# Armed Conflict and Peace Mission Analysis of Bosia-Herzegovina Conflict

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Abstract: This article aims to explore and explain about how armed conflict and peace mission occured in the conflict of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Using qualitative research methods, specifically a descriptive research design, we ranged peace mission process in Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. The data we collected end explained in this article are about the type of conflict, sources of conflict, actors of conflict, military/non-military intervention, the role of development cooperation in armed conflict, conceptual perspective of peace and peace missions, peace-building and peace-enforcement and peace-keeping, disarmament-demobilization-reintegration (DDR), and the settlement of disputes. Thus, we conclude that the conflict between the ethnic groups in it is a type of conflict with the noninternational armed conflict.

Keywords: Armed conflict, Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict, peace mission.

## 1. Introduction

The Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict is one of the armed conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. After taking place between the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Slovenia and Croatia, the independence of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina was also questioned by the Republic of Serbia, which considered itself a representative of the Federal State Government of Yugoslavia (Amelia, 2014). For so long in Bosnia, Turkish rule had much impact on the lives of the Bosnian people. Turkey treats the Bosnian people well, making the Bosnian people convert to Islam voluntarily. Bosnians who were willing to embrace Islam were bred by the Turkish rulers, causing the envy of the Orthodox Serbs. The jealousy grew until it turned into deep-rooted hatred.

Bosnia-Herzegovina, or as it is informally called Bosnia, is a country that has ethnic and religious diversity. The three largest ethnic groups are Bosniaks (Bosnian ethnic groups who are generally Muslim), Serbs (Serbs), and Croats (Croats). Following the failure of the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina followed Slovenia and Croatia's footsteps to secede from Yugoslavia in 1991 (Prabowo, 2020). Politically, Bosnia's independence was driven by injustice in the government ruled by ethnic Bosnian Serbs (an ethnic minority but with power). This independence was opposed by Serbia, who still wanted Bosnia to remain in

Serbian territory. Apart from wanting to maintain the unity of the regions that were formerly part of Yugoslavia, this opposition is based on the existence of natural resources owned by Bosnia. However, this apparently adds to the tension between ethnic groups who already have plans related to their respective interests.

In some areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina where the majority of the population is ethnic Serb, the status of the autonomous region of Serbia is announced arbitrarily. In April 1992, international recognition emerged, until Bosnia-Herzegovina became a member of the United Nations on May 22 1992 (Prabowo, 2020). However, the ethnic Bosnians Serb refused independence, even the Bosnian Serb paramilitaries attacked the city of Sarajevo, and Serb troops from the Yugoslav army immediately joined in the attack. Cities with large Bosniak populations, such as Zvornik, Foca, and Visegrad, were the main targets of the joint forces' attacks (Prabowo, 2020). Radovan Karadzic from the Bosnian Serb side who coordinated with Slobodan Milosevic from Serbia then cornered the position of Bosnian Muslims until they were helpless. Seeing the weak defense of ethnic Muslims, ethnic Croats who previously agreed to the formation of a Muslim-Croatian federation no longer support this idea. Ethnic Croats argue that cooperating with ethnic Muslims will only bring harm on their part. The conflict developed into an ethnic conflict. The conflict escalated when Serbia completely bombarded the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo and other cities after Bosnia proclaimed independence on April 6, 1992.

#### 2. Method Research

Researchers used qualitative research methods, specifically using a descriptive research design. Through this method, we explored a problem with a detailed boundary, had in-depth data collection, and enclose information from various sources (Jackson, 2012). Therefore, in the data collection process, researchers used literature studies as the main data source, by collecting documents, books, journals, articles, and newspapers that contained the appropriate information and had relevance to the research conducted. The data used in this journal article is data that is officially published, either in the form of documents or in the form of official websites from institutions related to

the issue. This research was conducted for approximately 2 (two) months, starting from October to December 2021.

#### 3. Results and Discussion

Bosnia-Herzegovina, or as it is informally called Bosnia, is a country that has ethnic and religious diversity. The three largest ethnic groups are Bosniaks (Bosnian ethnic groups who are generally Muslim), Serbs (Serbs), and Croats (Croats). Following the failure of the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina followed in the footsteps of Slovenia and Croatia to secede from Yugoslavia, in 1991. However, this added to tensions between ethnic groups who already had plans related to their respective interests. The ethnic Bosnians Serb refused the independence, even the Bosnian Serb paramilitaries attacked the city of Sarajevo, and Serb troops from the Yugoslav army immediately participated in the attack. Cities with large Bosniak populations, such as Zvornik, Foca, and Visegrad, were the main targets of the joint forces' attacks.

