

BiH DIPLOMACY REALITY AND NEEDS

*Analysis of causes of identity crises
in BiH foreign policy and diplomacy*

Recommendations

The articles, essays and analysis that appear in these pages do not represent any consensus of beliefs. We do not expect that readers will sympathize with all the sentiments they find here, for some of our authors will disagree with each other, but we do expect understanding for promotion of divergent ideas. We do not accept responsibility for the views expressed in any article, signed or unsigned, that appears in these pages. What we do accept is the responsibility for giving them a chance to appear.

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Dear readers,

The group for political analysis of Foreign Policy Initiative (VPI)¹, generously helped and sponsored by the Sarajevo office of Friedrich Ebert Foundation, here present their second analysis which this time deals with scanning of causes, which has led to identity crises of BiH foreign policy. It is about (self) criticism of general local inertia which has enabled that strategy and doctrine are replaced by tactics and voluntarism. Thus the BiH foreign policy has become not only a mere reflexion of local politics but also a hostage of daily politicking lacking vision and also ready to subdue the image of the state to own idea.

This analysis has been made with the aim to point out to the causes of our foreign policy autism in order to enable us, by using the method of introspection, to explain, in our further analytical reviews, strategic ways of getting out of this situation. It is not our wish and goal to make the final specialist's diagnosis for the illness that our foreign policy and diplomacy suffer from, but first of all, it is to provoke open and expert dialogue on the issue of what foreign policy and diplomacy are really about, nowadays, in the world of globalisation.

We would specially like to bring in some colour in black-and-white perception of our diplomacy and openly discuss whether the existing Dayton framework is wide enough for more dynamic and more accountable BiH politics.

Editorial board
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¹ See more at: www.vpi.ba

Executive Summary

BiH diplomacy, by its organisation, methods of functioning, principles on which DMCPs (diplomatic missions and consular posts) network is based throughout the world and long-term tasks and objectives, is a direct reflexion of the position of BiH foreign policy which is, by its performance, the mirror of internal constitution organisation of the state, as well as, politics and relations within the ruling political forces in the country. That is why it is not possible to execute the general reform of diplomacy which would bring it into accord with proclaimed interests of BiH and with modern world trends without the structural reform in the country, and without a thorough change of actual internal relations which make BiH today the state which by its institutional solutions and functions cannot be a partner to almost anyone in the modern world relations.

BiH Constitution, laws and other required acts must determine the objectives more accurately and in a more contemporary manner. Also for the benefit of the country as a whole the goals, authorities and competences in the foreign policy need to be determined more efficiently, which would lead to the framework for the organisation of diplomacy based on different grounds. First of all this implies enactment of the law on foreign policy and diplomacy which would define the duties, rights, competences and organisation of all the participants in this process. The work on a draft was started a long ago, but either for no reason at all or for some specific reason, it has not been finished for years.

The foreign policy and diplomacy reform needs to include organisations, institutions and individuals who can significantly contribute to the reform with their competences, scientific approach or with their international experience. The element of professionalisation of foreign policy and diplomacy and especially defining the position of profession as regards the politics are important issues which need to be defined in a different way. Separation of daily and particular interests from the expert and qualified functioning in this field is one of the prerequisites for the establishment of modern diplomacy.

There are several purely negative elements that make the framework of current image of BiH diplomacy. We shall mention those that are most obvious and essential:

- Inadequate basic **constitution framework** which needs to generate the common interest of the state taken as a whole within the state itself and especially abroad. Simply, there is an absence of state in its elementary functions.
- Undefined **foreign policy strategy** as well as short-term and particularly long-term foreign policy goals and priorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- Inability of the ruling political oligarchy to step forward from the co-ordinate system of war and disintegration of Yugoslavia and to enter the province of current and future relations within the *European* and wider *world integrations*.
- Complete relativization and even no acceptance of the world and European standards and customs in defining *staff policy* and professional functioning within the framework of foreign policy and especially of diplomacy.
- Inability and unpreparedness to change often caricature-like concepts of *“national equality”* in the country in the name of building a modern and efficient diplomatic network and standards necessary for its functioning.

Introduction

There are not many fields of political life like diplomacy that has always been guarded by the veil of elitism and tabooed from “ordinary” political administrators, as well as from the public. Therefore, for decades, there has been a certain mystification regarding the content, goals and the real role of diplomacy, and also a special interest in the activities from “behind the curtain” which were dealt with only by “specially chosen ones”. Therefore the analyses of this job, in accordance with the practice, were also done only within closed political circles, without transparency and possibility for the wider public to have influence whatsoever on the constitution of foreign policy processes, and especially on diplomacy.

