


10-16-2014

NATO in the Balkans

Bert Chapman

Purdue University, chapmanb@purdue.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fsdocs

 Part of the [Comparative Politics Commons](#), [Defense and Security Studies Commons](#), [Eastern European Studies Commons](#), [European History Commons](#), [Human Geography Commons](#), [Military History Commons](#), [Military Studies Commons](#), and the [Political History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chapman, B. (2014) NATO in the Balkans. In War in the Balkans: An Encyclopedic History from the Fall of the Ottoman Empire to the Breakup of Yugoslavia. Richard C. Hall (Ed.). (Volume 1, 198-199). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

NATO in the Balkans

Balkan countries such as Bulgaria and Romania served in the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact during the Cold War. Greece served in NATO and rebellious communist states such as Albania left the Warsaw Pact in 1968 and the former Yugoslavia never joined the Warsaw Pact and participated in the Non-Aligned Movement. The end of the Cold War, the Soviet Union's collapse, and Yugoslavia's disintegration into vicious internecine conflicts and separate nation states ended the Balkans cold war security infrastructure.

The subsequent two decades would see the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) gradually expand its presence into the Balkans with some opposition expressed by Russia which considers the Balkans, particularly Serbia, to be a core area of its security interests. Balkan countries besides Greece joining NATO as of early 2012 include Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Slovenia. Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia are Balkan countries participating in the NATO-affiliated Partnership for Peace Program.

NATO's Balkan membership seeks to participate in alliance security assistance programs, promote opportunities for security sector reform and professional military development, reorient national defense toward contemporary security

challenges such as human trafficking and counterterrorism, and place national defense responsibilities within a collective security infrastructure allowing more optimal use of finite financial resources and reducing the chances of interstate conflict. Some Balkan countries sought to prove their commitment to western security architectures by supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom with Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania contributing forces. Balkan countries participating in NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations in Afghanistan as of early 2012 include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia, and Turkey. Some of these Balkan countries soldiers were killed while participating in these military operations.

Contemporary and emerging security concerns confronting NATO in the Balkans include acute financial crises affecting European Union (EU) countries such as Greece which may produce civil unrest and fracture the Eurozone, lingering ethnic and sectarian tensions in former Yugoslav countries requiring the presence of peacekeeping forces, Balkan countries serving as drug and human trafficking transit centers, tension between Russia and Balkan countries which seek to integrate into NATO and the EU, concerns over the future direction of Turkish foreign policy, economic development problems in Kosovo and other

Balkan countries, and what role Russia and Turkey might play in supplying energy resources to Balkan countries.

Bert Chapman

References

R. Craig Nation. "NATO in the Western Balkans: A Force for Stability?" *Southeastern Europe*, 35 (1) (February 2011): 120-137.

Jim Seroka. "Security Considerations in the Western Balkans: NATO's Evolution and Expansion." *East European Quarterly*, 41 (1)(Spring 2007): 25-38.

U.S. Congress. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *The Balkans After the Independence of Kosovo and on the Eve of NATO Enlargement*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2008. <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS94875>.

U.S. Congress. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. *Unfinished Business in Southeast Europe: Opportunities and Challenges in the Western Balkans*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2010. <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo1335>