

# Balkanisation: Frozen Conflicts, Connectivity, and Politics

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# Frozen Conflicts: Some Definitions

- These are unresolved conflicts over **territory**
- They draw, redraw, or strengthen **borders** (as in a ceasefire)
- Behind these borders spring up authorities (“monopolies of coercive power”) with dubious legality and legitimacy
- Usually a consequence of (an attempt at) either secession or annexation
- Which could be either internationalised or not

# Balkanisation: Typology of Frozen Conflicts

	<i>de jure</i>	<i>de facto</i>
Secession	Kosovo	Kosovo 1991-1998
Annexation	Croatia 1991 Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995)	Republika Srpska Northern Kosovo

de jure: internationalised

de facto: not internationalised

# Outcomes and instruments

- Three outcomes: living with the conflict, secession or annexation fail, or they succeed
- Instruments: normalisation, legalisation, military intervention

# The Assignment Problem (pairing goals with instruments)

- Goal: living with the conflict; instruments: connectivity
- Examples: single market, free trade, regional integration
- Goal: failure of secession or annexation; instruments: constitution building (example Macedonia) or military intervention (Croatia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Goal: successful secession or annexation; instruments: agreement or legalisation or use of force

# International Action: Intervening, Influencing and Nudging

- Military intervention for security or human rights reasons (example of former: Bosnia and Herzegovina; example of latter: Kosovo)
- Legal intervention: to adjudicate claims to annexation or secession (ICJ decisions on Kosovo)
- Other legal interventions: ICJ on the right of Macedonia to join international institutions (EU, NATO); European Court of Human Rights' decision on the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the case of Sejdic-Finci)
- Sanctions: comprehensive to contain and influence regime change; targeted to constrain the government and influence change of policy
- Comment: Frozen conflict is a *de facto, by consequence of the lack of international legality and legitimacy*) a system of sanctions, often comprehensive ones
- Conditionalities: reintegration or integration (i.e. increased connectivity) with fulfilment of conditions

# Three Examples

- Croatia: failed normalisation; the conflict was resolved militarily
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: rejection of annexation through secession, military intervention, international constitution with the premise that connectivity (“Arizona Road”) breeds constitutionality (the outcome: prolonged frozen conflict)
- Kosovo: military intervention, legal resolution of the case for secession, and gradual normalisation

# Regional Cooperation

- The key strategy of normalisation and state building since the end of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995
- After 2000, bilateral free trade agreement
- After 2006, regional free trade agreement (CEFTA)
- From 2003, promise of and procedure for accession to the EU
- From 2010 (decision by the ICJ on Kosovo) no *de jure* frozen conflicts
- Geography of animosity unchanged
- EU conditionalities with very limited effects
- Welfare effects of economic interdependence positive, though regional connectivity beyond trade and some investment limited or non-existent
- Hard to cross borders (very difficult to invest in regional infrastructure, physical as well as institutional)



# Outcomes

- Political and policy spaces are more limited and rigid
- Monetary policy instruments are limited
- Fiscal policies are strained
- Labour markets tend to be depressed
- Corruption is widespread
- Internal markets are distorted

# Conclusion

- ICJ interventions helpful and should be listened to (implemented) more and referred to regularly (especially when Security Council cannot decide)
- Military interventions are always a latent risk as they are attractive as conflict resolution mechanism
- Political normalisation and economic connectivity solidify the freeze, but do not resolve conflicts over territory
- Economic consequences for contested territories are quite negative in the long run and only somewhat mitigated by increased connectivity and foreign aid