Various peace missions, ranging from preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, building, to humanitarian intervention have been carried out in the conflict between Bosnia and Herzegovina. UN forces engaged with mandate to support humanitarian operations through sending UNHCR and ICRC to deal with the issue of refugees due to war. In addition, the diplomatic route to stop armed conflict has also been carried out by the United Nations through the issuance of a UN Security Council Resolution, although this is not heeded by the conflicting parties, as evidenced by the ongoing attacks even on peacekeepers. Until then, the United Nations and NATO decided to take the path of violence to stop this conflict by carrying out airstrikes. The parties to the conflict, especially Bosnia, were only willing to comply with UN and NATO orders after intensive airstrikes by NATO. Along with these airstrikes, negotiations were also held, resulting in the Dayton Agreement, known as the Dayton Peace Accord.

# A. Type of Conflict

In armed conflict, there are at least 2 (two) types of conflict, namely IAC (International Armed Conflict) and NIAC (Non-International Armed Conflict). Based on the parties involved in armed conflict, IAC is divided into two types: pure IAC that occurs between two or more countries, and pseudo IAC whose parties' are non-state parties. Meanwhile for NIAC, the parties to the conflict are the legitimate government armed forces and organized armed groups (Putri & Narwati, 2020). There is also an explanation of the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), which states that an armed conflict known as NIAC is performed by one or more non-governmental armed groups involved (ICRC, 2008).

Written in the Commentary Geneva Convention I 1949, the definition of international armed conflict (IAC) is the same as a war between countries, where the subject of the conflict is the state (DCAF & Geneva Call, 2015). Meanwhile, noninternational armed conflict (NIAC) is an armed conflict in which the place of conflict is located in an area that involves the armed forces of the country and rebel groups. Based on this, the

conflict that occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina between the ethnic groups in it is a type of conflict with the NIAC or noninternational armed conflict because this conflict is also not an armed conflict between countries.

# B. Sources of Conflict

# 1) Religious and Ethnic Differences

The country located in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula in the southeast of the European continent is a very multicultural country because no religion or ethnicity in this country constitutes an absolute majority. This country has a heterogeneous ethnicity which is dominated by Bosnian Muslims and followed by Serbs. Bosnia-Herzegovina is also known as the place of "East meets west", namely the Ancient Roman Empire split into the Western Roman Empire of Catholic Christians and the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine) of Orthodox Christians. In addition to these two influences, at the end of the 13th century, the influence of Islam was brought in by the Ottoman Empire which succeeded in controlling the Balkan Peninsula after defeating Serbia in the battle in Kosovo and spreading Islam in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey's long rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina, has had many impacts on the lives of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey treats the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina well, thus making the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina convert to Islam voluntarily.

The Turkish rulers brought up the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina who are willing to embrace Islam, causing jealousy for the Ethnic Serbs who are Orthodox Christians. The jealousy grew so much that it turned into deep-rooted hatred. Serbia has always tried to expel Turkey from the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina by carrying out various rebellions. Against the Bosnians who have embraced Islam, Serbs do not want to be equated at all because they feel superior. This is what gave rise to the term Bosnian Muslim Ethnicity to distinguish between Serbian Orthodox Christians and Croatian Catholic Christians and Muslims.

Ethnic and religious differences are the main factors causing the armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina was not only caused by inter-ethnic conflicts but also by prolonged inter-religious conflicts. In addition, the past revenge of the Serbs against the Bosnian Muslims was also the cause of the emergence of armed conflict, because the Bosnian Muslims helped the Ottoman Turks in controlling the Balkan Peninsula. Thus, the main source of armed conflict in the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina is ethnic and religious differences (especially between Ethnic Serbs and Ethnic Bosnian Muslims). In addition, historical factors have also been the cause of the hatred between the Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims during the occupation Ottoman.

#### 2) Death of President Broz Tito

Broz Tito was the first president in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who tried to rebuild brotherhood in the country under the banner of communism, which later became known as the term "Unity and Brotherhood". The term became a doctrine of the development of harmony in life inter-ethnic in the Yugoslav region. President Josip Broz Tito tried to form a strong (centralized) central government, but each state was

given the freedom to govern itself. It aims to create a balance of power between the states.

