**Committee: Special Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4)**

**Issue: Achieving political stability in Newly Independent States**

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## INTRODUCTION

Often, Newly Independent States are subject to a high rate of political instability. This is because their fragile constitutional and democratic structure often allows them to endure a seizure of power or an overall political crisis. In addition, since Newly Independent States don't have a historic tradition of democracy, democracy may be initially exploited thus leading to political instability.

It is extremely important that the international community provides the needed political aid to Newly Independent States in order for them to construct a solid structure that will allow them to be less vulnerable to political instability. In addition, the international community must try to discourage the formation of single-party Newly Independent state.

Overall, in order to achieve political stability in Newly Independent States, the international community must collaborate in order to implement a constitutional and political solid structure.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Political Instability

Political stability is enjoyed by a ruling government that does not experience strong social and political unrest. Such a political scene calls for a state governance that provides essential services, manages state resources responsibly, has a solid legal framework, and allows for its people to participate and engage in governance through civil society organizations and political parties. These premises outline a mechanism that is supported by its people and that is not threatened by possible violent turmoil such as terrorism or revolution. Conversely, political instability is measured by a government's propensity to collapse or experience strikes and forms of violence including coup d'états and public manifestations.

In times of crises or national hardships, a stable political scene will make sure to manage conflict "peacefully through inclusive political processes"[1] and compete for power in non-violent manners. In order to maintain stability, the population must be satisfied by the way problems are tackled and by the solutions that arise from them. In fact, granting people a voice in how a country is ruled enhances its political stability.

Political instability, instead, often ensues from a more violent approach to conflict resolution in which the government is unable to provide people with essential services. The latter exponentially augments the difficulty of enforcing the law and results in a loss of state power that makes way for popular political and social unrest. Moreover, it must be noted that political instability is directly correlated with lower economic growth.

Hence, it becomes clear that political stability is a desirable condition and that without it, "political spoilers may rise to fill governance vacuum and usurp state resources"[2]. This often happens with aid from terrorist organizations or criminal groups that could cause major societal upheaval and motivate a return to violence.

## Coup d'ètat

A coup d'état is a sudden and illegal seizure of a state. In most cases a coup is carried out by the national military or by a very strong opposition. Usually, a coup d'état occurs in undemocratic countries or in countries where democracy stands on very weak foundations. The coming about of a coup d'état is extremely alarming since it provides evidence of extreme political instability. Regarding Newly Independent States, since most of them do not have a historic tradition of democracy, they often endure coup d'états. In particular, in 2013 a coup was carried out in Eritrea and the FYROM President Gruevski suspected the opposition of planning a coup in 2015.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Most Newly Independent States are definitely subject to a high rate of political instability. The reason for a state's political instability may vary, however, in most case scenarios it is caused by the lack of tradition for democracy and by the fact that the newly drafted constitution may not be totally implemented or respected.

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[1] "Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction", United States Institute of Peace
<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/guiding_principles_full.pdf>
[2] "Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction", United States Institute of Peace
<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/guiding_principles_full.pdf>

In democratic Newly Independent States, political turmoil may be caused by a very strong opposition that impedes the elected government to rule until the end of its mandate. In constitutional monarchies or in dictatorships, a civil uprising or a coup d'état, instigated by the national armed forces, may create a very politically instable situation.

## Political Instability due to Constitutional Reasons

Once obtained independence, Newly Independent States have to immediately draft a national constitution. In most cases however, due to conflicting political interests, it may take an extremely long time for the constitution to be drafted and passed. Furthermore, it takes much longer for the constitution to be fully implemented and respected by the civilians and the government itself. Obviously, this time lag sometimes allows the government to take advantage of the situation and establish a ruthless dictatorship. In most cases, this will eventually escalate to the opposition illegally seizing power through a coup d'état and establishing a situation of political instability.

