foremost criminal group that can be to an extent classified as a “Mafia” is the Albanian organized crime[38]. Its geographical spread is in and between the triangle Pristina (Kosovo) – Tetovo (FYROM) and Tirana (Albania). During the 1999 and the NATO campaign against Serbia, it was a common secret amongst the members of the international community that the KLA army was financed and assisted by the organized crime that hoped to achieve a safe haven in the Kosovo area[39]. The importance of Pristina is mainly associated with its use as a transit point in the infamous Balkan drugs route. Moreover the capital of Kosovo is a massive hideout for heads of crime syndicates across the Balkans and beyond[40].



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Furthermore the high unemployment rate in the region along with the chronic industrial decay, have forced masses of the population to remain tolerant –at best- in the practices of illegal activity[41]. The capital flowing from heroin trade mostly, have helped towards the revitalization of the local economies. To that point it is interesting to note that 4/5 of the heroin flowing to Europe from Asia (Afghanistan) is being transferred by Albanians that have established bases all across Europe from Oslo to Barcelona and from Budapest to Rome[42]. The Albanian organized crime as Xavier Raufer has pointed out operates on a dual basis[43]. That means it has also the function of a strong societal force that virtually governs peripheral areas of Albania, mostly in the North, as well as, Kosovo currently. The Albanian crime syndicates work in close contacts with their American-Albanian counterparts that are mainly located in New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia[44]. Since 1991 quite a few Kosovo-Albanians have managed under not-so-legal ways, to immigrate to USA and act as liaison with the European community.

This highly sophisticated criminal network has been able to control much of the drugs trade in Europe and also the trafficking of women and children from the Balkans to Western Europe. Both of these activities are complementary to each other and frequently criminal groups switch from one activity to the other[45].

The ethnic conflicts in Former Yugoslavia, provided ample opportunities for weapons smuggling that reached unprecedented proportions in 1997. The same year a civil unrest in Albania, led to the overthrow of the government and the lack of the rule of law for almost 6 months. During this period 700,000 Kalashnikov and about 200,000 Albanian passports were stolen[46]. Consequently a large portion of the above was sold to criminal groups in the Balkans and in Europe, whilst there are many allegations of terrorist connection whereby Al Qaeda members were able to obtain Albanian passports and an easier access to the European Continent[47].

The Kosovo experience has been up to date, a great disappointment for the international community. The UN administered territory has not been able to withstand the all-pervading influence of the organized crime. Despite numerous acts of violence and a very high homicide rate; very few convictions have been handed out to culprits, none of those was a member of the organized crime either. Nowadays the existence of regular heroin supply from Afghanistan, and the control by the “Albanian Mafia” of the Balkan route[48], has enabled it to obtain a large capital base that is laundered mainly through the construction centre in Albania and the use of offshore financial centers. Actually the largest enterprise in terms of sales and profits in South Eastern Europe is the Albanian organized crime[49].

In the case of Greece, there is not a national organized crime network that can be classified as a national mafia one, although that does not mean that criminal network are not indeed quite influential. Nevertheless, the perils of Balkan crime have surely affected the country in numerous ways[53]. Apart from the current crime statistics –that show a stronger pervasion of organized crime related activities- money laundering is a present and clear danger. The spread of the Greek banking system in S.E Europe[54] will certainly address in the near future the issue of capital transfer of criminal activities through those financial institutions.

Also the interstate relations between Greece and the other Balkan states should always take into consideration the influence of organized groups that are the 21st century non state actors. For that reason it is of outermost importance to construct in the Greek territory “An observatory of organized crime” that will act as a counselor for the Greek government-Perhaps for the EU as well- and will be compromised by experienced analysts, law enforcement agents, criminologists and international relations experts. The use of this foundation or institute would be to detect, collect, analyze relevant Balkan crime information and produce consultation. In essence an intelligence unit that will be able to predict future trends in organized activities.

Islamic terrorism and the Balkans: The perfect training ground

The emergence of radical – militant Islam during the 90’s is a very complicated issue that involves worldwide actors, social dynamics and a deep knowledge of the religious realm of the Islamic world. This article aims to present and inform for the events that shaped Islamic terrorism in the Balkans. In this corner of Europe, the past 15 years, the roots of Islamic radicalism have deepened and it is of the outermost importance to comprehend this phenomenon, so as to be able to combat it.

The beginning of the Yugoslavian civil strife in 1991 presented an excellent chance for the Mujahedin to get into Europe via the ethno-cultural conflict between Christians and Muslims in



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Bosnia. These religious mercenaries had proved their aptitude in war from the early 80's when they fought the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, and managed to inflict great damages to it using Western assistance.

The West at that period, along with its regional allies, promoted the creation of the so-called "Green Arch"[\[1\]](#). That meant the creation of strong Islamic pockets in areas of Soviet influence, or in border countries that deemed important for the strategy of the West against the Soviets. Thus Afghanistan, Pakistan, Caucasus, and in Turkey (through the use of the Turkish "Hezbollah"), became radicalized during the 80's.

What the West could not comprehend and predict at that period, is the "Genie out of the bottle" effect. Once these radicals groups gained access to armaments and training, they became autonomous and sought to create their own agenda. Therefore the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was the trial test of their newly founded role.

In mid-1992 some 3000 -3500 Mujahedin were already present in the ranks of the Bosnian Army as volunteer forces. They retained their operational autonomy and in essence became an army within an army[\[2\]](#). Most of their forces were under the command of General Shakib Mahmoujlin and their area of operations was Zenica. Soon the Mujahedin acquired the aura of the elite force within the Bosnian Muslim Army and were accounted for many atrocities against the civilian Christian population. There were instances where the guerillas didn't hesitate in presenting publicly beheaded corpses with the heads of the victims in baskets, a tactic often used in the Ottoman period as a part of psychological warfare against the enemy.

During the Bosnian war, the Al-Qaeda was beginning to emerge as a world wide Islamic force that intended to strike the West with all means possible. One of the key elements in its success would be to get a hold of "safe havens" in Europe[\[3\]](#). The situation in Bosnia was the opportunity wanted, and soon logistic bases were established within the Bosnian territory. Moreover a campaign of recruiting Bosnian Muslims to the Al -Qaeda cause, resulted in the creation of "Islamic pockets" in the middle of the Balkans. By the end of 1995 and the subsequent Dayton treaty that ended the war; hundreds of Mujahedin fighters were permanent residents of the established Bosnia-Herzegovina state, and acquired the citizenship of that country[\[4\]](#).

The USA security agencies have revealed that two of the hijackers in 9/11 attacks, had toured the Balkans and were trained in an Al-Qaeda camp in Bosnia[\[5\]](#). In addition the explosives used in the 7/7 attacks in London came from the Balkans[\[6\]](#), an event that portrays the tremendous lack of perspective that the West had when it tolerated the emergence of such networks.

The sensitive issue of the Kosovo status is also interlinked with the presence of terrorism –Of an Islamic nature- and its ramifications are much more extended than conventionally thought. Moreover the impact of Islamic driven terrorism in the Balkans is not only restrained in the region but has global consequences, thus it needs multiparty intelligence cooperation in order to be dealt with. Worries about Kosovo morphing into a safe haven for terrorists are not without merit. After all, radical Islamic elements aided some Kosovars—and earlier, Bosnian Muslims—in the ethno-religious warfare that destroyed Yugoslavia in the 1990s. For example, Australian al-Qaeda fighter David Hicks traveled to the Balkans to join the notorious Kosovo Liberation Army. Hicks completed military training at a KLA camp and later fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan, where U.S. forces apprehended him[\[7\]](#).

The Albanian nationalism and the Islamic terrorism

As in the case of Bosnia, the Albanian Muslims (70% of the population) proved to be a magnet for the Islamists that sought to regain a foothold in Europe. The conditions by which Albania was freed by the Communist regime in the early 90's, revealed the existence of a backward isolated country with no interaction with the rest of the world. The transition from a central command structure to that of a free market; ensured the development of multiple societal forces within the much repressed Albanian society[\[8\]](#).

In early 1994 the infamous Osama Bin Laden, paid a visit to Tirana, presumably to oversight the networking of his activities there. He came back in 1998 to oversight Al-Qaeda training camps in the Northern part of Albania, just across the borders with Kosovo[\[9\]](#). The trainers –of Arabic origin mostly- were assigned to train the newly recruits of the Usthria Climirtare e Kosoves –U.C.K- units for the forthcoming guerilla warfare against the Yugoslav forces in Kosovo.

The then Albanian Director of the Albanian secret service-SHIK-named Fatos Klosi admitted the training that took place in these camps and the existence of "Jihad warriors" from Sudan, Algeria,



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Saudi Arabia and Egypt that were responsible for the instruction of the UCK army. To this point it is important to add to the above, the existence of the Albanian Arab Islamic Bank, that was used for the financing of terrorist activities throughout the Balkans. Various sources indicate the existence of Bin Laden's backing in the bank's capital, with the sum of 11 million USD[10].