After President Broz Tito died in May 1980, Yugoslavia faced serious economic problems, weakening the central government. The central government's authority also declined because the presidency was regulated in rotation by the states. Therefore, there is no national figure who is strong enough and capable of tackling domestic problems, so that each state then fights for power. Thus, the death of Josep Broz Tito was also one of the sources of the emergence of the armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Yugoslavia no longer had a unifying figure.

## 3) Slobodan Milosevic's Political Policy

After 9 years of the death of President Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia was then led by Slobodan Milosevic, who was elected through an interstate presidential rotation system who also came from Serbian ethnicity. The emergence of the Republic of Serbia leader, Slobodan Milosevic, who was nationalistic at the helm of the Federal Government of Yugoslavia also marked the emergence of Serbian nationalism. For other ethnic groups, this is seen as a threat, considering that Serbia has ambitions to create a 'Greater Serbia' (Husna, 2001). This is done by making a policy of eliminating the practice of presidential rotation between state representatives and replacing it with a national-scale presidential election system that can be followed by every individual. If implemented, this will allow candidates from Ethnic Serbs to easily win elections because Ethnic Serbs are the ethnicity with the largest population in Yugoslavia. The desire of Slobodan Milosevic received strong protests from other states.

The impact of dissatisfaction with the policies of the central government led by the Slobodan Milosevic regime was that Yugoslavia was disintegrating. This began in 1991 when Slovenia and Croatia decided to separate from Yugoslavia and establish their own state. The independence of Slovenia and Croatia was then followed by the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992 holding an independence referendum. However, the central government, which did not want to lose its territory again, considered the referendum held in Bosnia-Herzegovina invalid. The central government of Yugoslavia then armed the Serbs residing in Bosnia-Herzegovina and sent the Yugoslav National Army or Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija (JNA) to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Based on this, it can be understood that the political policies issued by the Slobodan Milosevic government tended to benefit Serbia, thus causing dissatisfaction from other ethnicities which resulted in the desire of the states to separate themselves from Yugoslavia.

## 4) Natural Resources

Bosnia-Herzegovina has natural resources in the form of coal, iron ore, bauxite, tin, copper, zinc, nickel and manganese. Seeing the wealth of natural resources and the many industrial factories located in cities in the Bosnia-Herzegovina region, it is clear that the central government of Yugoslavia does not want to lose the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thus, the armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina has become one of the armed conflicts that will take a long time to resolve. The desire to own natural resources is one source of the emergence of conflict and

the cause of the long-armed conflict in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

## C. Actors of Conflict

Based on the type of conflict, the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict belongs to the NIAC. Based on the parties involved in the armed conflict, the NIAC consists of the legitimate government armed forces and organized armed groups (Putri & Narwati, 2020). There is also an explanation of the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), which states that an armed conflict known as NIAC is performed by one or more non-governmental armed groups involved (ICRC, 2008). Based on this, the conflict that occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina between the Bosniak, Serb, and Croat ethnic groups can be categorized as NIAC with Armed Forces. Non-State Actors (NSA) as the actor.

The inter-ethnic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina is an armed conflict that occurs between non-state actors because both are not state actors, but armed groups within the state, and are actors with a domestic level of analysis. In the level of individual analysis, this conflict also involves Slobodan Milosevic who was elected through the interstate presidential rotation system who is also of Serbian ethnicity. The emergence of the Republic of Serbia leader, Slobodan Milosevic, who was nationalistic at the helm of the Federal Government of Yugoslavia also marked the emergence of Serbian nationalism to become the ruling leader in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina fully.

## D. Military/Non-Military Intervention

The conflict that occurred between Bosnia and Herzegovina had an impact on the emergence of refugees and displaced people in Europe. This population movement is one of the consequences of the war because of certain ethnic extermination practices. This has become one of the most complex humanitarian problems that has ever occurred in Europe. Violation of humanitarian principles, systematic denial of humanitarian access, and the very dangerous level of community security risk later became the reasons for conducting humanitarian operations in the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict (Young, 2001). Therefore, UN forces are involved with a mandate to support humanitarian operations, through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

UNHCR and ICRC are 2 (two) organizations that are very serious about working together to carry out operations to address humanitarian issues – including human rights violations - that occurred as a result of the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. In carrying out its activities, UNHCR focuses more on the issue of civilian victims who have to evacuate and leave conflict areas, while the ICRC is more dedicated to people affected by war in open conflict situations. However, the humanitarian crisis is increasing which then causes UNHCR to be included in the work of the ICRC, and vice versa. UNHCR has concluded that the ICRC does not have sufficient capacity to address these increasingly complex problems. The intensifying humanitarian crisis has led these two organizations to develop

complementary, collaborative relationships (Young, 2001).