In addition to the time lag between the passing and the implementation of a state's constitution, the constitution may directly be responsible for a state's political instability. For example, in Kosovo, two Presidential elections were declared unconstitutional, thus leaving the nation without a leader. Since it is extremely important that a solid and applicable constitution exists, it is a person's duty to respect it fully. If not, in severe cases, political instability may be settled.

## Political Instability due to the Strength of Opposition

Freedom of speech and of explicit opposition is a fundamental right that all people should have. However, in non-democratic states or in states where people don't fully accept democracy as the conventional form of government, people often aren't granted these rights. In these cases, due to the lack of democracy and freedom of expression, the opposition to the existing government may try to overthrow it illicitly. This means that in dictatorships and single-party states, since there is no room for constructive criticism the opposition sees it impossible to dialogue with the government and therefore tries to illicitly seize power. In fact, it is totally not a coincidence that coup d'états often take place in countries that do not have a popular tradition for democracy. The illicit seizure of power of a state usually results in political instability.

In Eritrea, for example, the non-democratically elected President Isawerki risked to lose his power because of a coup d'état instigated by the strong opposition. Now, since the

attempted coup failed but opposition is still extremely strong, Eritrea is currently facing a situation of severe political instability.

Overall, it is extremely important that all governments recognize the fundamental right of freedom of speech, as it is the defining constituent of democracy. If it is not, the opposition may seize power illicitly and establish a situation of tremendous political instability within the entire country.

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

### Eritrea

Eritrea has earned independence in 1993 after having been ruled by the Italians, the British and lastly by the Ethiopians. Since then, Eritrea is being ruled by Isaias Isawerki.
In Eritrea, a rather concerning political system is in act which consents only a single party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), to legitimately exist (independent political activity is prohibited). Furthermore, the Eritrean constitution that was drafted in 1997 isn't yet fully implemented thus consenting President Isawerki to govern very powerfully.

In 2013 the national army took over the headquarters of the national state owned TV broadcaster EriTV. In addition, the army also put pressure on Isawerki to release all political prisoners and concede more freedom to the Eritreans. After a few hours of unrest the coup d'état failed as a faction of President Isawerki's supporters managed to halt the many militarists. Although the coup failed, it certainly is a demonstration of how politically divided Eritrea is.

Since the failed coup d'état of 2013, opposition to President Isawerki's government has exponentially grown. Opposition groups such as "Freedom Friday" and the banned newspaper "MeqaleH Forto" have been growing in popularity signalling that Isawerki's leadership is on thin ice.

Overall, given a failed coup d'état and growing opposition to President Isawerki's regime, Eritrea is to be considered a very politically unstable regime.

### Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

Since achieving independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has endured a high rate of political instability and diplomatic tension. Recent protests and civil unrest have further deteriorated the political situation.

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Protests first began in 2014 as to when the leader of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDUM), Zoran Zaev, accused the newly elected Prime Minister, Nikola Gruevski, of abusing the country's democratic system. In response, not only did Prime Minister Gruevski reject Zaev's accuses but he also accused the SDUM of organising a coup d'état scheduled for the 31st of January 2015. At this point, the opposition party released various documents and data intended to demonstrate that Gruevski had around 20,000 Macedonian officials wiretapped.

The SDUM's accuses caused around 45,000 Macedonians to protest against Gruevski and his cabinet on the 17th of May 2015. The following day, thousands of citizens manifested their support to Gruevski's elected government.

Shortly after the protests of the 17th of May and Zaev's accusations, the Internal Minister, the Transport Minister and the chief of internal security resigned, leaving Gruevski's government additionally vulnerable to the opposition. As a response to the evident political instability of Zaev's government, the Macedonian President called for anticipated general elections. The elections of the 5th of June 2015 resulted in a transitional government being formed by a majority of SDSM Ministers. The elections however did not result in political stability. In fact, as the political crisis continued, Prime Minister Gruevski resigned six months after the vote and was replaced by Emil Dimitriev.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is currently facing a dramatic deal of political instability. The SDSM party is struggling to govern the country as Zaev's opposition is extremely rampant. Therefore, due to an ongoing struggle for power between the SDSM and the SDUM, FYROM is extremely politically unstable.