International political reality and requirements as regards the diplomacy have significantly changed in the past twenty years and the world has undergone at least three “revolutions” during that time, which are also important for the functioning of international diplomatic relations and establishment of new criteria in these relations. These changes have new tasks and search for new standards for each country, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its diplomacy.

As the British author F.G. Felthman points out in the introduction to his well known and internationally recognised “Diplomatic manual”, the revolution that had most direct and influential effect on international relations and diplomacy was of *political* nature: the fall of the Soviet empire defined the end of an era of potential risk of nuclear war at the global level. It marked the end of the period of schematically drawn military alliances and military necessity when diplomats, not by their fault, were not able to act efficiently. It was the end of the totalitarianism in Europe, a beginning of new alliances and quest for a new world order...

Other, no less important revolution, according to this author is in the domain of *economy*. Categories of employment, economic migrations, reduction of trade and customs barriers, formation of global market and relations place the foreign policy and state diplomacy in a completely new position as regards the objectives, human resources and experts, diplomatic techniques and required knowledge.

Finally, a revolution in *communications* also took place, which among other things significantly contributes to the “global feeling of political awareness”.

All of these changes have a great impact on Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. Additionally, political priorities including the priorities of diplomatic action in this country have changed significantly compared to the years at the beginning of previous decade. Bosnia and Herzegovina is not now a country that is frantically fighting for its sovereignty, internationally recognised borders, internal constitution and identity with the help of diplomacy in which “loyalty” is more important than sophisticated diplomatic knowledge

and professionalism. Also foreign policy partners are not any more the ones that can help in concrete way politically and financially, but the entrance into the world of international diplomacy means also the need for knowledge and skills essential for more complex tasks and partnerships which are not always unequivocally directed.

Why is it necessary to draw attention to these elements of political reality in the world, in the introduction to the analysis of conditions of BiH diplomacy?

First of all to understand the depth of the gap which exists at this moment between the requirements on which the tasks are based as well as the goals of diplomacy on one hand, and objective situation in this particular field in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other. It is not only about the real situation in the field today, but it is more about the segment which we can call "the awareness of the situation, reality and needs". It can be easily concluded that the current situation additionally dramatizes the complexities of diplomatic tasks. They will further require knowledge about how the world functions (and it functions differently), they must possess professional skills accompanied by outstanding personal qualities. The diplomacy has become more complex, more demanding and more professional.

Professionalism vs. voluntarism

General knowledge must be much wider and it is hard to believe that it can be acquired from the level of poorly educated local party officials drafted by the apparatus for purely pragmatic needs of other kind and assessed through categories of one sided loyalty of specific character. The situation is similar with the second rate bureaucrats who do not speak foreign languages and who have no elementary skills for communication outside their local communities. They are people unable to listen and understand different points of view, or to accept the arguments of other party and they are forever ready to "generate negative energy".

Of course, any political official elite endorsed by the election results can according to their needs determine the profile of their own diplomacy, and also the diplomats that suit their criteria. They can also claustrophobically adjust the objectives and tasks exclusively for particular projects and wishes. That is how we had highly positioned state official who loudly expressed his thesis that BiH should send to a neighbouring country an ambassador "who will have the main task of getting the Diaspora together so that they vote for our party at the next elections, and that the job also demands a clear profile of party activism... He would not need to speak any foreign language for that."

Wider political, economic, cultural and other state interests, economical and other relations with neighbouring countries, participation in regional processes by the holder

of mentioned position, use of experience from processes of Euro-Atlantic integrations which include our country – all of these are not relevant if compared to the mentioned perception of tasks which diplomats have in normal conditions.

What are “normal conditions” according to which the existing state of diplomacy in BiH can be analysed?²

It is noticeable that all definitions mention “state interest”, “interest of the country”, “strength and continuity of the country” etc. In the framework of these categories, the precise and generally accepted definition is given in the “**Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations**” in 1961:

- Presentation of the sending country to the reception country
- The protection of interests of the sending country and its citizens in the reception country within the limits allowed by law.
- Negotiations with the government of the reception country
- Determining by all means allowed the situation and development of events in the reception country and reporting to the sending country.
- Promotion of friendly relations between the sending and reception countries and development of their relations in economy, culture and science.

The profile of people who can successfully respond to these tasks seems quite clear and focused. However, it can be obtained only by a logical sequence of accurate setting of goals and strategy of foreign policy which has, according to traditional and acknowledged theories from the domain of the state and law, directly developed from the characteristics of that country and its internal policy and goals. Here in fact, the coordinate system closes, in the framework of which we can successfully give answer to the questions: What kind of diplomacy do we actually have? Who and what is satisfied by its current structure and what do the staff policy criteria stem from and what do they draw on? Who and with what goals and capacities follows such staff policy? What do we want to achieve as a state on the international level? What for and why do we have the current situation? Why are there neither political will nor interest and no institutional framework in which results could be achieved in accordance with true needs of the state and formally proclaimed political goals? What are the long and short - term consequences of the current situation?