In 1997, the financial collapse of Albania by an economic scandal that shook the country; had as a result the social unrest throughout the territory and the collapse of the rule of law[11]. An uncounted number of armaments were stolen during the period of the riots from the Albanian's Army caches, and the bulk of it ended in the hands of the UCK and its Islamist collaborators. Until early 1998 USA characterized UCK as a terrorist organization, due to its connection with well-known figures of the extremist elements of the Islamic world. Nevertheless, the American policy changed its direction since it deemed the existence of Milosevic more threatening at that period than the Islamic movement[12]. During the skirmishes and fights before the NATO bombings in March 1999, the Yugoslav Army managed to inflict great damages to the Mujahedin fighters that were combating along the UCK lines[13]. In Urocevac the bulk of them was eliminated by the Serbian Army and was obliged to retreat back in their safe havens in Northern Albania.

After the end of the 1999 war, the Mujahedin networks regrouped and started to infiltrate the Kosovo area in great numbers[14]. That included the mushrooming of Islamic charitable funds across the region, the construction of Mosques and the radicalization of the local Albanian population[15] and the wider Muslim populations of the ex-Yugoslavia.

It is interesting to note that the Albanian population in its majority cannot be conceived as a fundamentalist Islamic nation and the extremists are for the time being a forceful minority of that nation. The Islamic expansion in the Balkans is coupled with the existence of the criminal syndicates that are all prevalent in the Balkan Peninsula. Since the terrorist activities cannot be financed through the use of the legal free market economy, the use of narcotics and trafficking illegal trade has enabled the flourishing of the terrorist networks[16]. The "Hybrid" organizations as the merged terrorist and criminal are named[17], has created the necessary framework for the Balkans to enter in one of the worst periods of their modern history. The leading criminologist Loretta Napoleoni has researched articulately the issue and offers illuminating approaches as to the extent of the infiltration of crime & terrorism in world economy.

According to her recent interview for balkananalysis.com[18], some 1.5 trillion USD are the revenue of the organized crime worldwide. A fair portion of that is being achieved by controlling the "Balkan drugs route" a geographical area that encompasses Kosovo, Northern Albania and Tetovo. More or less the Islamic terrorism network has located some of its bases, along the way of some of the most lucrative criminal areas of Europe. Therefore it is able to increase its revenues and finance its monstrous acts.

In spring 2001, the Mujahedin forces, once again, were brought to day-light by joining the National Liberation Army in its fight in Western FYROM[19]. The NLA was a composition of various Albanian fractions that along with the Islamic extremists sought to prepare the basis for the disintegration of FYROM[20]. There is a large Albanian minority in the country, which also happens to be located right in the centre of the Balkans and where the "Balkan drug route" passes by. The Mujahedin formed the majority of the 113 brigade of NLA[21], and were accused of many atrocities against innocent civilians of Slavic descent.

On August 2001 the Ohrid accord was signed and the conflict ceased without any real gains by the Albanian side[22]. A month later, the attack on the twin towers revealed to the world the spread and the power the terrorist organizations have amassed, thus the "War on terror" begun and to a great extent dismantled the world wide Islamic terrorist web.

SEVEN KEY AL-QAEDA MEMBERS WHO DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TOOK PART IN 9/11 AND ARE LINKED TO BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA[23]

- Nawaf al Hazmi, a Saudi. He was a September 11th hijacker. He fought in BiH in 1995.
- Khalid al-Mihdhar, from Yemen. He also was a September 11th hijacker. He also fought in BiH with the foreign mujahideen battalion in Bosnia in 1995



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- Sheikh Omar abd-al Rahman (convicted of the 1993 attack on the WTC) was connected with the so-called humanitarian organization TWRA, which was a cover for terrorists. Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic made personal guarantees for TWRA's general director and personal friend Elfatih Hassanein, so he could open an account with Die Erste Osterreich Bank in Vienna, Austria in 1993.
- Mohammed Haydar Zammar, who recruited Mohamed Atta into Al-Qaeda, had a terrorist base in Bosnia. Zammar is also responsible for recruiting two of Atta's lieutenants, Ramzi Binalshahib and Said Bahaji.
- Osama bin Laden received a Bosnian passport from the Embassy in Vienna, Austria. Many other Al-Qaeda members were issued B-H passports, which enabled them to continue their terrorist activities.
- Abu al-Ma'ali (Abdelkader Mokhtari), a senior Al-Qaeda operative, was stationed in Bosnia until recently. Just a few years ago, US officials used to call him "Osama Bin Laden, Jr."
- Bensayah Belkacem was arrested in Bosnia in October 2001. Numbers saved in his cell phone connected him with at least one top-rank associate of Bin Laden

The "White Al-Qaeda" in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Information available to experts on international terrorism indicate that B-H is at this time one of the most dangerous countries in Europe, as it represents a nursery for potential Islamic terrorists – the so called "white" or "European" Al-Qaeda[24]. Money from Islamic countries that is laundered through "humanitarian" organizations finances the religious education of at least 100,000 young Bosnian Muslims[25]. In addition to such education, which follows the interpretations of Wahhabi Islam, there is another type of "training" in various officially registered camps throughout the B-H Federation[26]. There, the young and carefully selected Wahhabis attend "additional courses" in marksmanship, explosives and martial arts[27]. Organizations such as "Furqan," the "Active Islamic Youth," the "Muslim Youth Council" and others – differing only in name and primary donors, but otherwise interchangeable – teach young Muslims computer and Internet skills, so they could establish contacts with their coreligionists worldwide. Knowing all this, the former head of UN Mission in Bosnia Jacques Paul Klein recently said that some 200 mujahid'din in Bosnia did not represent a danger, because they can be easily controlled. Klein knew it would be a lot more difficult to stop the spread of young Bosnian Wahhabis throughout Europe, youths who consider Osama Bin Laden and the mujahid'din role models[28]. Nowadays there is still a strong presence of a variety of extremist Islamic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina, under the pretext of charity funds and related philanthropic establishments[29]. Thus it is not of surprise that the U.K Foreign Office still warrants concern safety for every British national traveling there, especially in relation to potential terrorist incidents[30].

Foreign intelligence involvement in the Balkans

Since the early 1990s, Bonn and Washington have joined hands in establishing their respective spheres of influence in the Balkans. Their intelligence agencies have also collaborated. According to intelligence analyst John Whitley, covert support to the Kosovo rebel army was established as a joint endeavor between the CIA and Germany's Bundes Nachrichten Dienst (BND) (which previously played a key role in installing a right wing nationalist government under Franjo Tudjman in Croatia)[31]. The task to create and finance the KLA was initially given to Germany: "They used German uniforms, East German weapons and were financed, in part, with drug money". According to Whitley, the CIA was, subsequently instrumental in training and equipping the KLA in Albania[32]. The covert activities of Germany's BND were consistent with Bonn's intent to expand its "Lebensraum" into the Balkans[33]. Prior to the onset of the civil war in Bosnia, Germany and its Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher had actively supported secession; it had "forced the pace of international diplomacy" and pressured its Western allies to recognize Slovenia and Croatia. According to the Geopolitical Drug Watch, both Germany and the US favored (although not officially) the formation of a "Greater Albania" encompassing Albania, Kosovo and parts of FYROM[34]. According to Sean Gervasi, Germany was seeking a free hand among its allies "to pursue economic dominance in the whole of "Mitteleuropa.[35]"

An interesting twist in the sector of intelligence operations and especially the ones described as "Covert operations", is the abundance of material available and the easiness by which the USA in particular have provided access to their operational tactics. Todd Stiefler has documented that "In



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Kosovo, the Agency was extremely eager to publicize its covert operations”[36]. In contrast with other similar incidents in Latin America or the Middle East; the CIA was confident enough to inform the public of operations that are not to be announced and that is an intriguing and not well answered topic.

The emergence of “Balkan Jihad” and its progress in the region

After the 9/11, a worldwide “War on terror” begun in order to disband and neutralize Islamic terrorist networks across the globe. The main focus of the largest anti-terrorist campaign in history is focused in the Middle East area, as well as in Afghanistan.

The Balkan Peninsula is the European area where this campaign has also taken place, with numerous arrests and a continuous effort into riding the fundamentalist out of the area. The question arising though, is how did the extremists gain a foothold in South Eastern Europe in the first place, and what was the reaction of the international community over the previous years.

The presence of Islam in the Balkans dates back in the 13th century.

In order to create the much needed mercenary armies, against the then archenemy, the Franks, Byzantine Emperors allowed Muslim Turks into modern day Bulgaria. They were used mainly as cavalry forces due to their excellent techniques in that kind of war. Over the coming decades the antagonism between the Franks and the Vatican from one side and the Byzantium from the other, led to the final conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453. Gradually virtually the whole of the Balkans came under Muslim dominance and were included in the Dar al Islam territory stretching from the Hindu river and up to Gibraltar.

In Bosnia in particular the sect of Vogomils –Eastern Orthodox sect-, converted to Islam for a variety of societal and spiritual reasons. Since the Vogomils were the affluent class of the central Balkans they soon became the ruling class over millions of Christians of mostly Slavic descent.

