

The creation of the Union of Serbia-Montenegro, the successor state of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, does not guarantee the stability or longevity of this state, in spite of the European Union's crucial role in its formation, noted **Dr. Reneo Lukic, Professor of Political Science at Laval University in Quebec City**. His central contention was that this union is a temporary stage in the process of disintegration of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. According to Dr. Lukic, the recent constitutional agreement between Serbia and Montenegro has not changed the process of internal dissolution of this state; it is rather an attempt to freeze it for three years. It should allow all sides, he argued, to buy time to find a definite settlement to the question of statehood of Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

According to Dr. Lukic, from 1997 on, Montenegro has chosen – like Slovenia 10 years ago – the road to Europe as its economic future. Serbia, by contrast, has been in conflict with the Euro-Atlantic community since 1991. For Montenegro's long-term interests, this position has become untenable and a possible future stumbling block. Dr. Lukic noted that, if there is no explicit and firm commitment by both Serbs and Montenegrins to live in one country, their union cannot become a viable federal state.

If the Yugoslav successor states are to evolve from minimalist democracies sustained by vertical accountability mechanisms (such as elections) to consolidated liberal democracies, they need to be supported by agencies of horizontal accountability that can provide viable constraints on the executive branch, argued **Geoffrey Dubrow of the Parliamentary Centre in Ottawa**. Building institutions of horizontal accountability, he said, is critical to the success of democratic consolidation. Mr. Dubrow defined horizontal accountability as the capacity of state institutions to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government.

There are numerous genres of horizontal accountability: financial accountability, administrative accountability, a professional type, a moral one, legal accountability and constitutional accountability. Horizontal agencies in this area include electoral commissions, tribunals, auditing agencies, anticorruption agencies, ombudsman's offices, administrative courts and human rights commissions.

In addition to the other speeches on the same topic, **Dr. Achilles Skordas of the Faculty of Law at the University of Athens, Greece**, noted that the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans is a relatively new institutional cooperation framework in the region. It is, therefore, still early to analyze its impact on the process of building good governance structures in Southeastern Europe. Dr. Skordas understands good governance as democratic practices, rule of law, efficient use of resources, effective decision making, public accountability and transparency.

The Plan is based on six bilateral agreements, all having a common structure, concluded by Greece with Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Romania and Serbia-Montenegro. According to Greek legislation, the purpose of the Plan is to modernize infrastructures, to promote productive investments, to modernize public administration and self-government, to support democratic institutions (especially cooperation between parliaments in the region), to support the principles of rule of law and welfare state, and to address economic equalities and training of labour force.