² Thus, for example Prosveta’s “Small Encyclopedia” states that diplomacy means “the skill of conducting international relations and conducting international affairs. It is the art of selecting the interests of a country and winning over the foreign governments for the politics of the own government...” Earlier yet British author Ernest Sallow in his “guide to Diplomatic Practice” defines diplomacy in a sense of “application of knowledge and tact in conducting official relations between countries, coordinating interests of own country with those of host country...” Even renowned professor and the member of the Academy from Sarajevo Anto Babic, great expert on the history of medieval Bosnia, in his valued book “Diplomatic Service in Medieval Bosnia” clearly underlines the connection between the goals and interests of the state and the tasks of diplomatic service, pointing out that through the diplomacy the court and the chamber expose the strength and nation building continuity of the state.

There are several pronouncedly negative elements which form the frame for the picture of the current BiH diplomacy. Let us mention those which stick out as the most recognizable and most important:

- Inadequate basic *constitution framework* which needs to generate common interest of the state as the integral subject at the internal and especially at foreign policy level. Simply said, it means the absence of the state in its primary functions.
- Undefined *foreign policy strategy* and short - term and particularly long - term foreign policy goals and priorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Inability of the ruling political oligarchy to make a step forward from the coordinate system of the war and to enter the area of modern and future relations within the *European* and wider *world international processes*.
- Total relativisation and no acceptance of the world and European standards and customs in defining *staff policy* and professional functioning within the framework of foreign policy and especially within diplomacy.
- Inability and unpreparedness to change often caricature-like concepts of *“national equality”* in the country in the name of building a modern and efficient diplomatic network and standards necessary for its functioning.

“Unlocking” the constitutional framework

It is not necessary to repeat the known theories about the Dayton Agreement as the framework for the ending of war which, as it is obvious today, has not offered strong and precise grounds for the construction of a normal state based on internationally recognizable and generally acceptable principles and standards. On top of everything, it is clear that many powers and concepts that were decisive for starting and wedging the war, with known goals and appetites even after the war dominated the political scene on a wider territory of ex Yugoslavia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina tightly narrowing the possibilities for construction and functioning of the state. Their prolonged service to completely anachronous concepts and wishes for rearrangements of the region, pronounced particularism, tendencies to destruction rather than construction of an integral and functioning state, hypertrophied and one-sided approach to “national interest”, a need to satisfy the superior interests of the “mother country”, exclusive wishes to satisfy group purely party and local interests, rather than integral interests of the state - all of this has led to partial interpretation and selection of even those solutions that Dayton offered as possible, and partially positive constitution framework for BiH.

Even then, at the time of the Dayton Peace Agreement adoption, the total triple parallelism came into existence not only in the organisation of diplomatic network but in the manner in which it functioned as well. Hierarchy is not built in accordance with the functional principle but with purely national one, DMCPs were opened according to completely simple and sometimes caricature - like archaically conceived "historical affiliation" to certain countries, regions and civilizations. From the level of the Ministry to the level of an embassy there are "parallel" ministers, and in a peculiar way parallel ambassadors too, while the diplomatic network scheme has no connection at all with the state foreign policy goals.

The main foreign policy competences were at that time passed on to the BiH Presidency, which often interpret them in a completely wrong way, exhausting themselves on issues which are not within the domain of creating foreign policy strategy and a long-term envisaging of relations in the world, but have a daily pragmatic quality and significance.

The concept of transfer of the key foreign policy competences to the Presidency was not accompanied by adequate internal organisation of that body, thus when decisions in this field are being made it can often be observed that analytic quality, subtle but essential knowledge, information and abilities required for understanding and strategic decision making in the field of foreign policy are lacking in these decisions. At the same time such situation has made the Ministry of Foreign Affairs significantly passive by being excluded from the regular activities, especially its professional staff, often giving the executives an alibi for not acting and for being passive, which is automatically transferred to DMCP network.

Obviously it is necessary for the whole field to be regulated by the law and decrees on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs³ in a manner in which it has been done throughout the modern world. The roles of the Presidency, the Parliament and the Council of Ministers as well as the MFA (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs) should be precisely defined and marked in compliance with the European standards as the local "system" has become incompatible with these standards. The Presidency has to be organised and staffed for the tasks that follow from the Constitution. Nowadays, it is clear that the only sound and potentially successful solution would be to have a president of the state who would have the team of competent advisors coordinating the work with authorised parliamentary commissions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³ This is about the law which would define these relations and activity coordination as *lex specialis*, and also special qualities that need to be required from state officials (non-professional diplomats).