In Albania the Islamic takeover had a dramatic effect and in a matter of 150 years 2/3rds of the population converted from the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholicism into Islam. The main reason for such a large proselytism in Albania had been the traditional adherence towards the stronger ruler that the mountainous Albanians have showed since their early history. During the Roman Empire times, the Albanians served as elite corps in the Armies of the Emperors Empires –i.e. Diocletian was of Albanian descent- and tended to absorb the cultural and religious norms of their regional superintendents. The same was the case in the more or less Greek dominated Byzantium. As soon as the “Eastern Roman Empire” waned in favor of the Western one; there was a mass conversion to Catholicism in the early 13th century[37].

The historical collective path of the Albanian people can be compared with that of the mountainous Swiss that have eloquently absorbed influences and norms by the much larger and influential neighbors (Germany, France, and Italy). It is against this historical background that the Islamic fundamentalist drama in the Balkans evolved in the 1990s. Evan F. Kohlmann, author of Al-Qaeda’s Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network argues that “key to understanding Al Qaida’s European cells lies in the Bosnian war of the 1990s”[38]. Using the Bosnian war as their cover, Afghan-trained Islamic militants loyal to Osama bin Laden convened in the Balkans in 1992 to establish a European domestic terrorist infrastructure in order to plot their violent strikes against the United States.

So, the outbreak of the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992 presented an unparalleled opportunity for the international Mujahedeen to storm Europe, establish safe havens in the area and thus initiate re-conquest of regions they previously ruled[39]. The leader of Bosnia, Alia Izebegovic was eager to obtain as much assistance as possible and didn’t hesitate in providing the necessary framework by which the Islamic ties were forged[40]. In the same year, a variety of Islamic mercenaries flocked into the Balkans in order to support the “Holy cause”, meaning the establishment of the first Islamic state in Europe[41]. The end of the war in 1995 saw quite a few of those mujahedin, acquiring Bosnian citizenship and establishing the first Islamic community in the village of Bocinja Donja[42]. During 2006 and 2007, hundreds of citizenships were revoked by Islamists residing in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nevertheless the whereabouts of most of them remain unknown, raising fears for potential terrorist acts by them in the future and in an European soil[43]. What is more, the Novi Pazar town in Sanjak area in Southern Serbia; has become a core for Islamic fundamentalism, linked with Al-Qaeda cells. Novi Pazar is the focus of the Islamist attempt to build a landbridge from Albania and Kosovo to Bosnia.



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Further to the East, in southern Serbia's Raška Oblast, are three other concentrations of Muslims: Sjenica and Pester area (lightly populated but mostly Muslim), Prijepolje (some 50 percent Muslim) and — very close to the Bosnia border where Republica Srpska controls the slender Gorazde corridor — Priboj (also some 50 percent Muslim). The land between is Serbian farmland, but the Islamist goal is to link the cities as “evidence” that the entire region is, or should be, Muslim territory. The same strategy worked successfully in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Serbian farmers were driven off their lands during the civil war.

Just south of the Serbian area of Raška Oblast is the Montenegrin part of Raška region, where, for example, Bijeljo Polje is some 60 to 80 percent Muslim, and Pijevlja, close to the Bosnian border, is about 40 percent Muslim. These Montenegrin towns, like those of the Western Serbian Raška region, are the key to the illicit arms and narcotrafficking across the Gorazde Corridor to Bosnia.

A new Islamist university has opened in Novi Pazar, ostensibly a normal college, but led by an Islamist mufti of little formal education. This modern institution — whose officials proclaim it a normal educational institution — reveals its character in its symbol: the Wahabbi/Salafi Dawa symbol, an open Q'uran surmounted with a rising sun. The university, in a renovated former textile factory, is a known center of radical Islamist thinking. A book fair held there in early October 2003 distributed very radical Islamist literature, specifically advocating conflict with the West.

The Dawa sign indicates that the university is predominantly Saudi-funded, although some Western funding is known to have been pumped into the institution, reportedly largely to undermine Serb interests in the region[44].

Western tolerance of Islamic radicals, however, was one of the gravest mistakes of modern times[45]. In addition, a well organized criminal network has already been established in Sarajevo that in a large extent facilitates illegal immigration from Asia to Europe[46]. That activity is coupled with the narcotics trade that is being supplemented by the infamous “Balkan Drug route”[47]. It is illuminating to note that the areas from where this route is passing are under Muslim influence mostly.

The Albanian factor

Albania was under the Communist rule during the Cold War, the most isolated country in Europe. The break of the Soviet Empire unleashed forces that were kept dormant in the society for decades, and resulted to some very interesting developments. In 1992 Albania becomes a member of the Islamic Conference, an international Islamic organization[48]. The same year as well the government of Sali Berisha, currently also a Prime Minister, signed a military agreement with Turkey, thus enacting a series of discussions in the neighboring states, around the possibility of an Islamic arch from Istanbul to Sarajevo.

One of the main reasons the Albanian officials were eager to form strong ties with the Muslim world was the hope that large investments from the Gulf would ensure the uplifting of the decaying Albanian economy. Therefore the religious sentiment of the majority of Albanians, mostly in the North, was overplayed in order to gain capital from the Islamic world. Unfortunately no serious investment initiatives were undertaken; instead the Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, found another state to expand their illegal activities. Many different and respectable sources have indicated two visits by Bin Laden in Tirana that aimed into creating an Islamic platform for the country and the construction of terrorist networks within the territory.

An Albanian called Naseroudin Albani played an instrumental role in spreading extremist Islamic values into the Albanian society. He was a fugitive from Albania since 1963 and resided in Amman-Jordan[49]. Sources from Albania point out that Albani organized radical Sunni sects back in the 70's in the Middle East that became the nucleus of the modern day Mujahedin. Another Albanian, the then head of the Albania's Secret service, SHIK, called Bashkim Gazidante assisted into implementing radical Islamic agenda in Albanian domestic policies. During the 1997 Albanian riots Gazidante fled from Albania and he is said to be an instrumental part in global Islamic networks[50]. He fled presumably to a Middle Eastern country and currently he resides in Rome-Italy treated in a local hospital due to chronic illness; according to reliable regional sources[51].

The Al Qaeda factor in Albania was consolidated by the creation of the Arabic-Albanian bank, in which Bin Laden allegedly invested the sum of 11.4 million USD. This financial institution acted as a front cover for the transfer of capital for Islamic activities within the country[52]. Just before Berisha's political overturn in 1997, another Islamic institution called “El Farouk”, acted as a



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

recruitment agency for young Albanians, under the pretext of a charity. One of the most dramatic indicators of the degree of Islamic presence in Albania is the militant Islamic training camp just outside Tirana, the same camp on which Berisha relied in his unsuccessful 1998 coup of his rival Fatos Nano[53]. At this point it is interesting to note that it was a well known fact around the international community of the nexus between organized crime syndicates, terrorist cells and the KLA, operating under and with Albanian assistance[54]. Actually Albania was mainly used as springboard to neighboring Kosovo. In April 1999, some 500 Arab Mujahedeen were smuggled into the capital of Tirana. Their mission was to conduct special operations against Yugoslav forces in Kosovo. They entered Kosovo from Northern Albania. The whole operation was led by Bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri[55].

The Nairobi and Tanzania bombings of 1998 shocked the US administration into taking some action, for the first time, do dismantle terrorist's networks. Soon, the pressure fell on Albania and in the October of the same month individuals of Middle Eastern origin were rounded up and deported[56]. The head of SHIK, Fatos Clozi, admitted for the first the existence of extremists in Albania and promised the eradication of the terrorist nucleus.

The 9/11 attacks proved to be a fatal blow for the radicals in Albania and the USA forces have more or less neutralize any remaining cells[57]. The government of Albania, which is more than willing to become inducted in the Euro-Atlantic security framework, has ceased to seek Islamic assistance and the current Berisha's administration has refaced its Islamic outlook into a modern European one[58].

Nevertheless, the Albanian-Islamic connection is now concentrated in Kosovo, the very same province NATO forces are stationed! There is an overwhelming variety of sources and reports that indicate a well established fundamentalist presence in that area. It is a common secret in the international community that the West kept a blind eye during the 1998-1999 Winter where hundreds of Mujahedin joined the UCK forces and helped it expand[59]. Shaul Shay describes "The [Kosovo Albanian] KLA enjoyed the support of former Albanian President Sali Berisha, who regarded the war in Kosovo as a Jihad and issued a call to all Muslims to fight for the protection of their homeland"[60].

At that period the means justified the end which was the disbandment of the Russian influence in the Balkans, as the Clinton administration viewed the Milosevic one. The result was a resurgence of Islamic radical networks in the region, thus eliminating the beneficial results of previous actions against it. Moreover Russia managed to regroup and it is still viewed as a great player in South Eastern Europe.

The newly independent Montenegro nowadays faces a long term Islamic population bomb and it is certain that should current trends continue, in 2050 half of the population would be Muslim That is not of course a prelude of terrorism action per se, but the overall turbulent Balkan history and the existence of terror networks in nearby Kosovo do not assure a tranquil political future for the newest Balkan state.

The FYROM is also another terrain where the delicate balance between radicalism and Muslim secularism is taking place. Back in 2001, an Albanian uprising nearly resulted in the disintegration of the state although nowadays there is an uneasy stability. However any negative developments in Kosovo will affect directly the country which is also the epicenter of the Balkans by a geopolitical point of view.

