

Agreements attributable to the pact

In the summer of 2001, the pact's regional approach helped to develop a Regional Action Agenda for refugees and displaced persons that includes a series of agreements (issues around ownership, shelter, pensions, etc.) involving the main countries affected: Croatia, Bosnia and Yugoslavia. A Media Freedom Charter was also approved at Salonika in June 2000 and accepted by all states in the region.

As regards security, the pact has maintained programs for military demobilization and return to civilian life in Bulgaria and Romania. With the success of these programs, the pact is studying the possibility of extending them to other regional states. The pact has also promoted a Regional Arms Control Verification Assistance Centre (RACVIAC) in Zagreb.³²

Quick Start Package: efficient funding approach?

This package has acted mainly as a catalyst for rebuilding infrastructures, since this area generally offers the fastest and most spectacular results, including restored roads and bridges. However, the SPSEE features most often criticized include lack of transparency in its selection processes for Quick Start Package projects. This approach apparently produced lists of specific projects more than it developed an overall strategy. Working Tables 1 and 3 have particularly been singled out in this regard.

The pact's real challenge is to maintain donor interest when these reconstruction projects have run out and the time comes to fund less spectacular undertakings. For the moment, the SPSEE seems to be lobbying successfully to encourage investments in the region.

SPSEE's role in preventing new emerging conflicts

Although the Stability Pact failed to prevent inter-ethnic confrontations in FYROM over the spring and summer of 2001, some aspects of the international community's crisis management can be seen as successful. The regional and international players coordinated their efforts and moved fast, militarily and diplomatically, to promote a political solution, which had been impossible in earlier conflicts in the region. As well, if the negotiations among the various factions in the Macedonian government were able to reap results, this was partly through the work of the SPSEE that helped get dialogue going.

3.2.2 Structural problems

An overly complex structure

The quest for stability calls for involvements in a host of areas, but this does not mean that the organization of these involvements has to be as complex as the problems themselves. The operating structure of the SPSEE is so complex as it may discourage its donor countries and possibly even participating states. The division of labour among the pact's structures is sometimes seen as too fragmented to be efficient, since solutions have to be found for some problems that are affecting several working groups at the same time. To meet this need for coordination, the Working Tables have formed liaison groups that add more new structures on top of the old ones. With the red tape generated by all this, some