Strategic Decomposing

The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina had at one point adopted the document called "Guidelines for the strategies of the Foreign Policy"⁴, which was later amended. The document was not accompanied by any regulations and there was no necessary reorganisation within the foreign policy institutions based on this document, particularly not in the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Apart from a few discussions on BiH foreign policy organised in 2001 in which many participants who were invited, some outside the official structures like members of the Academy, intellectuals, journalists etc. expressed their views, wider public discussions on the proclaimed foreign policy priorities and on BiH diplomacy have not been called for in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There is no culture of re-examining foreign policy decisions and diplomatic practice, ideas and activities in BiH. The rare exception is the Diplomatic Forum⁵, which has shown that contrary to the mentioned fact there is a significant interest within the wide circles for playing an active role in these matters. However, the Forum is more the result of work and enthusiasm of individuals and organisations outside of state structures than of organised action within the system.

The main problem of non-existence of the foreign policy strategy which causes ineffective functioning of DMCPs, in fact, is the non-existence of wider and long-term strategy in the development of the state and its positioning in political, economical, security and all other developments in its neighbourhood and further⁶. Such situation has naturally resulted in the "atrophy of diplomatic reflex", so diplomats often in peripheral posts of the world and absent from the "observation posts" of the global processes, lose need for most important trends, which stimulates their occupation with completely unimportant and marginal tasks and activities.

By following this practice completely wrong standards and criteria are being established in diplomacy. Spending more time on their own promotion than on essential tasks in the interest of the system and state, to many political officials it is much more important what kind of protocol treatment they will be given by the embassy of our country in the country they visit than what kind of information and political assessment they can obtain from the same embassy on the issues for which the visit and meetings have been organised. Diplomatic personnel abroad basically operate without any instructions,

⁴ See more at: www.mvp.gov.ba/vanjskapolitika

⁵ Founded in 2002 as a common initiative of MFA of BiH and Friedrich Ebert Foundation. After ten round tables and analytic publication "BiH between regional integration and EU" moved to the sponsorship of Foreign policy initiative (VPI), the first local think-tank, and as such will function under the name of «Foreign policy Forum» in future.

⁶ As rightly stated in the book by Amer Kapetanović «BiH Foreign Policy – between challenge and weakness» (very rare book written in the last ten years and dealing with these issues): "...in this coordinate system we can notice general identity crises of BiH foreign policy, accompanied by the loss of confidence and ownership of processes. Institutional autism, generated by dogmatic Dayton realism, ten years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, unables the definition of foreign policy doctrine which would produce the concrete strategy. From the leaving strategy of the international community (OHR) in BiH, to the strategy for the membership in EU, PfP of NATO, and even in the NATO".

analyses and tasks as no one in the base is really faced with these analyses, tasks and definition of strategic priorities. In political circles in Bosnia and Herzegovina no one can actually see the systematic need for such things.

At the top of political structure in BiH when required and depending on circumstances, officials may say that the priorities of foreign policy are access of BiH to the European and NATO integrations, building constructive relations with the neighbouring countries and the closure of the circle of bilateral relations contract with them as well as regional politics. However, it is noticeable that neither the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor other corresponding state institutions and diplomatic network are adjusted to so defined state priorities in foreign policy nor with real state interests. Bosnia and Herzegovina still does not have representatives in many European Union countries important for the state, the diplomats are not being trained for the issues of security policy, military issues and the like, and so called economic diplomacy is only a dead letter. The understanding of the tasks of so called economic diplomacy is mainly incorrect.

The embassies are most frequently asked to engage themselves in direct problems of specific companies, remaining debts, unsolved property relations in the process of succession etc. instead of primarily arranging relations within the domain of bilateral regulations which create conditions for economic cooperation. Simply, the fact that institutions are not set in order in the country, results in the absence of long-term political and economical state strategy, which further leads to complete lack of political strategy and doctrine in the development of diplomacy.

The situation is aggravated by totally unused intellectual recourses on which the state could and should rely in building not only of foreign policy doctrine but in the reorganisation of pertaining institutions especially in diplomacy. All this has in a wider picture led to the total loss of foreign policy and diplomatic identity and credibility of the country.

Instead of policy planning, the state foreign policy "strategy" is tailored in some offices and in very close circles, without essential data and analyses and often without basic knowledge for the job. DMCPs are almost as a rule uninformed even about such decisions. Therefore it is not surprising if for example, BiH ambassador is not informed, not on time but even subsequently, that BiH Government decided on one-sided suspension of already ratified interstate agreement with the embassy's host country. How is the ambassador in that country to explain to the proper authorities the reasons for such decision if he does not even know that it has been made, and at home no one cares about it and in the system no one feels accountable for it.