### E. The Role of Development Cooperation in Armed Conflict

Several international organizations carried out efforts to build cooperation to stop the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict, including NATO, IFOR, SFOR, NAC, SHAPE, and COMARRC. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) conducted its first major crisis-response operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implementation Forces (IFOR) or NATO-led implementation forces were deployed in December 1995 to implement the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA), and a year later were replaced by the Stabilization Forces (SFOR). Safe environment and facilitated the country's reconstruction after the 1992-1995 war (NATO, 2019).

IFOR's leadership is based at its operational headquarters in Zagreb, Croatia. Following the handover to SFOR in December 1996, the command structure, as directed by the North Atlantic Council (NAC), the scope of this organization was later expanded to include SFOR deputy commanders - deputy operational commanders and divisional commanders – at each head. a multinational task force or the multinational task Force (MNTF) which reaches 1800-2000 forces (NATO, 2019). As for all NATO operations, control, and political coordination are provided by the NAC, which is NATO's senior political decision-making body to stop the conflict between Bosnia and Herzegovina. Strategic Command and control is carried out by Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe NATO's (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium.

## F. Conceptual Perspective of Peace and Peace Missions

In carrying out peace missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, international peace organizations are very serious by investing considerable resources in their efforts to resolve crises/conflicts in this region. This is evident from the deployment of EU monitors, UN peacekeepers, human rights rapporteurs, human rights and humanitarian activists, as well as international administrators in the region to carry out their respective duties with high dedication (Wellee, 1996). In addition, there was deployed United Nations Protection and Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina to establish and maintain peace.

The peacekeeping mission in this conflict is specifically focused on establishing safe areas to end the conflict and violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The establishment of a Rapid Reaction Force and a large-scale air attack was carried out as one of the United Nations missions which later ended in a ceasefire (Wellee, 1996). Armed attacks carried out by the United Nations and NATO are considered to be able to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina to conditions of peace that can last a long time. Until then, this conflict could end with the agreement of the Dayton Agreement by all parties, including the role of the United Nations, NATO, and other international actors involved in the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina missions (Wellee, 1996).

# G. Peace Building & Peacemaking

Peace-building is a series of activities to identify, determine the form and type of support to be taken, as well as to build trust and good relations between parties involved in the conflict. The

conflict between Bosnia and Herzegovina was identified as having an impact on the emergence of refugees and displaced people in Europe. This has become a complex humanitarian problem because humanitarian principles have been violated and the level of community security risk is felt to be very dangerous (Young, 2001). Therefore, UN forces are involved with a mandate to support humanitarian operations, through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the UN Protection and Force (UNPROFOR).

While Peacemaking is the operational stage that prioritizes diplomatic action to bring the disputing parties to the negotiating table by peaceful means, so that a mutual agreement is reached. The implementation of peacemaking itself is regulated in the United Nations Charter Chapter 6. In connection with the conflict between Serbia and Herzegovina, the UN Security Council has issued 8 (eight) UN Resolutions Security Council from September 25, 1991 to May 15, 1992, because the conditions in Bosnia were felt to be getting worse and out of control. Attacks on UNPROFOR members marked this deteriorating condition as peacekeepers, ICRC members, violations of the ceasefire, and the expulsion of civilians who were not ethnic Serbs (Sefriani, 2000).

## H. Peace-enforcement & Peacekeeping

Peace enforcement is a last option of peacekeeping operations if all the stages that have been taken are deadlocked, which is regulated in the United Nations Charter Chapter 7, regarding the rules for the use of force of arms to maintain and restore world peace and security (Hidayat, 2021). In the armed conflict of Bosnia-Herzegovina, peace-enforcement was also carried out by the United Nations because various bluffs from the United Nations and NATO were completely unable to stop the atrocities arising from the conflict. The parties to the conflict, especially Bosnia, were only willing to obey the United Nations and NATO orders after intensive airstrikes by NATO (Sumartini, 2014). Marathon talks were held in Geneva, New York, and Dayton, along with the airstrikes.

