

Why Self-determination?

Self-determination is the right of all colonized peoples. The absence of preparation in the fields of politics, economics, society or education cannot be used as a pretext to delay independence. (UN SC Resolution 1514, 1960)

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Newsletter from the Movement for SELF-DETERMINATION!

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THIS WEEK: The Ahtisaari Agreement

The Ahtisaari Plan does not create an independent or sovereign Kosova. It divides Kosova into two entities: one with an Albanian majority, ruled by the EU; the other with a Serb majority, ruled by Belgrade. Rather than creating a state in which all citizens are equal, it creates a territory divided into ethnic blocks. It has in effect created a territorial Serb entity linked horizontally and vertically with Belgrade. By doing this, the Agreement preserves the direct control of Belgrade in existing and new Serb municipalities, and provides Serbia with institutional mechanisms to influence and destabilize central government in Kosova.

Injustices of Ahtisaari's Agreement

No independence and no sovereignty

The Agreement does not mention that Serbia's sovereignty over Kosova will end, thus leaving open the possibility for it to continue through Resolution 1244. It does not define Kosova as a state, as independent or as sovereign. It calls it a 'multi-ethnic society' and territory (Article 1).

No membership of the UN

Article 1 allows Kosova to make international agreements and to request membership of international organizations. It does not offer or guarantee membership of the UN which implies recognition of statehood.

No self-determination

The agreement does not mention the right to a referendum, except to ban it as an instrument of decision-making on laws in Article 3. It prohibits any request or act of uniting with another state, or part of a state. (Article 1)

No Army

The Agreement disbands the Kosovo Protection Force, and will replace it with another so-called 'security force' with the power to deal with crisis response, demining and civil protection. Security will remain the responsibility of the ICR and NATO. (Annex 8)

Tyranny of the minority

The Agreement is so concerned to limit the power of central government over non-Albanian communities, that it has created a tyranny of the minority. Serbs constitute 6% of the population whilst Albanians 90%. All laws relating to minorities which includes for example, creation of municipal boundaries, powers of municipalities and their cross-cooperation, must be approved by a double majority: a majority of all deputies, and then a majority of all minority deputies. 10 seats are reserved for Serbs and 10 for other minorities. With just 4

extra seats won in elections, this means Serbia, through manipulation of Serb deputies, will have the ability to block legislation initiated in the Kosova Assembly (Article 3).

No democracy

The people of Kosova will still not have democratic rights. They will be ruled by an International Civilian Representative (ICR) who is not elected by them, is immune from prosecution and unaccountable. The ICR has final authority over security, law and public order, and over the implementation of this Agreement which in essence covers in detail all aspects of government. The ICR has the power to remove from office any public official judged to be obstructing the Agreement. The mandate of the ICR will be reviewed within 2 years, but then, that's what they said for UNMIK too and they're still here, 7 years later. (Annex 9)

Joint Contact Group Statement, 2.2.07

'The Contact Group expects both parties to demonstrate responsibility, flexibility and recognition of the need for realistic, compromise-based solutions so that the process is brought forward on the basis of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244.'

An imposed Constitution

The people of Kosova will be required to approve a constitution which they have not freely drafted themselves. Its contents are determined and imposed by the Agreement, and must be approved by the ICR before going to the Assembly. Its contents must be approved by minorities (imagine that it refers to Kosova as an independent state!) and any amendments require a double majority of 2/3. (Article 10)

No restoration of property expropriated through 'colonization'

The Agreement commits Kosova to return properties to refugees, without making it clear that many are returning to disputed property, expropriated by Serbia during the 20th century in the colonization process.

Denial of any Albanian orthodox heritage

The Agreement speaks only for so-called Serb heritage in Kosova. Annex 5 affirms that the Orthodox Heritage in Kosova is the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). It creates 45 special zones around religious and cultural buildings in Kosova. These sites will have immunity from taxes and customs; access by the authorities of Kosova will be at the discretion of the Church; most economic activity will be banned, and permission must be sought from the Church even for public gatherings and recreation! Annex 7 commits Kosova to return property to the SOC without providing any explanation: What property? Does this mean a return to feudalism?

An unjust debt

The Agreement speaks of the debt Kosova will inherit from Serbia, but nothing of the

damages caused to Kosova by Serbia during the war, and the 1990s (Annex 6)

A territorial Serb entity

Annex 3 describes the self-governing powers of the new Serb municipalities. Despite the claim that they will be multi-ethnic, two of them are mono-ethnic: Partesh and Ranilug have been designed to be 100% serb.

The municipalities will have the right to work together horizontally inside Kosova as an Association and vertically with other municipalities in Serbia. They will receive tax-free funding from Belgrade. Serb municipalities will have greater competences than Albanian: North Mitrovica will have competences over its University; North Mitrovica, Gračanica and Shtërpçë will have competences in secondary health; and all will have authority over so-called Serb cultural and religious heritage, and enhanced rights in selection of police commanders. All education in Serb municipalities will be according to the curriculum of Serbia and any challenge regarding the content of offensive textbooks will be determined by a council in which internationals hold the decisive vote. The police

force and judicial structures will reflect the ethnic construction of the municipality, their boundaries will coincide with municipal boundaries, and the police will cooperate with the municipality via a local council chaired by the Municipal President.

The only mechanism allowed to central government to question a municipal decision is to go to the District Court of the Municipality. A District Court that will be controlled by the parallel structures of Serbia.

New municipalities can be created where a minority community constitutes 75% of 5000 residents, and this will be reviewed over time. As Annex 1 states that all citizens, and their descendants, of the Republic of Serbia who lived in Kosova on 1.1.1998, are residents of Kosova, this means that through 'return', Serbs brought by Milosevic to Kosova from Croatia and Bosnia to alter the population balance in the 1990s, will have the right to settle here and form new municipalities.

Who has the right to oppose this Agreement?

And finally, Annex 11 states that the international military presence will assist local authorities in responding to 'violent extremists', but provides no definition of this term. As we have been branded 'violent' for throwing bottles of paint at our institutions, and 'extremist' for seeking the right to self-determination, does this refer to us?

DEMONSTRATE!

FEBRUARY 10TH 14:00

SELF-DETERMINATION