It is known that in the developed democratic systems in the world in making foreign policy decisions four segments take part: The Presidency of BiH, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH and the Council of Ministers, subsequently the whole think-tank expert organisations, specialists and intellectuals within, and finally mass media. The offices of the members of the BiH Presidency objectively are inadequate when it comes to organisation and staff for the conduct of foreign policy in the capacity granted by the Constitution. Party coalitions whose prominent officials are in the Presidency have made the chaos of the situation in which they try to reconcile coalition opportunism with pronounced triple parallelism of interests and concrete moves in diplomacy without any desire to apply expertise and knowledge to this disharmony in order to correct existing circumstances.

The Parliament as “the rest of politics” plays a marginal role and sporadic attempts of assembly bodies to approach this field are mainly inexpert, not grounded on correct information and analyses and totally in disaccord with the Presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Council of Ministers. It is not rare that the members of BiH Parliamentary commissions who are formally in charge of foreign policy and international contacts, which are not few, hold opposing views from those expressed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DMCP network. Think-tank as the form of expert and intellectual creation control and correction of BiH authorities almost does not exist as an institution, and the influence of experts and intellectuals on foreign policy is negligible.

Marginal media interference in creation of foreign policy and diplomacy mainly and with rare exceptions boils down to negative energy production, it shows total ignorance when it comes to these complex issues, it is sporadic and sensational and burdened with criticizing without valid arguments and playing “games” for the account of some particular non-institutional interests.

New standards

If the first staff solutions in BiH diplomacy and especially organization of The Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the organization of DMCP network were dictated in conditions and circumstances of the war, the present situation in the world and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in spite of all the problems, does not give any justification for almost dramatical situation of “not doing anything” in this field. The situation right after the war gave an alibi to the creators of those organisations for appointing ambassadors in accordance with the logic “who is willing to help us” or “who will support us for historical or other reasons of affiliation”, or that alibi was partly in the fact “we already have our person there...” For those reasons, for example the Presidency decided that we should have the embassy in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Emirates etc., while at the same time our embassy in Egypt as regards the staff and organisation was completely neglected and marginalised. No one was interested in the historical fact that Cairo, despite all changing tides and events has always been the centre of Arab politics, that in the world it has been political and diplomatic junction and “observation point”. It is also strange that BiH even today does not have diplomatic relations with Iraq, and there is no DMCP in Baghdad where there is an open fight going on over the future jobs in that country⁷. As far as the wider European neighbourhood is concerned, the embassies in Sofia, Bucharest, Prague, Warszawa and Tirana are not functioning yet.

At the multilateral level, observing position has been neglected at the Conference of Islamic countries and Non-aligned movement is not mentioned at all in the generated system of prejudices as well as misconceptions about the systems and organisations which seen pragmatically, constitute significant political factors in the international politics and especially in the United Nations.

A more serious problem than the arrangement of diplomatic destinations is, indeed, a specific mentality which has been stimulated in diplomacy for a long time. The main political view and criteria for “political correctness” was the view of war and criteria generated and defined in the war, which can be partly justified but today it can not be acceptable as the primary standard and framework for the conduct of foreign policy. Thus, for some political structures even today there exists a criterion of “friendship and animosity” looming above the concrete interests of the state and its citizens as a whole and its position in the international relations. The great part of the total political structures, diplomatic included, have not yet disembarked from the gloomy atmosphere

⁷ Not having DMCP in Baghdad perhaps could have been justified two years ago because Iraq during the rule of Saddam Hussein never recognised Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, his regime was openly negative towards the recognition of BiH and the reason is that he had exceptionally good relations with the regime of Slobodan Milošević. Additionally to close state relations, Saddam Hussein gave his strong personal support to the Hague detainees now, the accused Milošević and Šešelj. However, today, apart from security reasons, there is no valid justification for not opening if not DMCP then at least some kind of non-residential cover from the nearest DMCP as to give the support to our construction companies who have a chance of getting back to that large building site. This is specially important because the BiH companies in ex SFRJ, performed the most demanding tasks in Iraq, established business contacts and gained practical experience.

caused by autistic society devastated by the war and embarked on the co-ordinate system of accountability for social processes leading to regional, European and world integrations by relating to them and coordinating.

The content and technical procedure standards, diplomatic methods of good faith, customs and usual regulations are often being belittled in an extremely inappropriate manner in the name of political correctness and alleged “patriotism”. This very often turns BiH diplomacy into totally incompatible partner to other countries. If, for example, an ambassador does not possess even the basic knowledge and skills, or is not fluent in any of the foreign languages, that is not only his/her embarrassment, to a certain extent it is an insult to the country. He/she is automatically disqualified from the normal communication, isolated from the circles of his partners, he needs assistance of indirect sources, and in short he is unable to do his main job.