Lastly the Sanjak area in Southern Serbia is a territory to watch, where the Wahhabi strain of Islam has gained tremendous influence in the local Muslim population. On March 2007 a terrorist cell was disbanded by the Serbian authorities and a terrorist plan was dwarfed at the last minute[61]. Again Kosovo as the centre of radicalism in the Balkans could play the role of the powder keg for any developments in Sanjak, against the Serbian population in the region[62].

The EU strategists, whoever they may be, must become aware of the complicated Balkan reality: the region is a mostly secular one, but it has the peculiarity of hosting safe havens of terrorists and organized crime related Islamists[63]. Most of these areas are under international protection a paradox that ridicules the entire Western anti terror campaign. Another worrying fact is the real danger of proliferation of chemical or biological weapons into the hands of terrorists, especially in the case of Albania[64]. Already this threat is one of the top priorities for the security services across Southeastern Europe, and Greece along with the USA, Italy, Switzerland, and the European Union; assists Albania in destroying the stockpiles of its chemical weapons[65]. It is worthwhile to mention that the Albanian authorities had discovered 16 tons of chemicals in 2002, stored in an underground cache, but there are no verified accounts if any amount had been stolen during the 1997 riots, thus



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

raising a question as to whether terrorist organizations already have taken hold of quantities of chemicals.

Lastly, the attack on the USA Embassy in Athens-Greece in January 2007 with an RPG weaponry, is assumed to have a Balkan-Albanian connection, meaning source it came from, the “Weapons black market” vividly active in the borderlines between Kosovo and FYROM.[66]

Only a coordinated pan European operation would be able to eradicate this perilous condition. The bombings in Madrid and in London had a Balkan flavor in them, namely the explosives used, according to many, came from those very same Muslim pockets in the Balkans that are protected by Western armies. For the future then, Islamic radicalism in the Balkans is an X factor. What is certain though is that this factor will not be used for the benefit of the West and the only way of neutralize it is by disrupting its logistic and financial base.

The only obstacle so far for the successful inaction of a “Balkan war on terror” are the careers in various world capitals, that are related on the perception of half truths and half lies about the West’s involvement in the Yugoslav wars and the use of the Islamic X factor on them. Political ambitious, international reputations and the all pervading political correctness, hinders the right actions to be taken. Unfortunately the implications of the Western involvement have spilled-over worldwide and with dire consequences regarding the global anti-terror campaign. Shaul Shay states that “In the course of 1999-2000, several terror cells were discovered in the U.S. and Canada. Some of their members lived in Bocinja [Bosnia] or were connected to radical Islamic entities that resided there”[67]. The West followed a contradictory stance in the Balkans where it promoted the advance of radical Islamic elements linked to terrorism, in the same period -1999- it enacted the attacks against Serbia, thus empowering the former. A great leader once said “A fanatic is one who can’t change his mind and won’t change the subject”. That surely sums up the mentality of the international officials around this Balkan “X factor”.

The Muslim minorities in the Balkans

In contemporary Europe there is a great debate on the role of Islam in modern societies and the path that the European-Muslim relationship will lead into the 21st century. The Balkans is a European area where considerable Muslim communities reside, some of them for over 700 hundred years and since the era of the Ottoman Empire[68].

The Balkan Peninsula was always an area characterized by continuous population arrivals and exodus due to the turbulent history of the region and because of its geopolitical disposition in the midst of three continents. Since the fall of the Roman Empire immigration and conquest waves have over the centuries shaped the population composition of this European soil. The Slavs in the 6th Century AC, the Bulgarians in the 7th and the Turks in the 14th one, have all constructed more or less modern ethno-diversity in the Balkans[69].

The former were able –after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 AC- to create the Ottoman Empire stretching from modern day Saudi Arabia and North Africa, right up to the infamous “Gates of Vienna” or more specifically in Klagenfurt and the Styria province. During much of the previous 6 centuries, there have been massive conversions to Islam that formatted the existing Islamic enclaves in the Balkans. The fall of the Soviet Bloc in 1989 and the civil wars in Ex-Yugoslavia; brought the remembrance of the religion wars that were a part of the Balkan history for the better part of the last Millennium[70].

Nowadays, all Balkan states-Bar Rumania- have Muslim minorities that are part of the social and political life of the respective states and most importantly have been often accused as acting like a “Trojan Horse” from powers seeking to exercise influence in the area.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Bosnia was already a part of the Ottoman realm, back in 1463 and a mass conversion of the Bogomil Christian sect[71], endured the existence of a large and influential Islamic community in the state. This area was for centuries the epicenter of the Balkan Muslim life, since it was ideally placed in the centre of South Eastern Europe and had a viable and vibrant Muslim community. In this point it has to be noted that the Bogomils were the most affluent class of Bosnia and their adherence to Islam constituted an initiative from their part to retain their privileges and rights under the newly formed dominion[72].

In 1908 Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed by the then Austria-Hungarian Empire, at the same period the idea of a united confederation of the Southern Slavs –Serbs, Croats, Slovenians- was



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

gaining hold. The creation of Yugoslavia after WW1 didn't resolve the wide religious and cultural gaps between Catholics, Orthodox and Sunni Muslims. The Second World War saw the alliance between the Fascist, pro-German Croatian regime of Andre Pavelic and the Muslims in Bosnia.

Actually in 1943 the latter created the 13th Mountainous SS Brigade –Waffen Gerbings Division der SS- that committed atrocities against the civilian Serbian population in a classic ethnic cleansing fashion[73]. In 1944 a similar brigade was to be formed by the Kosovo Albanians -21st Skanderberg Brigade- that sought as well the elimination of Serbians from Kosovo-Metohija.

During the 90's Mujahedeen from various Islamic states, fought along the Bosnian Muslims against both the Croats and the Serbs. Numerous allegations and documents reveal a strong Jihad connection between the then Izebegovic administration and Al Qaeda operatives that sought a safe have in the centre of the Balkans and close to mainland Europe[74]. Stephen Schwartz notes "Muslim Bosnia and neighboring territories also face growing Islamist extremism. Wahhabi missionaries, promoting the ultraradical cult financed by Saudi Arabia, have come back to the Balkans after their expulsion from Sarajevo in the aftermath of September 11. Bosnian authorities acted then with admirable speed in cracking down on the Saudi High Commission for Relief of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a center of al Qaeda activity"[75]. Currently 40% of Bosnia's population is Muslims, mainly populating the urban centers[76].

Serbia-FYROM-Montenegro

Serbia's largest Muslim minority is to be found in Kosovo where over 90% of the population is of Albanian descent and Muslim in denomination. The situation after the 1999 NATO intervention has revealed a massive destruction of the Serbian Christian Orthodox heritage[77]. Kosovo has been since the early Middle Ages a traditional Serbian pilgrimage and state epicenter. The negotiations in action concerning the status of the province have come to a halt and there is a great debate within the international community on which direction Kosovo should move on within the coming months.

The percentage of the Muslims in Kosovo was traditionally 50-60% from the Ottoman period and up until the 1950's. The mass immigrations of Albanians from Northern Albania, the immigration of Serbians to Europe and the very high birth rate of the former; resulted in the creation of an almost homogenized Albanian-Muslim Kosovo in the course of the second half of the 20th century[78]. The importance of Kosovo to the Serbian psyche, stems amongst other by the greatness of its artistic, literature and architecture grandeur during the Middle Ages and under the Serbian Nemanja Kingdom, most probably the most highlighted era in the history of the Serbian Kingdom[79].

Another Serbian province with large numbers of Muslims is Sanjak –Close to Kosovo borderline- that is also a habitation of Wahabbi strings as recent investigations point out[80].

FYROM is a state that can be characterized as a hub between Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece. Due to its unique placement it always attracted various ethnic and religious minorities, amongst them the largest would be the Muslim one. It is mainly composed by Albanians, Turks and Roma. After the 1999 war, scores of Kosovo Albanians sought refuge in FYROM thus increasing the total percentage of Muslims in the country. The 2001 conflicts between the Slavic majority of the country and the Albanian minority revealed a cultural chasm between them, as well as, the fear of the Slavs that the high birth rates of their Muslim compatriots will lead them to majority levels in the course of the 21st century. Already, grossly 30% of the citizens claim Muslim religion[81].

Montenegro always had a small Islamic community that has risen up considerably due to the continuous influx of refugees because of the Yugoslavian wars in the 90's. Roughly 20% of the population is Muslim[82], and their vote was crucial during the independence referendum in 2006, that broke Montenegro's ties with Serbia.

Albania

Albania is the only Balkan country that has an absolute majority in terms of Muslim citizens. Officially 70% of the population is Sunni Muslims, even though there are considerable segments of non-practicing secular ones. The main reason for such a large Muslim impact in the state is the mass conversion during the Ottoman Empire that saw a considerable stratum of the Albanian population exchanging their Christian religion for Islam in order to gain considerable advantages in the Ottoman bureaucracy and army.



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

Actually many Turkish historical figures were Albanians, and one of them rose to become the first Pasha of Egypt; Mehmet Ali Pasha[83].