## Kosovo

Kosovo is certainly renowned for its struggle for independence that ended in 2008. Furthermore, the troublesome region is unfortunately also known for its political instability. Kosovo first encountered political issues as an independent state, shortly after it proclaimed its independence in 2008. In 2010, the Constitutional Court declared that the first elected President, Fatmir Sejdiu, was violating the implemented constitution by being both President and leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK). As a result, President Fatmir Sejdiu decided to resign as President, thus calling for anticipated elections. At the following elections, the leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), Behgjet Pacolli, was elected as Sejdiu's successor. However, the Constitutional Court declared the elections as unconstitutional as Pacolli was the only candidate running.

Although the troubled outcome of the 2010 elections has been partially solved,

Kosovo is still encountering many issues of political nature. For example, the fact that many people still define the Balkanic country as a 'semi-consolidated authoritarian regime'[3], means that Kosovo has not fully grasped the ideal of democracy yet. In addition, the opposition to the current government has vividly protested against two agreements involving both Serbia and Montenegro.

Overall, Kosovo is an extremely politically unstable country since it is having a few difficulties to fully respect its constitution and democracy altogether. In addition, Kosovo's delicate situation with Serbia is responsible of creating further political divisions within the country.

## South Sudan

The first five years of South Sudan's existence, as an independent state from Sudan, have certainly been subject to drastic political instability.

Firstly, although the government is democratically elected, people have been seriously debating on the contents of the country's constitution (ratified on July 7, 2011). Many believe that President Kiir Mayard constitutionally has too much power, hence menacing the country's democratic nature.

These beliefs first spurred in 2013 as to when President Kiir relieved all Ministers, Vice-Ministers, the Vice-President and the chairperson of the "Sudan People's Liberation Movement" (SPLM) from their positions. Following this date, former Vice-President Riek Machar openly opposed Kiir's government thus causing internal instability to arouse. That same year, a civil war started seeing Kiir's government and its supporters to counter Machar's newly founded "Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition" (SPLMIO) and various other rebel groups. Although peace was resettled on the 26th of August 2015, the damage had already been done: the civil war had the macabre outcome of around 240,000 deaths and of about 1,780,000 people displaced. Rather surprisingly, after the end of the civil war, President Kiir Mayard re-appointed the SPLMIO leader Riek Machard as Vice-President.

As a result of the turmoil, the national Parliament decided to postpone the elections planned in 2015 to the 9th of July 2018. As a result, Kiir's mandate has been extended by three years.

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[3] "Kosovo's Political Crisis Suggests Its Citizens Are No Longer Willing to Accept Large-scale Electoral Fraud." *EUROPP*. N.p., 09 Feb. 2016. Web. 27 July 2016.

Currently, with the second highest Fragile States Index in the world and with a dramatic level of corruption, South Sudan is on the verge of another political crisis.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

| Date | Description of Event |
|---|---|
| 8 September 1991 | The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) achieves independence from Yugoslavia. |
| 24 May 1993 | Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia. President Isawerki takes office. |
| 23 May 1997 | Eritrea's constitution is officially ratified however, it has not been completely implemented yet. |
| 17 February 2008 | Kosovo declares independence. |
| 25 September 2010 | Kosovo's national Constitutional Court declares that the elected President, Fatmir Sejdiu, was violating the newly implemented constitution. |
| 27 September 2010 | Elected President Fatmir Sejdiu decides to resign. |
| 22 February 2011 | As a result of the anticipated elections, Behgjet Pacolli is elected as Kosovo's President. |
| 4 April 2011 | Kosovo's Constitutional Court declares that since Pacolli was the only candidate running for the Presidency, the elections were to be considered unconstitutional. |
| 7 June 2011 | South Sudan ratifies its constitution. |
| 9 July 2011 | South Sudan proclaims independence. |
| 21 January 2013 | The Eritrean national army carries out a coup d'état. The national state owned television broadcaster, EriTV, is took over. After a few hours however, the attempted coup d'état fails. Since this date, opposition towards President Isawerki has definitely grown. |
| 23 July 2013 | The South Sudan President, Kiir Mayard, relieves all Ministers, Vice-Ministers, the Vice-President and the chairperson of the "Sudan People's Liberation Movement" (SPLM) from their positions. |