The new reality indicates that foreign diplomatic partners more and more often come to understanding that the messages and activities which they would like to convey and share with our diplomats are not being understood in their true meaning, that they are not forwarded to the right address but most often just to “the third of the address”, thus in such cases the attempt to work within a wider diplomatic community becomes impossible. If BiH truly wants to become a part of the great European and world family, then its diplomacy should have all the required capacities to be able to function in that family. The signals that are being sent ever so often in this regard by not accepting certain proposals as regards the staff policy of the authorised bodies of the BiH state in the field of diplomacy are clear and easy to read. Reconstruction of the logic that, for example, BiH diplomat in Belgrade, Zagreb, Skopje and even Ljubljana “does not have to speak a foreign language because it is our language they speak over there” is the imperative which does not withstand any “hidden agenda”. This also tells us that the owners of such logic in the political structures are either ignorant on how the world of diplomacy functions today or that they couldn’t care less what kind of results we achieve at the international level or they are preparing an alibi for themselves in advance for some future diplomatic post.

The foreign policy of BiH including diplomacy should not be satisfied by sheer taking over someone else’s views or even specific orders, but must start building their own views and start own initiatives on important international issues. The perception of BiH diplomat in the world should shift from “that’s the one who always asks for favours” to “that’s the one we can learn from about the region”. Bosnia and Herzegovina was the victim of brutal political plays and appetites in the region but today it can and must exist within the borders of its projections and possibilities as an active participant in the building of democratic processes within the international community.

Staff Policy

A strategic approach has given way to the tactical and voluntaristic one, generating deviation which has made the staff policy in diplomacy the doctrine per se. This has reflected on public opinion and mass media which when writing about foreign policy mainly write in the context of staff scheming. Thus, both political and media analysts of actual situation in foreign policy and diplomacy mostly and with a reason write about staff policy i. e. concrete examples from the selection of diplomats in order to prove how this field has not been defined. It has been publicly revealed that some people do not have the elementary knowledge required for this complex and important job for which they have been appointed. The attention is drawn to the fact that they cannot speak foreign languages which prevents communication as well as to their lack of general knowledge, culture and manners essential for this profession. There are cases being mentioned that surpass any credible diplomatic practice: diplomats working in the interest of many others rather than in the interest of their own country; the cases of ignoring functions and the renouncement of belonging to the state; cases of criminal actions and various offences of the law; there's even been a case of refusal to fly the flag of the own country. The cases of completely ignoring the protocol and common procedures in our diplomatic practice and communication are not rare, as well as refusal to regularly communicate with the base, apart from well established communication channels and people from own party or "corpus". There is still a practice of double or multi reporting and informing etc.

All the cases that have been mentioned are not exceptions and in some elements they form the standard behaviour. In a way they are not unexpected, they are not classified as incidents in a wider sense. They are first of all the result of everything previously said- the product of the lack of institutional framework for foreign policy and diplomacy, lack of consistent principles and foreign policy strategy and almost total chaos as regards the organisation and the staff in BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, non-existence of any kind of form and permanent education system for diplomats and preparation of professional staff for this job etc. (BiH is the only country in the region that does not have a permanent diplomatic school or Academy).

All this has resulted in widely spread beliefs that the diplomacy is the site for fulfilling and settling certain party, group or personal "debts", and to award politically correct staff for loyalty to this or that party. It has been widely accepted that "anyone can do it" because "the diplomat's job is just to go around to luncheons and dinners for very big salaries" and to represent his country in a "Mercedes" and at a "cocktail party". Such misconceptions have strongly marked the staff policy and political structures (the Presidency, The Council of Ministers, the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and ruling parties gave up a long ago on any defining of staff requirements for specific type

of jobs, specific tasks and specific destinations in diplomacy. So we have people dealing with economic issues without having any knowledge in the economy, consulate work is performed by ex drivers and janitors, cultural promotion is done by people without any experience, name and means to communicate; secretaries are often inadequately trained as their appointment also settles various kinds of “debts” etc. Namely the list of candidates for specific jobs simply does not take into account the elementary question of competence and qualifications for the specific post as well as for a specific task which each DMCP, among regular functions, must have.