Albania since 1992 is a member of the Islamic conference, an intergovernmental Muslim organization and it has often become a country focused by the international community because of links by fundamentalists and members of the state apparatus.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria has a considerable Muslim minority in the southern regions bordering with Greece and Turkey. The Communist regime in Bulgaria after 1945, initiated measures that forced Muslims –Of Turkish descent mostly- to immigrate to Turkey. In the 1980's alone 300, 000 of those were to flee Bulgaria[84]. Nevertheless the percentage of Muslims in the country is well over 10% and they exercise significant influence in the political climate of Bulgaria. The existence of a well established Turkish-Muslim minority in Bulgaria has proved to be one of the main reasons for the Greek-Bulgaria rapprochement that enacted in the mid-70's and continues up to date, bringing the two states with a colorful history of rivalry together; along with excellent bilateral relations.

Greece

Greece's Muslim minority is to be found in Western Thrace, the province neighboring with Bulgaria and Turkey. The first Muslim coming from Anatolia, settled there in 1363 along with the Ottoman Turks in the first European conquest Endeavour.

In 1923 Greece and Turkey agreed to a mass exchange of populations and consequently Greeks resettled from Minor Asia to mainland Greece and vice versa[85]. The Muslim minority in Thrace along with the Greek-Orthodox in Istanbul remained as a counterweight to its other and as a symbolic remembrance of the oldest Muslim settlement in Europe and the historical Byzantine – Christian presence in the East respectively.

The course of events though revealed a systematic extinction of the Greek-Orthodox Christians in Istanbul that number some 5,000 people down from 200,000 in the 1920's[86]. In Western Thrace 110,000 Muslims reside and constitute a 1% of the total population in Greece and a Quarter of the Western Thracian populous[87].

Future trends

In all Balkan states excluding Greece the overall Muslim population is set to increase because of very low birth rate of the Christian population –Especially in Bulgaria- and the reverse trend by the Islamic communities. Moreover an immigration movement from the Balkans towards Western Europe has actually lowered population like in Bulgaria, over the past decade or so[88].

The Balkans has always constituted one of the fiercest terrains of ethnic – Cultural enmity in Europe. The reasons for the above are the placement of the Peninsula close to Asia that reserved the role of the “European gatekeeper” for the whole of South Eastern Europe. One has to remember of the Krajina border area created by the Austrians in the 17th century in order to counterweight the Ottoman forces [89]. Moreover the Venetians were active in recruiting Greeks as “Stradioti[90]” in order to combat all along the Aegean Archipelagos and the Greek coastline.

Future seems to have elements of repeating this situation due to the ongoing rivalry between West and East, a phenomenon that one can easily retrieve by reading Homer's Iliad or by comprehending the Persians wars dated in the 5th century BC, as they were recorded by Herodotus historiography. The Balkans are the borderline area between the West and the East, where the two either meet or contest and in any case synthesize or degenerate.

In lieu of a conclusion

The overall challenges for the security and intelligence services, oriented in the Balkan region seems overwhelming, judging by the multitude of the challenges involved and the tasks needed to overcome them. The current époque has brought –Especially to Greece- the re-engineering of security policies, in order to combat non-symmetrical threats such as the ones of organized crime and terrorism. Taking into account the globalization process, the interrelation between societies and the breathtaking advancements in



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

telecommunications and transport; it is fair to assume that certain issues should be seriously reflected upon, on a different perspective than the traditional mode.

A multiparty approach to organized crime should be form here upon the core of any intelligence activity in the Balkans. Organized crime –Along with the rest of the perils for modern societies- need measures that are up to the modern way of life and communication of ours. A parallel and well constructed method of Open Source Intelligence gathering and the operation of specialized crime intelligence units will certainly help towards the aim of curbing crime and its calamities. In addition a conclusive analysis and synthesis of the available information, without any bias; should be the core of any serious attempt into reaching viable prognosis and stall malicious situations such as terrorists incidents and further empowerment of organized crime.

In order for the aforementioned to become a custom reality, there has to be a constructive and significant replenish of the human resources involved and an upgrade of the present era technical equipment. Therefore decisions should be taken soon enough so as to foresee any positive results, before events surpass the ability of the intelligence community to react and function properly. The Balkan Peninsula remains more than ever “The soft underbelly of Europe”, apart from the other more conventional menaces in the wider Eastern Mediterranean area.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books & Academic literature (For all above articles)

- Alessandro Politi, “European Security: The New Transnational Risks,”Chaillot Papers, No. 29, October, 1997
- Blumi Isa, “Contesting the edges of the Ottoman Empire: Rethinking ethnic and sectarian boundaries in the Malesore”, International Journal of Middle East Studies, 35, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003
- Central European and Eastern Adriatic Research Group, Research & Analytical Papers “Organized Crime in Southeast Europe”, Foreign and Commonwealth Office London, November 2002
- Cpt. Velko Atanasoff, Bosnia and Herzegovina-Islamic Revival, International Advocacy Networks and Islamic Terrorism, Strategic Insights, Volume IV, Issue 5, May 2005
- Cviic, Christopher. Remaking the Balkans. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991.
- Evan F. Kohlmann, “Al-Qaeda’s Jihad in Europe”,Berg Publications, Oxford-UK, September 2004.
- Galeotti, Mark. 2001. “Albanian Gangs Gain Foothold in European Crime Underworld.” Jane’s Intelligence Review 13(11, November): 25-7.
- H.T. Norris “Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society Between Europe and the Arab World”, C. Hurst & Co, London, Jan 1994
- International Crisis Group, “Bin Laden and the Balkans: The Politics of Anti-Terrorism”, ICG Balkans Report No. 119, 9 November 2001
- Kaplan, Robert D. “Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History”, St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1993.
- M. E. Mallet and J. R.Hale, “The Military organization of a Renaissance State: Venice ca. 1400 to 1617”,Cambridge University Press,London, 1984
- Maltz D. Michael , “Defining Organized Crime”, in: Robert J. Kelly et al. (eds.), Handbook of Organized Crime in the United States, Westport/London, 1994
- Mark Galeotti ‘Albanian Organized Crime: The Threat to Europe,’ Cross Border Control Issue 12
- Raufer, Xavier avec Stéphane Quéré. “La Mafia Albanaise, une Menace pour l’Europe: Comment est née cette Superpuissance Criminelle Balkanique” Lausanne, Favre, 2000.
- Schindler John R. “Unholy Terror: Bosnia, Al-Qa’ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad”, Zenith Press, Osceola WI, July 2007
- Shay Shaul “Islamic Terror and the Balkans”, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, December 2006
- Schwartz Stephen, “The failure of Europe in Bosnia and the Continuing Infiltration of Islamic Extremists”, The Weekly Standard, 20 June 2005
- Suha Taji-Farouki and Hugh Poulton “Muslim Identity and the Balkan State”, New York University Press, New York, October 1997 New York



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- Todd Stiefler, “CIA’s Leadership and Major Covert Operations: Rogue Elephants or Risk-Averse Bureaucrats?”, Intelligence and National Security, Volume 19, Number 4, Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group, London, December 2004.
- Xenakis Sappho, “International Norm Diffusion and Organised Crime Policy: The Case of Greece”, Global Crime, Volume 6, Issue 3 & 4 ,P:345 – 373 ,London, August 2004.

Material used from Open Sources Intelligence (Media, Reports, Presentations, Papers, Quotes, Documentaries, Open Editions, Articles, Speeches, Reviews, Reports, Briefings, Hearings, anecdotal data, statistics)

- Albanian-Canadian Organization
- American Council for Kosovo Organization
- Antiwar Organization
- Association of Breton & Celtic Journalists
- Assyrian News Agency
- Axis Global Research Corporation
- Balkanalysis News Agency
- BBC News
- BIA-Security Information Agency in Serbia
- Boston Globe Newspaper
- Bulgarian Helsinki Committee Publications
- Business Week Journal
- CEMES Institute
- Center for Contemporary Conflict
- Centre for Drugs Research-University of Amsterdam
- Centre for European Reform
- Centre for Peace in the Balkans
- CERE Research Centre
- Chicago-Kent College of Law and the Illinois Institute of Technology
- CIA Publications
- CIAO Organization
- CNN
- Columbia Encyclopedia
- Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Publications
- Council on Foreign Affairs
- Counterterrorism Blog
- Covert Action Journal
- Der Spiegel Newspaper
- DHKC Information Bureau
- Drug Text Organization
- European Commission -External Affairs Service
- European Communities Official Journal
- EUROPOL Publications
- Federation of American Scientists Publications
- Foreign Military Studies Publications
- Geopolitical Drug Watch Journal
- German Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Global Policy Forum
- Global Research Organization Publications
- Jamestown Foundation
- Journalismus – Nachrichten Von Heute



