



Auswärtiges Amt

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## **Thesenpapier/Bullet-Point Paper**

„Ownership and Related Dilemmas of International  
Intervention and Foreign Aid“

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## **Introduction:**

Bosnia should not be seen as a *sui generis* case of international regulation because of the unique powers of the OHR. To learn the lessons of Bosnia it should be seen as highlighting key trends at work within EU regional policy. Note: Paddy Ashdown is not only the High Representative of the ad hoc international Peace Implementation Council but also the European Union Special Representative to Bosnia.

The dynamics of intervention in Bosnia – the problematisation of ordinary aspects of society; the increasingly unaccountable accumulation of external powers; the counterproductive nature of many policy initiatives; the lack of self-reflectivity etc (drawn out by the ESI and others) – are reproduced in EU policy across the region.

The presentation considers why this is the case.

## **Three Theses:**

### **1. Process of intervention is driven by the problems of the EU not of the region**

From the perspective of EU administrators the extension of EU influence in the region and the use of its specific attributes as a ‘civilian power’ to assist in ‘contributing to stability and good governance in our immediate neighbourhood’ (Solana Thessaloniki paper) stems from the security concerns of bad governance and its relation to crime, corruption, state failure, terrorism etc.

This perspective inverts the dynamic. Rather than the problems of the region necessitating EU intervention as a regional and civil power, this presentation suggests that the need to answer the question of what the EU is and the role of the EU and its answer – a regional and civilian power (note that the other 2 strategic objectives put across by Solana merely echo US security policy) - has led to a focus on EU identity creation through the project of enlargement and external intervention – a process which flatters and coheres the European project.

### **2. This process becomes an end in itself resulting in cycle of problematisation of everyday life and extension of bureaucratic regulatory power**

As the drive to intervene in the region bears little relationship to the needs and concerns of the region, but rather the needs and concerns of the EU (yes economically and strategically – but the focus here is at the level of ideology and institutional legitimacy) it is a process driven by EU member states and one which meets little resistance in the region due to the asymmetry of power relations and the dependency of non-EU states on good relations with the EU.

This means that the process becomes more important than the ends, each round of membership negotiations, CARDS planning, Stabilisation and Association process contractual talks, programmes for *acquis communautaire* compatibility or Stability Pact table gatherings results in new demands on non-EU states and raises new problems to be dealt with – from institution building, civil society-building, minority rights, corruption, trafficking to environment etc etc. The discourse is one of flattery - the EU has the solutions and guidance and the non-member states the problems. This process is one which as in Bosnia bears little relationship to the situation on the ground.

### **3. This process reproduces a crisis of political legitimacy in the region with governments undermined by external powers and the bypassing of govt by interest groups**

The drive to address questions of political legitimacy in EU member states (governments' disconnection from public, the lack of political programme and big ideas) expressed in the inevitable drive to strengthen EU institutions and avoid public accountability, has displaced but not solved the problem by posing these questions at the level of the EU (which previously was legitimated at the technocratic or economic level). Ironically this displacement is spreading the crisis of political legitimacy from the EU member states to the non-member states in the region. This legitimacy crisis is clearest in Bosnia (see Gerard Knaus and Felix Martin in JoD), the point of this paper is to clarify that this is merely an exaggerated form of the same process in non-EU states in the region.

The external drive by the EU to politicise and internationalise questions of governance in the region may not necessarily be destabilising (although the possibility is inherent in the process) but it institutes mechanisms and relations of governance which hollow out the role of the state and of political consensus-building and public participation. Firstly political elites are forced to follow an external agenda – in Bosnia as much as in other states under the SAp or the SP - and often in opposition to public demands. Secondly the EU relates directly to interest groups and sectional interests (civil society, minority rights, local authority etc) again bypassing the government (and the public sphere) as the agent for conflict-resolution and consensus-building.

### **Conclusion:**

The lesson of Bosnia is that the EU's attempt to solve its problems of legitimacy externally merely reproduces and reflects its own contradictions and tensions on a more transparent level – and it is not a pleasant sight.