



DRIVERS FOR SCENARIO

“Bridging Human Rights and Conflict Prevention: A Dialogue between Critical Communities” July 16-17, 2001

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Drivers are events that will take place during this future six-month period and that may impact the scenario. The background paper provides more information on the drivers and the full context of the scenario.

Below is a list of drivers rated in terms of variability and importance.

1. *Census*
 - a. Importance: High - results of the most recent census revealed an increase in birth rates among the Albanian population, fueling Macedonian fears of a Greater Albania. Ethnic Macedonians also fear that a larger ethnic Albanian population will mean a more legitimate claim to and more pressure by ethnic Albanians for political power and rights within Macedonia, independently of the Greater Albania. This is why Macedonian Slavs are tempted to manipulate the results. The underlying fear by the majority that the Albanian population is a destabilizing factor is likely to be reinforced by these figures. This is also important in the way it is handled by the government (i.e. how the results are publicized, whether the true results are made available, etc.)
 - b. Variability: High – numbers can be easily manipulated, and the interpretation is dependent on how the government handles it when the figures are released in October.
2. *NLA – What is their actual intent– are they fighting for rights or independence or to protect the route of criminal trade from government control?*
 - a. Importance: High- with respect to the level of public sympathy for the NLA among Albanians
 - b. Variability: High - violence could stop and start again quickly. Also their intent itself is subject to change, depending on how the conflict plays out. The support from the general citizenry could change based on the way the NLA conducts themselves in the conflict and in negotiations.
3. *Weapons proliferation*
 - a. Importance: High – how these groups are able to arm themselves will have a significant impact on how the conflict plays out.

- b. Variability: High- support could come from a number of places (Including Albania, through former KLA networks, international supporters of either side) and can change as the conflict evolves, things get more heated.

- 4. *Constitutional reform* - is legislation enough? The ethnic rather than civic characterization of the preamble of the constitution sets the standard for discrimination. Albanians, Roma, Turks, and Vlachs are represented as a minor groups rather than constituents.
 - a. Importance: High – this is one of the central issues in the negotiations
 - b. Variability: High – it could go in a number of directions, and have an equally high number of consequences.

- 5. *Stability of the Unity government*
 - a. Importance: High – The issue of whether the government falls apart, if there are breaks in the political/peaceful dialogue, and the way that the government is structured are in and of themselves factors. The distinction of separate groups defined by ethnicity can harden the ethnic identity and wind up being more divisive than unifying. The focus of the government, which has been more on power sharing than integration, may have served to fuel the fires of inter-group hostility. The power-sharing arrangement can further exemplify the fault lines because of its reliance on elites, rather than encouraging stability, cooperation, and coalition building, as was the intention.
 - b. Variability: High –Will it survive the current conflict? What are the trade-offs? What is the perception of the Albanian party’s role and legitimacy?

- 6. *Kosovo Factor*
 - a. Importance: High - while the final status is important, it has indirect effects for both sides: either as a precedent to strengthen a Macedonian secessionist movement or, from the Albanian perspective, as the formation of a greater base of support.
 - b. Variability: Moderate to High – both the status of Kosovo and the General Assembly elections in Kosovo in November are variable

- 7. *Education* - rights of ethnic minorities at all levels of education. The high level of ethnic Albanian participation in primary and secondary education coupled with a lack of educational facilities and qualified teachers lead to overcrowded classrooms and strong feelings of resentment from minority groups.
 - a. Importance: High - this issue has been and continues to be the source of contention and civil disobedience. (Tetovo University and ensuing riots)
 - b. Variability: Moderate – it is unlikely that this issue will be resolved to anyone’s satisfaction any time soon, but it is an item in the negotiations.

- 8. *Language use policies* - concerns of the ethnic Albanians include equal recognition and status for their language and religion. The constitution stipulates that the Macedonian language is the only official language of Macedonia. Ethnic Albanians argue that the lack of access to public services in Albanian is strongly discriminatory and demand the provision of a bilingual public administration and education system.
 - a. Importance: High – this is clearly on of the most contentious and primary issues for the Albanian community
 - b. Variability: High - depending on how talks go, they will either have their demands met or not

- 9. *Citizenship*
 - a. Importance: High – given the ambiguous and contentious issues relating to the structure of the law and the issuance of passports. The question of citizenship law is an issue especially for Albanian residents who do not hold Macedonian citizenship (numbers

estimated in tens of thousands). Ethnic Albanians contend that this is discriminatory and racially motivated, as ethnic Macedonians in the diaspora abroad, many of whom have never lived in Macedonia since independence, hold citizenship, while ethnic Albanians do not, as there is a fifteen-year permanent residency requirement. This underscores Albanian claims that they and other minorities are second-class citizens. This is an especially sensitive issue now, in light of the recent dissemination of a threatening pamphlet by a paramilitary group, which calls for the evacuation of all Albanians who either do not have citizenship or who received it after 1994. The citizenship laws could also become a factor later, as the estimated 70,000 Albanian refugees who have fled Macedonia since the beginning of the most recent outbreak of violence try to return to their homes. According to a UN official, about 40 Albanians who recently tried to return from Kosovo were denied reentry to Macedonia, despite the government's agreement several months ago to let them do so.

- b. Variability: Moderate - while the actual laws pertaining to citizenship are unlikely to change in the short-term, the way this issue is handled by government and paramilitary groups is variable, as evidenced by the above-referenced examples.

10. *International involvement* – in terms of economic, military, and social support.

- a. Importance: High - Expectations of Macedonians for positive outcomes from initiatives such as the Partnership for Peace may be too high. The Albanian community, especially post-Kosovo has the perception that NATO will come to its aid. There is expectation that the EU (and the greater international community) will play a role in the resolution of the conflict.
- b. Variability: Moderate to High – it is difficult to determine how the NATO presence will play out, and what it will mean at a local and regional level.