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- Hellenic Resources Organization
- Independent Newspaper
- Indian Ministry of External Affairs
- International Herald Tribune
- Interpol Publications
- Inthe80's.com
- Irish Examiner Newspaper
- ISSA -Defense & Foreign Affairs Journal
- Italian Parliament Publications
- FBI Publications
- Kathimerini Newspaper
- Kokkalis Foundation -Kennedy School of Government
- Le Monde Diplomatique
- Library of the USA Congress
- Lobster Magazine
- London School of Economics- Hellenic Observatory
- MSNBC News Service
- NATO Publications
- Observatoire Geopolitique des Drogues Foundation
- Organization of Islamic Conference
- Radio Free Europe
- RAND Institute
- Reuters News Agency
- Rupert Schumann Foundation
- National Post
- New York Times Newspaper
- Nexhat Ibrahimi
- Novi Sad Newspaper
- Partnership for Peace Consortium
- Saudi Aramco Corporation Publications
- Serbianna News Agency
- Sisyphé Organization
- Strategic Culture Foundation
- Strategic Insights Journal
- Terrorism Monitor Journal
- Transnational Organized Crime Journal
- Truth in Media News Broadcast
- Voice of America News Service
- Washington Quarterly Journal
- Washington Post Newspaper
- West Network Organization
- Wikipedia
- Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
- University of Belgrade
- University of Buffalo
- United Kingdom – Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- United Nations Information Office in Vienna
- United States Department of State
- United States Senate – Subcommittee on European Affairs



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- USA AID
- USA Embassy in Rome-Italy
- USA Navy – Naval Historical Centre Publications
- USA Pentagon Library
- USA TODAY Newspaper

Footnotes for: “Islamic terrorism and the Balkans: The perfect training ground”

[1] Strategic Culture Foundation Journal (03/04/2007), By Mikhail Yambaev, “Kosovo-2007: Russia’s Moment of Truth”. Web Site: <http://en.fondsk.ru/article.php?id=643>

[2] Congressional Research Service – The Library of the USA Congress- (26/07/2005), Report by Steven Woehrel, Specialist in European Affairs; Foreign Affairs, Defense & Trade Division. “Islamic Terrorism & the Balkans”. Website: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL33012.pdf>

[3] Strategic Insights Journal, Volume IV, Issue 5 (05/2005), By CPT Attanassoff; Bulgarian Armed Forces, “Bosnia Herzegovina: Islamic Terrorism”. Website: <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/May/attanassoffMay05.asp>

[4] Ibid.

[5] MSNBC News Service (16/06/2004), “9/11 Commission Staff Statement”. Website: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5224099/>

[6] The Irish Examiner Newspaper (14/07/2005), “Explosives used in London bombings originated in the Balkans”. Website: <http://archives.tcm.ie/irishexaminer/2005/07/14/story664838892.asp>

[7] Assyrian International News Agency (24/05/2007), By Alan W. Dowd, “An Independent Kosovo?”. Web site: <http://www.aina.org/news/20070523100735.htm>

[8] NATO Publications (06/1998), By Kosta Barjaba, “Albania in transition”

[9] USA TODAY Newspaper (2002), “Bin Laden linked to Albania”. Website: <http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/bomb162.htm>

[10] The center for Peace in the Balkans (09/2001), “Bin Laden’s Balkan connections”. Website: <http://www.balkanpeace.org/index.php?index=/content/analysis/a09.incl>

[11] New York Times Newspaper (10/06/2000), “Stolen Albanian weapons”. Website: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A00E3DC1F3FF933A25755C0A9669C8B63&n=Top%2fNews%2fWorld%2fCountries%20and%20Territories%2fAlbania>

[12] USA TODAY Magazine; Society for the advancement of education (05/2002), By Ivan Eland, “Provoking terrorist groups”. Website: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1272/is_2684_130/ai_86062103/pg_1

[13] Novi Sad weekly Newspaper “Nezavisni” (11/09/1998), By Slobodan Inic, “Defeat of KLA in Kosovo”. Website: <http://mediafilter.org/Monitor/Mon.66/Mon.66.nezavisni1.html>

[14] Balkanalysis News Agency; Security & Intelligence Brief-Part 1 (26/06/2006), By Christopher Deliso, “Dragas pocket worries terrorism experts”. Website: <http://www.balkanalysis.com/security-intelligence-briefs/06262006-dragas-pocket-worries-terrorism-experts/>

[15] The Jamestown Foundation, Terrorism Monitor Journal, Volume 4, Issue 12 (15/06/2006), By Anes Alic. “Al Qaeda’s recruitment operations in the Balkans. Website: <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370031>

[16] The USA Embassy in Rome-Italy Publications, CRS Report (06/01/2006), By Kristin Archick (Coordinator), John Rollins, and Steven Woehrel, “Islamic extremism in Europe”. Website: <http://www.italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RS22211.pdf>

[17] RAND Institute Publications, Monograph (04/1998), Chapter 3, By Phil Williams, “Transnational Criminal Networks”. Website: www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1382/MR1382.ch3.pdf

[18] Balkanalysis News Agency (17/04/2006), Interview of Loretta Napoleoni by Balkanalysis, “Terrorist finance & the Balkans”. Website: <http://www.balkanalysis.com/?p=667>

[19] Official Journal the European Communities; Council Common Position (16/07/2001), “Concerning a visa ban against extremists in FYROM”. Web site: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:194:0055:0055:EN:PDF>

[20] Axis Global Research Corporation (11/10/2005), By Can Karpat, AIA Balkan section, “Political Solution and Terrorism in F.Y.R.Macedonia”. Website: <http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=430>

[21] University of Buffalo; Listserv Buffalo (04/03/2002), By MILS News, “Seven terrorist killed near Skopje”. Website: <http://listserv.buffalo.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0203a&L=maknws-l&T=0&P=298>

[22] The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (04/2002), By Lt. Col. Harry Dinella, Policy Advisor, Western Policy Center, “Uncertainty in the Slav-Albanian Partnership”. Website:



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=109941&fuseaction=topics.documents&doc_id=119929&group_id=115869

[23] University of Belgrade; Faculty of Security Studies Publications (2002), By Prof. Drako Trifunovic, "Terrorism and Bosnia and Herzegovina – Al-Qaeda's Global Network and its influence on Western Balkans nations" P. 9-11.

[24] Washington Post Newspaper (01/12/2005), By Rade Maroevic and Daniel Williams, "Terrorist Cells Find Foothold in Balkans". Website: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/30/AR2005113002098.html>

[25] Ibid.

[26] The Jamestown Foundation; Terrorism Monitor Journal; Volume II; Issue 20, (21/10/2004), By Stephen Schwartz, "Wahhabism and al-Qaeda in Bosnia-Herzegovina".

[27] PFP Consortium; Study Group Crisis Management in South East Europe; Vienna and Sarajevo (12/2002), By Alfred C. Lugert, "Preventing and Combating Terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina"

[28] University of Belgrade; Faculty of Security Studies Publications (2002), By Prof. Drako Trifunovic, "Terrorism and Bosnia and Herzegovina – Al-Qaeda's Global Network and its influence on Western Balkans nations" P. 16-17.

[29] Kokalis Foundation; Kennedy School of Government; Harvard University, Paper presentation by Teodora Popescu, "Tackling Terrorism in the Balkans. Website: http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW9/Popescu_paper.pdf

[30] United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office (Current as of 13/05/2007), "Bosnia & Herzegovina travel advice". Website: www.fco.gov.uk/.../ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=1013618385675

[31] Quoted in Truth in Media news broadcast in Phoenix; USA(02/04/1999)

[32] Covert Action Journal; No. 56. (Spring 1996), By Michel Chossudovsky, professor at the Department of Economics at University of Ottawa, "Dismantling Yugoslavia; Colonizing Bosnia". Website: <http://www.libbs.org/yugoslavia.htm>

[33] Association of Breton & Celtic journalists (21/09/1998), By Roger Faligot, "How Germany backed KLA". Website: <http://www.bretagnenet.com/reporter-breton/archives/germany.htm>

[34] Geopolitical Drug Watch Journal; No 32 (06/1994). P. 4

[35] Covert Action Quarterly Journal; No. 43, (Winter 1992-93), By Sean Gervasi, "Germany, US and the Yugoslav Crisis"

[36] Intelligence and National Security, Volume 19, Number 4 (12/2004), pp. 632-654(23), By Todd Stiefler, "CIA's Leadership and Major Covert Operations: Rogue Elephants or Risk-Averse Bureaucrats?"

[37] Chicago-Kent College of Law and the Illinois Institute of Technology (1996), "Nationbuilding in the Balkans-History of Albanians". Web Site: <http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/resources/history/albania/albhist.htm>

[38] Evan F. Kohlmann, "Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe", Berg Publications, Preface, Oxford-UK, September 2004.

[39] Kokalis Foundation; Kennedy School of Government; Harvard University, Presentation paper by Xavier Bougarel, "Islam & Politics in the Post-Communist Balkans. Website: <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW1/GSW1/13%20Bougarel.pdf>

[40] Foreign Military Studies Publications (02/1995), By LTC John E. Sray, U.S. Army, "Mujahedin Operations in Bosnia". Website: <http://leav-www.army.mil/fmsp/documents/muja.htm>

[41] Department of the USA Navy; Naval Historical Centre Publications (26/07/2005), By Steven Woehrel, "Islamic terrorism & the Balkans". Website: http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/islamic_terrorism.htm

[42] Ibid.

[43] Reuters, Alert Net Service (11/04/2007), By Daria Sito-Sucic, "Bosnia revokes citizenship of Islamic ex-soldiers". Web Site: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L1151505.htm>

[44] Information was provided by a variety of ISSA Reports, informal journalist sources from Serbia, Albania & FYROM. The material has been made publicly else were and has not been contended for its reliability.