In many concrete situations everything else is more important. Despite strict rules in the employment system of state officials, diplomats or appointed personnel, there are many individuals who pass through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and who apart from “support” mostly have nothing else to offer. There is a special case of those who in their personal card have many “blanks”, people who are publically totally discredited as the active participants in the destructive politics which marked the last decade on the territory of ex Yugoslavia and especially of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were even very close associates of the Hague prison detainees or the ones soon to become. For the political structures in BiH when it comes to diplomatic staff it is of no importance and no obstacle that some names proposed could be found on the publically announced black lists of influential international organisations, communities and states. It isn't hard to guess what chances these people have in politics and diplomacy in the system of the international community.

National Equality

The reality as to the Bosnia and Herzegovina national composition is well known. It is hardly being disputed nowadays. The problem is that the existing constitutions in BiH have in certain segments made conflict of practical materialisation of this fact with the functionality, efficiency and rationality of state institutions. A few years right after the war, when the diplomacy of BiH was formally at the state level and in reality there was obvious domination of one peoples, today, primarily due to external pressures and with the aim of consistent application of the Dayton Constitution provisions, the scheme that ensures “national equality” is being satisfied at least technically on a much stricter level. This mainly sheer “mathematical” scheme, however, increasingly shows explicit weaknesses and often it is an obstacle to reaching the quality, efficiency and successfulness. The division of diplomatic destinations according to ethnic affiliation and by previously established quotas which are also under strong pressure of mostly extremely simplified and stretched logic of “who is closer to Bosniacs, to Croats or to Serbs” and it is often realised against professional principles. First of all, the impression is that certain destinations seem like a “natural right” of representatives of one peoples,

also it creates a feeling that “a representative of one ethnicity” does not represent the state and its interests as a whole but that he/she is first of all the interpreter of the interests of “his/her people” and their representatives in DMCP. The present reality also stimulates the practice of so deployed diplomats communicating only through “their ethnic channels”, opening parallel channels, relying on one-sided sources, expecting instructions from the same sources etc.

Especially noticeable lack of logic from the point of functioning of state bodies is that the members of Presidency have the exclusive right to propose ambassadors almost without any interference from “the second or third party” in the process of selection. This is done in accordance with established scheme and in the name of ruling parties whose representatives again against any logic consider themselves the exclusive representatives of the ethnic group they belong to. The principle “if you don’t interfere in my proposal I won’t interfere in yours” has been brought to the point of absurdity what is seen by all except those who create such politics.

It is the matter of course that complete acknowledgement of multinational reality of BiH is unquestionable, but the interpretation of the term “equality” has become absurd. It would be normal that, with due respect of balance, the first to be considered are concrete situations, appropriate staff possibilities and requirements, and sometimes also specific characteristics of some destinations and tasks that need to be performed. It is clear that such practice would demand a high level of communication and trust within the top political structures and that is exactly the quality that is lacking in political reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is why BiH diplomacy, with few exceptions, is becoming the mirror in which all the absurdity of the system, like no other in the world, transparently reflects.

The essential question today is whether this is only the result of the previous decade and a logical consequence of everything that was happening during that time or whether it is the reality that acts knowingly and even targets the depths as a part of rational politics of those forces for which BiH in the European Union means the political end or even worse. Bosnia and Herzegovina certainly has a sufficient number of qualified and educated professionals with individuals among them who are being internationally awarded for their work. Unfortunately, they have been completely excluded from the processes of the state and other democratic institutions which, with their assistance, could solve the problems in this field in relatively short period of time. The problem is clear: they are not allowed to do that. At the same time, the international community in its proclaimed politics base on a wish to achieve big results and undergo serious reforms overnight, mostly without taking into account the internal reality in the country, does not show the will to support the concept of partnership. According to them, it cannot give results which they can promote as their own, quick success. And here is the answer to the question – Why the panel of experts like the one which were able to give answers to

complex questions of the United Nations reform are not able to give solutions for the reform of the foreign policy and diplomacy in BiH? The answer is they obviously won't get a chance to offer their solutions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a diplomacy which reflects the state: the lack of concept, strategy, priorities, organization etc. Unpreparedness for the challenge and competition is complete and almost public because they require knowledge, courage and individuality. Personality is required. For the maintenance of the present state which is a little embarrassing, the state does not need capable, clever, and educated but it needs the obedient, blackmailed, people of a small calibre who are satisfied with small gains, measured by the new system of values and new standards in political structures of the country as a whole. The ones who do not belong to this group are exceptions to the rule. In the world of professional diplomacy even the diplomatic couriers have clear and specific knowledge. In our situation even some highly positioned diplomats would not be able to perform the duties of the couriers in some serious destinations. The country with such concept simply does not need that.

Coordinates of recovery

Authorized state institutions must re-examine, restore and correctly determine foreign policy goals and state priorities, with participation of public, expert institutions, qualified organisations and individuals. On the basis of established strategy and objectives, there should be re-examining of the MFA, and especially DMCP network, and principles need to be determined for staff policy which should enable realisation of determined objectives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be equipped in expert and professional regard, in order to give answers to all the questions relevant for the state foreign affairs, and to produce analyses and conclusions to prepare and facilitate the political structures in decision making.