| 2 October 2014 | The leader of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDUM), Zoran Zaev, accuses the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski of abusing the existing democratic system. From this date, tension in the country certainly grows. |
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| 31 January 2015 | The date in which, according to President Gruevski, Zaev and his supporters should have carried out a coup d'état. |
| 17 May 2015 | Zaev's many supporters gather and protest against President Gruevski and his government. |
| 18 May 2015 | In response to the protests against Gruevski and his government, thousands of supporters of the existing government gather at a pro-government rally. |
| 5 June 2015 | Following the anticipated elections, a transitional government is formed in FYROS. |
| 26 August 2015 | Although violence certainly does not cease to exist, this is the date in which the South Sudan civil war ends. The SPLM and the SPLMIO agree to end the civil war. |

## UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The United Nations has debated many resolutions that explicitly addressed the issue of political instability in Newly Independent States. However, these resolutions are still being implemented and will probably be extremely important in the upcoming future. In particular, the United Nation's Security Council is regularly given reports regarding the issues that Kosovo is facing. The resolutions passed regarding the issue of political instability in Newly Independent States are listed below:

- Supporting South Sudan on Political Transition, 8 July 2011 **(S/RES/1996)**
- The United Nations sees the possibility of creating a UN led Darfur-based Political Process (DPP), 29 July 2011 **(S/RES/2003)**
- Security Council Resolution condemning violence for political reasons, 26 September 2001, **(S/RES/1371)**

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

In addition to the United Nations, the European Union has certainly tried to reduce the level of political instability in Newly Independent States. Following the protests of the 17th and 18th of May, The European Union started negotiations between Zaev's Social Democratic Union of Macedonia and Gruevski's government however, an agreement wasn't reached.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), instead, has decided to send troops to Kosovo in order to alleviate the Serbian threat and limit a possible uprising. In addition, the United Nations has sent various constitutional advisors to Kosovo.

With regards to political instability in Newly Independent States, the African Union is not extremely active. The African Union Chairperson, Idriss Déby, is constantly given updates regarding the situations in Eritrea and South Sudan however, no direct intervention has yet been planned.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

It is extremely complicated to grant political stability and an overall wellbeing in Newly Independent States. However, the UN and other influent international bodies may find a feasible solution. For example, in order to set up a stable transitional government in Newly Independent States, the UN may decide to send advisors who definitely can aid the country in becoming a globally accepted democracy. Furthermore, the UN could impose heavy sanctions to whoever violates the resolution **(S/RES/1371)** that condemns violence for political reasons and objectives. In addition to the possible sanctions, it would be useful if the UN encourages the governments of Newly Independent States to create a development plan, which encloses the government's political and strategic objectives. Although the government might omit various details and objectives, the development plan would allow the UN to forecast if government policies could spur social and political unrest. The UN may oversee the design of a sound economic and budgetary plan for those Newly Independent States, thus providing them with the necessary know-how, while the World Bank and/ or the International Monetary Fund (the latter under certain conditions) may assist both by providing funds for infrastructure and facilities and with the necessary input, thus joining forces with the UN operatives. This would certainly allow the government to create better living conditions for its people and seek for the necessary political stability.

In the case of unstable authoritarian regimes, it is absolutely essential that the UN monitor the situation very carefully, laying great emphasis the situation of fundamental rights and on the protection of democratic institutions. This is because growing opposition in such a state may see the authoritarian regime further oppressing the opposition in order to maintain power. Sanctions on the government, mediation for a peaceful resolution to the conflict with the help of third states as well and negotiations with all parties involved belong to the armory of the UN.

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