[45] For extensive and sensitive information on the subject see: ISSA Special Report (17/09/2003). Web Site: <http://128.121.186.47/ISSA/reports/Balkan/Sep1703.htm#App1>

[46] Council on Foreign Relations; Open Edition (13/02/2002), By David L. Phillips, "Keeping the Balkans free of Al-Qaeda". Website: http://www.cfr.org/publication/4344/rule_of_law.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F385%2Fbalkans

[47] European Commission; External Affairs Service (2004), "The Contribution of the European Commission to the Implementation of the EU-Central Asia Action Plan on Drugs". Website: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/drugs/hero.htm

[48] Organization of Islamic Conference (2007), memberships. Website: www.oic-un.org/about/members.htm

[49] Center for Contemporary Conflict; Strategic Insights; Volume V; Issue 4 (04/2006), Anouar Boukhars, "The challenge of terrorism in Jordan". Website: <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2006/Apr/boukharsApr06.asp>

[50] ISSA Research & Analysis Corporation; Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis (16/01/2006), "Kosovo SHIK Directly Linked With Albanian SHIK Intelligence Organization".

[51] According to Stavro Markos, acclaimed Albanian journalist, correspondent for UK, French and Greek media.

[52] Global Research Organization Publications (22/10/2003), By Michel Chossudovsky, "Regime rotation in the USA". Website: <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO310B.html>



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- [53] Federation of American Scientists Publications (1998), By Milan. V. Petkovic, “Albanian terrorists”. Website: <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980000-kla-petkovic-terror.htm>
- [54] Alessandro Politi, “European Security: The New Transnational Risks,” Chaillot Papers, No. 29, October, 1997. This paper discusses analytically the strong evidence around the KLA’s tendencies towards criminal actions well before the U.S. intervention in Kosovo and with the suffice knowledge by the international bodies. ALSO see an article by the Independent newspaper (25/09/2002), “Bin Laden linked to Albanian drug gangs”. Website: http://www.thedossier.ukonline.co.uk/Web%20Pages/INDEPENDENT_Bin%20Laden%20linked%20to%20Albanian%20drug%20gangs.htm
- [55] Der Spiegel, 24 September 2001, p. 15
- [56] Federation of American Scientists Publications; Patterns of global terrorism (1998), “Europe overview”. Website: http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/terror_98/europe.htm
- [57] International Herald Tribune (22/12/2006), “Albania seizes assets of alleged bin Laden associate”. Web Site: http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/12/22/europe/EU_GEN_Albania_Terror_Financing.php
- [58] Voice of America News Service (08/05/2007), “Albania supports War on terror”. Website: <http://www.voanews.com/english/About/2007-05-08-albania-foreign-minister.cfm>
- [59] Anti War Article & Analysis Organization (19/09/2001), By Christopher Deliso, “How Islamic terrorism took root in Albania”. Website: <http://www.antiwar.com/orig/deliso5.html>
- [60] Shay Shaul “Islamic Terror and the Balkans”, P. 82, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, December 2006
- [61] For detailed information on terrorist sympathizers in the Sanjak area (Names, locations), see a GIS Security Briefing: <http://www.slobodan-milosevic.org/news/dfasa040307.htm> (Reprint)
- [62] ISSA Research & Analysis Corporation; Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis (03/2007), By Darko Trifunovic, “Terrorism: The case of Bosnia, Sanjak & Kosovo”.
- [63] United Nations Information Service in Vienna (01/10/2004), Press Release SOC/CP/311, “UN warning on terrorism in the Balkans”. Website: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/soccp311.doc.htm>
- [64] Washington Post (20/01/2005), By John Stilides, “Albania’s Dangerous Past”.
- [65] Boston Globe (01/05/2006), By Jonathan B. Tucker and Paul F. Walker , “A long way to go in eliminating chemical weapons”. Website: http://www.boston.com/news/globe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2006/05/01/a_long_way_to_go_in_eliminating_chemical_weapons/
- [66] Kathimerini Newspaper (07/02/2007), “ Kosovo link to Embassy strike”. Web Site: http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/w_articles_politics_100012_07/02/2007_79818
- [67] Shay Shaul “Islamic Terror and the Balkans”, P. 70, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, December 2006
- [68] Of course there were interactions of a great scale between the Byzantines and the Arab Muslims well before the arrival of the Ottomans in the Balkans. For more see: H.T. Norris “Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society Between Europe and the Arab World”, P. 43-50, C. Hurst & Co, London, Jan 1994
- [69] Nexhat Ibrahim, “Islam’s first contacts with the Balkan nations”. Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6875/nexhat.html>
- [70] The USA Pentagon Library; Selected bibliography on Balkan conflicts. Website: <http://www.hqda.army.mil/library/balkans.htm>
- [71] Wikipedia (2007), “Bogomils”. Website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogomil>
- [72] For an articulate description of the “ Bogomils” and their impact in the Pan-European history see: Medieval Cathares History: Short History of Bosnian Bogomils. Web Site: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/9892/bhhisto.html>
- [73] Serbianna News Agency (11/04/2006), By Carl Savich, “The role of the Bosnian Muslims in WW2”. Websites: <http://www.serbianna.com/columns/savich/077.shtml> & <http://www.serbianna.com/columns/savich/006.shtml>
- [74] The Counterterrorism Blog (17/08/2005), “Jihadist found a convenient base in Bosnia”. Website: http://counterterror.typepad.com/the_counterterrorism_blog/2005/08/jihadists_find_.html
- [75] Schwartz Stephen, “The failure of Europe in Bosnia and the Continuing Infiltration of Islamic Extremists”, The Weekly Standard, 20 June 2005
- [76] CIA Publications; Factbook; Bosnia-Herzegovina (2005). Website: <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bk.html>
- [77] Serbianna News Agency (23/10/2006), By Russell, Gordon “Behind Kosovo’s façade”. Website: <http://www.serbianna.com/columns/gordon/004.shtml>
- [78] Radio Free Europe; Background Report/253 (31/10/1983), By Louis Zanga, “Albanian Population Growth”. Reprinted by the Open Society Foundation Archives. Website:



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

<http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/3-13-10.shtml>

[79] Kaplan, Robert D. "Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History", P. 95-98 St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993. The chapter of Kaplan on Serbia, extensively and articulately grasps the importance of Kosovo-Metohija for the Serbian nation and the consequences of a potential loss of that territory.

[80] USA AID Organization Publications (2002), "Wahhabi presence in Sanjak". Website: www.pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADC982.pdf

[81] Indian Ministry of External Affairs Publications (2003), "Assessment of FYROM". Website: www.meaindia.nic.in/foreignrelation/macedonia.pdf

[82] BBC News (32/12/2005), "Muslims in Europe: Country guide". Web Site: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4385768.stm>

[83] Wikipedia (2007), "History of Ottoman Albania". Website: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Ottoman_Albania

[84] Bulgarian Helsinki Committee Publications (11/2003), "The human rights of Muslims in Bulgaria in law and politics since 1978". Chapter 2, Paragraph 2. Web site: www.bghelsinki.org/special/en/2003_Muslims_fm.doc

[85] Hellenic Resources Network Organization, "Presentation of the Lausanne Treaty". Website: www.hri.org/docs/straits/exchange.html

[86] London School of Economics; Hellenic Observatory Annual Symposium; Paper presentation, By Giorgios Niarchos Ph.D Candidate, "Continuity & Change in the minority policies of Greece & Turkey". Website: www.lse.ac.uk/collections/hellenicObservatory/pdf/symposiumPapersonline/Niarchos.pdf

[87] Ibid. AND Saudi Aramco Corporation Publications (08/1976), By Pamela Roberson, "Islam in Greece". P. 26-32

[88] BBC News (23/12/2005), "Muslims in Europe: Country guide". Website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4385768.stm>

[89] Wikipedia (2007), "Krajina". Web Site: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krajina>, ALSO for an in-depth analysis of the ethno-religious lines during the era of the Ottoman Empire in the Northern Balkans: Blumi Isa, "Contesting the edges of the Ottoman Empire: Rethinking ethnic and sectarian boundaries in the Malesore", International Journal of Middle East Studies, 35:P. 237-256, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003

[90] M. E. Mallet and J. R.Hale, "The Military organization of a Renaissance State: Venice ca. 1400 to 1617", Cambridge University Press, London, 1984

Footnotes for: "Narcotics and the emergence of crime syndicates in the Balkans"

[1] Interpol official publication (2006), "Heroin production", Website: <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Drugs/heroin/default.asp>

[2] Council of Foreign Affairs (09/2006), by Lionel Beehner; "Afghanistan's role in Iran's Drug problem". Website: <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11457/>

[3] BBC News Europe (03/08/2000), "Albanian mafia steps up people smuggling". Website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/863620.stm>

[4] Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (12/2002), By Glenn E. Curtis & Tara Karacan. Website: http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/pdf-files/WestEurope_NEXUS.pdf

[5] Website of Xavier Raufer: <http://www.xavier-raufer.com/>

[6] The Washington Quarterly Journal (09/1999), By Frank Cilluffo & George Salmoiraghi. Website: <http://www.twq.com/autumn99/224Cilluffo.pdf>

[7] EUROPOL Publications (2005), "EU Report on drug production and drug trafficking 2003-2004. Web site : <http://www.europol.europa.eu/publications/SeriousCrimeOverviews/2005/SC2Drugs-2005.pdf>

[8] CEMES Institute (2004), "Balkan trafficking report". Website: <http://www.cemes.org/current/ethpub/ethnobar/wp1/wp1-d.htm>

[9] Sisyph Organization (02/2005), By Prof. Richard Poulin, "The legalization of prostitution and its impact in trafficking of women and children". Website: http://sisyphe.org/article.php?id_article=1596

[10] Maltz D. Michael , "Defining Organized Crime", in: Robert J. Kelly et al. (eds.), Handbook of Organized Crime in the United States, Westport/London 1994, 21-37. ALSO for the particular Modus Operandi of the Albanian criminal groups see: Raufer, Xavier avec Stéphane Quéré. "La Mafia Albanaise, une Menace pour l'Europe: Comment est née cette Superpuissance Criminelle Balkanique" P. 12-124, Lausanne, Favre, 2000.