With the aim of realisation of the previous conclusion in the process of permanent education of the staff and their training for diplomatic service and for various other jobs related to creation and execution of Foreign Affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina must establish adequate forms of that education, including, first of all, the establishment of permanent diplomatic academy. The curricula of this academy among usual courses and subjects must in a very flexible way respect the strategic objectives of BiH foreign affairs and specific tasks which diplomacy has in realisation of these objectives. In this job wide cooperation is possible and desirable within the region and further and in that regard interests have been expressed several times from abroad.

Bosnia and Herzegovina diplomatic network must be completely adjusted to the foreign policy priorities as well as to the internal state constitution and realistic organisation, financial and staff capabilities. By being much more flexible and determined, various forms of diplomatic presentation must be used in the world of known and widespread methods such as covering from the headquarters, establishment of more powerful «regional embassies» from which more countries are actively covered, strengthening consulates and cultural centres which have superb possibilities for diplomatic activities etc. At this, MFA must be more pragmatic and flexible in the selection of staff for specific destinations as well as for definition of “national destination scheme” bearing in mind, first of all, the efficiency in obtaining results and reaching goals. Of course, at the global level of DMCP network required national balance must exist, which does not mean that certain destinations would be kept exclusively for one nation permanently or on a long-term basis.

DMCP network must well cover neighbouring countries first of all as well as other countries in the region, then the countries of the European Union, the headquarters of the international organizations and institutions (UN, NATO etc.), countries with full UN membership and the most important regional and continental centres for BiH. The criterion of “importance” is economically determined as well as the criterion of the number of BiH citizens abroad.

BiH foreign policy and diplomacy must find answers to the question how to organise and strengthen the ties of diaspora (almost the third of the total population) with their mother country for the benefit of both the country and the people. The present practice of DMCPs sees these BiH citizens who remained abroad mostly as the ballast and people that they can earn money on for various consular services, instead as population with good education, social and professional positions that can be of service to their country in many ways as proved by diaspora of many other countries. Being isolated, pushed away and “not needed” by their mother country they very often function as a “surplus” welcome for intensifying political and social claustrophobia already increased.

The internal organization of the state and its administration for a long– term strategic processes such as the access to EU and NATO, cannot be treated as the exclusive task of the Presidency and MFA and especially not as an exclusive job of the Office for European Integrations. These are processes whose realisation in specific segments must be “brought down to” at the level of complete state administration, to the ministries, administration of justice, education, media etc. Separation of MFA from the Office for European Integrations poses an increasing problem, and their activities have counterproductive effects, and “integration” process rests on pragmatic activities in the close circles, which is completely opposed to the idea of the process itself.

Following the previous conclusion in accordance with BiH foreign policy priorities, the Council of Ministers and MFA based on the decision of the Presidency must restructure diplomatic posts in the European Council, Parliament and in NATO. They must be strengthened regarding staff with regard to both quality and quantity and systematically employed in their daily activities in these institutions, for representation and promotion of goals and performance of tasks, for analysing daily and long – term processes within EU and NATO, for direct lobbying and actions that will give the new identity to the country able to be an active partner and not only passive observer who asks for more liberal visa policy and almost nothing else. Few individuals in these DMCPs who deal with these matters without enthusiasm and without results make exceptions from the practice of all the other countries that are in the same position as Bosnia regarding integrations.

All mentioned recovery co-ordinates demand additional financial means as to improve the work of MFA and the image of our country in the world, apart from political will and knowledge the MFA budget needs to be increased for the performance of the tasks. This cannot be realised before the above mentioned projections of foreign policy activities are planned, institutional organizations and staff revisions are analysed and the final framework of BiH foreign policy strategy is obtained. Target investments and critical points of recovery should not be considered as expenditure but as an investment. It is exceptionally delicate matter for the presentation to the public who will consider this as another spending in already extremely expensive administration. The communication with the public in this matter should be separate and complementary strategy within the process as a whole.

With regard to the specific interrelations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and international community, not rarely fluidly defined relations, authorities and competences within the relations, the relevant state institutions must define the co-ordinates of those relations. It is obvious that not having rules necessary for partnership relations often leads to events which discourage and sometimes even unable the flow of regular processes within the relevant state institutions, the rights and competences are unjustly restricted and at the same time its manifestations are in unnecessary and unforeseen “excess of competences” of some international institutions. Bosnia and Herzegovina is by its political reality quite vulnerable to various influences from abroad, institutional and other and therefore the settling of relations in this area is required even more.