Peacekeeping is a stage of operations that requires the presence of the United Nations (military & civilian) directly by monitoring the implementation of agreements related to conflict control (truce, separation of powers, etc.), solving problems, and ensuring security during the process of distributing humanitarian aid (Hidayat, 2021). In the armed conflict of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the formation of UNPROFOR became one of the steps peacekeeping taken by the UN Security Council. In addition, war criminals in Bosnia are also tried in order to maintain international peace and security, through the International Criminal Tribunal. The United Nations do this to prevent any efforts that can threaten international peace and security (Sefriani, 2000).

#### I. Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)

In the post-civil conflict of the cold war, the process of disarmament or disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) repeatedly been shown to be important in order to stabilize post-conflict situations; reduce the possibility of new

violence, either because of the re-emergence of war or the outbreak of conflict residues owned by actors of past conflicts; and facilitate the transition of society from conflict to normalcy (Pietz, 2004). Disarmament or disarmament is an activity carried out to collect, control, and dispose of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and so on from combatants and often also from the civilian population (Moratti & Sabic-El-Rayess, 2009).

Demobilization is a process in which the armed forces – both from the government and/or the opposition – reduce or even disband completely as part of the combatants. Typically, demobilization involves collection, the deployment, disarmament, administration and discharge of former combatants, who may receive some form of compensation and other assistance to promote their transition to civilian life (Moratti & Sabic-El-Rayess, 2009). At the end of the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1995), the United Nations had difficulty estimating the total number of combatants due to the complexity of the civil war and the lack of records of the size of the army or combat unit.

Reintegration programs are assistance measures provided to ex-combatants to increase the economic and social integration of themselves and their families into civil society. Reintegration programs may include cash transfers or in-kind compensation, vocational training, and income-generating activities (Pietz, 2004). DDR in the handling of the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict was considered not to be carried out properly after the signing of the DPA because the agreement did not clearly/strongly contain DDR. In particular, the DPA does not contain specific details and a long-term perspective on the DDR process, which demonstrates the political fragility in the agreement's formulation and shows that the agreement only aims to stop violence (negative peace). As a result, international organizations then paid no attention to the details of the postconflict DDR process in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Pietz, 2004).

#### J. The Settlement of Disputes

Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) or general framework agreement is an agreement that was formulated and agreed to end the war in the Bosnia and Herzegovina conflict. The DPA is a peace treaty reached at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, United States (November 21, 1995), and was formally signed in Paris on December 14, 1995. The treaty consists of 11 articles and 11 annexes, with annexes which regulates substance matters such as issues related to military aspects, regional stabilization, boundaries between entities, elections, the constitution, to the issue of refugees (Pietz, 2004).

The Warring parties followed the Dayton talks under the auspices of the United States and NATO. The negotiations were then signed by all parties, with the following agreements (Masnun, 2017): (1) Bosnia-Herzegovina remains as a single country internationally; (2) the capital city of Sarajevo remains unified under the Bosnian-Croatian Muslim Federation and several autonomous administrative areas of Serbian-Bosnian

control; (3); Radovan Karadzic and General Mladic are considered war criminals by the International Court of Justice and may not hold office; (4) refugees return to their original place; and (5) elections will be held between 6-9 months after the signing of the Paris Agreement.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict is one of the armed conflicts that occurred in the former Yugoslavia. In the Commentary Geneva Convention I 1949, the definition of noninternational armed conflict (NIAC) is an armed conflict in which the place of conflict is located within the territory of that country's armed forces and rebel groups. Based on this, the conflict that occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina between the ethnic groups in it is a type of conflict with the NIAC or noninternational armed conflict because this conflict is also not an armed conflict between countries. In addition, the sources of this armed conflict are, among others, religious and ethnic differences in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the death of President Broz Tito, Slobodan Milosevic's political policies, and the struggle for natural resources.

The inter-ethnic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina is an armed conflict that occurs between non-state actors because both are not state actors, but armed groups within the state, and are actors with a domestic level of analysis. In the level of individual analysis, this conflict also involves Slobodan Milosevic who was elected through the interstate presidential rotation system who is also of Serbian ethnicity. The emergence of the Republic of Serbia leader, Slobodan Milosevic, who was nationalistic at the helm of the Federal Government of Yugoslavia also marked the emergence of Serbian nationalism to become the ruling leader in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina fully.

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