[11] United Nations Information Service in Vienna (09/2004), "Nexus between drugs, crime & terrorism". Website: <http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/pressrels/2004/uniscp500.html>

[12] Xavier Raufer (2002), "At the heart of the Balkan chaos: Albanian mafia". Website: http://www.xavier-raufer.com/english_5.php

[13] BIA -Security Information Agency- (09/2003), "Organized crime in Kosovo & Metohija". Website: <http://www.decani.org/albterrorism.html>

[14] National Post (04/2000), By Patrick Graham, "Drug wars: Kosovo's new battles". Website:



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

<http://www.balkanpeace.org/index.php?index=article&articleid=7582>

[15] Wikipedia (2007), "Albanians". Website: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albanians>

[16] Observatoire Geopolitique des Drogues Foundation; Annual Report (1996) "The World Geopolitics of Drugs". Page 61-75.

[17] Wikipedia (2007), "Opium". Website: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opium>

[18] FBI Publications (2002), "Report on transnational narcotics trade". Website: <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/orgcrime/lcn/ioc.htm>

[19] Drug Text organization, Reference library, By McCoy, "Marseille: America's heroin labatory". Website: <http://www.drugtext.org/library/books/McCoy/book/11.htm>

[20] Federation of American Scientists briefing, "Kurds I Turkey". Website: http://www.fas.org/asmp/profiles/turkey_background_kurds.htm

[21] The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th Ed. (2001-2005), "Iran-Iraq war". Website: <http://www.bartleby.com/65/ir/IranIraq.html>

[22] Charles R. Grosvenor Jr. (2007), "The Iran-Contra scandal". Website: <http://www.inthe80s.com/scandal.shtml>

[23] Lobster Magazine; Issue 30 (1995), "Persian Drugs: Oliver North, the DEA and Covert Operations in the Mideast"

[24] German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (10/2006), "Profile of Turkey". Website: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/Laender/Tuerkei.html>

[25] DHKC Information Bureau (01/1997), "The Susurluk accident". Website: <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/51/289.html>

[26] BBC News (06/10/2005), By Sarah Rainsford, " Turkey at the drugs crossroads". Web site: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4305692.stm>

[27] West Network organization (1998), "Corruption in Turkey". Website: <http://users.westnet.gr/~cgian/cillermurder.htm>

[28] Le Monde Diplomatic (07/1998), By Kendal Nezan, "Turkey's pivotal role in international drugs trade". Website: <http://mondediplo.com/1998/07/05>

[29] Centre for Drugs Research-University of Amsterdam- (1998), By Tim Boekhout Van Solinge, "Drugs use & trafficking in Europe". Website: <http://www.cedro-uva.org/lib/boekhout.drug.pdf>

[30] Ibid

[31] Journalismus Nachrichten Von Heute (11/12/2006), "The Hijacking of a Nation", Quoting Mark Galeotti, a former UK intelligence officer and expert on the Turkish mafia. Web Site: oraclesyndicate.twoday.net/stories/3049459

[32] Centre for European Reform (07/2006), By Hugo Brady, "Organized crime & punishment". Web Site: http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/brady_esharp_july_aug06.html

[33] Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Publications, "Open Edition on Albanian people". Web Site: <http://www.thefellowship.info/Global%20Missions/UPG/Albanian.icm>

[34] CNN (26/10/2004), By Eric Pearce, "Albanian crime rings suspects arrested". Website: http://www.mfa.gov.yu/FDP/CNN-261004_1.html

[35] Balkananalysis news agency (30/11/2006), By Christopher Deliso, "The hijacking of a nation, part-2". Website: <http://www.balkananalysis.com/2006/11/30/the-hijacking-of-a-nation-part-2-the-auctioning-of-former-statesmen-dime-a-dozen-generals/>

[36] American Council for Kosovo organization (28/08/2006), "Text of report in English by Belgrade based Radio B92". Website: <http://www.savekosovo.org/default.asp?p=5&leader=0&sp=118>

[37] Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (11/05/2005), "Bucharest Declaration". Website: http://www.mvpei.hr/seecp/docs/7_BUCHAREST_DECLARATION_11_MAY_2005.pdf

[38] Subcommittee on European Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate (30/10/2003), Testimony by Grant D. Ashley, Assistant Director, Criminal Investigative Division, FBI, "Eurasian, Italian, and Balkan Organized Crime". Website: <http://www.fbi.gov/congress/congress03/ashley103003.htm> ALSO see more on: Galeotti, Mark. 2001. "Albanian Gangs Gain Foothold in European Crime Underworld." Jane's Intelligence Review 13(11, November): 25-7.

[39] CIAO organization, interview of Mark Edmond Clark in CIAO, "Terrorism and organized crime". Website: http://www.ciaonet.org/special_section/iraq/papers/clm10/clm10.html

[40] The Center for Peace in the Balkans (06/2003), "Humanitarian bombing vs. Iraqi freedom". Website: <http://www.balkanpeace.org/index.php?index=/content/analysis/a14.incl>

[41] Global Policy Forum (2004), "Kosovo". Website: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues//ksvindx.htm>

[42] Gus Xhudo. (1996) "Men of Purpose: The Growth of Albanian Criminal Activity." Transnational Organized Crime. 2(1). Spring: 1-20

[43] Website of Xavier Raufer: <http://www.xavier-raufer.com/>

[44] Wikipedia (2007), "Albanian Mafia". Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albanian_mafia

[45] USA Department of State (2006), Trafficking in person's reports". Website: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/>

[46] Albanian-Canadian organization (2006), "Dateline of Albanian history". Website: <http://www.albanian.ca/datehistory.htm>



CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – February 2013

- [47] Serbianna News Agency (19/04/2005), By M. Bozinovich, "Al-Qaeda in Kosovo". Website: <http://www.serbianna.com/columns/mb/035.shtml>
- [48] Interpol official publication (2006), "Heroin production", Website: <http://www.interpol.int/Public/Drugs/heroin/default.asp>
- [49] Italian Parliament Publications (29/03/2006), Report by Senator Alberto Maritati, "Organized crime in the Balkans with a reference to Albania". Website: www.cespi.it/Rotta/Ascod-criminalità/maritati.PDF
- [50] Open Democracy Foundation (16/08/2006), By Ilija Trojanow, "Bulgaria: The Mafia's dance to Europe". Website: http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-europefuture/bulgaria_3825.jsp
- [51] Information acquired through various reliable journalistic sources in Bulgaria
- [52] Robert Schumann Foundation (17/10/2006), By Corrine Deloy, "Presidential election in Bulgaria". Website: <http://www.robert-schuman.org/anglais/oe/bulgarie/presidentielle/default2.htm>
- [53] Xenakis Sappho, "International Norm Diffusion and Organised Crime Policy: The Case of Greece", Global Crime, Volume 6, Issue 3 & 4 August 2004 , pages 345 – 373, London.
- [54] Business Week Journal (20/06/2005), BY Alkman Granitsas, "Digging for gold in the Balkans". Website: http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/05_25/b3938161_mz035.htm

Ioannis Michaletos is an associate of the Institute for Defense & Security Analysis in Athens, Greece. He is a political and security consultant for the IHS Jane's Information Group and a regular contributor for security issues for World Press, Serbianna, Balkanalysis and a host of other online journals. He frequently interviews & comments on such issues for the world media. He holds a BA in political science from the Essex University and an MSc in human resources management from the Luton-Bedford University. Mr. Michaletos leads the Southeast European office of the World Security Network Foundation, contributes to the BRIGHT magazine in issues of Balkan organized crime, and is a member of the FLARE network (European network of civil society against trans-national organized crime). His main interests are in the research and analysis of asymmetrical security threats in Southeastern Europe (organized crime networks, terrorism and extremism). His experience includes consultancy projects for security research organizations and corporations, focused mainly in the Balkans, Greece, the regional extremist networks and the trans-national illicit markets. Read more articles from I Michaletos at:

www.rimse.gr



NOTE: At <http://www.rimse.gr/2013/01/blog-post.html> you can read an additional paper (in Greek) on "Albanian Organized Crime in Greece" [Jan 4, 2013].

