

3. Discussion Groups

(Rapporteurs' summaries of proceedings.)

1. Kosovo: Looking for a Way Out

John Fraser and Michael Borish, resource persons. **John Graham**, moderator.

The group reflected a certain sense of gloom over the long-term prospects for Kosovo, but recommended in the end that Canada continue its activities to promote peace in the region.

This was part of a broad consensus that the international community should continue its commitment to work for effective social institutions in Kosovo as part of the rebuilding effort, with periodic review of progress. Stable structures of justice, education and health were seen as essential to securing peace in the region.

Some members held that physical security is a requisite for progress on any of these; they proposed that Canada should therefore consider re-committing a military contingent as soon as the defence department finds it to be feasible.

Members generally believed the hostilities in Kosovo will end only when the culture of violence, hatred and revenge is countered with peace education. This could include common texts for school curriculums, supplemented by distance education (an area in which Canada could offer expertise).

In health policy, greater priority should be given to programs for post-traumatic stress – experienced at both the individual and systemic levels in the region – in the hope that the ethos of fear and enmity may be eradicated. Institutions need to be rebuilt from the ground up, implying grassroots participation for 'internal transformation'.

Members saw inclusion of the contesting parties in multilateral initiatives such as those of the European Union as potentially stabilizing influences. In the same vein, it would be useful if neighbouring countries – preferably middle, and therefore non-hegemonic, parties, like Italy and Greece – encouraged investment and promoted prosperity and political stability in Kosovo.

The idea of a regional non-aggression pact, bringing together all countries in the region including Russia, was discussed. To be effective, such a pact would require detailed protocols on monitoring, access and transparency, as well as an international guarantor.

The group agreed that with no sign of a solution to the divisive sovereignty issue, the lesser evil is to ignore it while other policies are put into effect.