

Chapter 5

Preferences, Strategies, and Outcomes in Albania, 1997

“To be frank, we do not know what to do.”

- Swedish Foreign Minister Lena
Helm-Wallen, March 15, 1997²⁰⁸

The previous chapter explored patterns of outcomes across events and international institutions using quantitative techniques. At the outcome level, we observe no association between unilateral activity and institutional actions. This suggests that states treat most forms of foreign policy cooperation as complementary to, rather than a substitute for, their own foreign policy activity. The focus on outcomes, however, masks important variation in how individual states treat cooperation.

This chapter expands the test of the consensus-capacity framework beyond the level of outcomes by providing preliminary tests of hypotheses about the behavior of individual states in pursuit of the outcomes studied in Chapters 3 and 4. Do states explicitly strategize about venue choice with concerns about consensus and capacity in mind? Under what conditions are states willing to act outside institutions, either unilaterally or collectively?

The collapse of Albania in early 1997 provides an excellent opportunity to test hypotheses at the level of individual states. When extensive Ponzi (pyramid investment)

²⁰⁸ Quoted in (MacKinnon 1997).

schemes collapsed, ties between the pyramids and the ruling party turned economic chaos into political breakdown. The government refused to act, either to suppress the pyramids or to protect its already-impooverished citizens from the scams. Citizens in the hardest-hit areas took up arms and eventually marched on the capital. The country hovered on the brink of civil war for several weeks until a belated European diplomatic mission successfully negotiated a solution. Over a month later, a peacekeeping force finally deployed to facilitate weapons collection and new elections.

This complicated scenario engendered an even more complex set of responses from other European states. Over the course of the crisis, we see issues of humanitarian relief, democratization, economics, domestic (internal) security, and international security. The final foreign policy outcome of the crisis involved a range of both institutional and unilateral actions. Unilateral activity ranged from declarations to military deployment; institutional responses included a number of declarations of concern and support along with a UN-authorized, OSCE-organized, Italian-led ad hoc military intervention.

Examining an extended, multifaceted crisis with a nuanced and highly-contested outcome is advantageous because it provides an opportunity to extract multiple observations from this single “case.” By identifying discrete events or phases within the crisis and studying the responses of multiple states, I expand the number of observations within the case to reduce overdetermination while holding other factors about the crisis constant across all phases. While the evidence here is preliminary and drawn from secondary sources, it nevertheless provides a clear picture of states evincing explicit

concern about capacity and contesting the definition of the issue to obtain action in their preferred venue.

From an empirical standpoint, the Albanian case is a good focus for testing these hypotheses for several reasons. First, it is sufficiently after the substantial preference upheaval and institutional redesign that accompanied the end of the Cold War. By 1997, states' preferences had begun to stabilize, and they had begun to acclimate to the new dynamics in the various institutions. Second, the Albanian crisis contains several non-conflict-oriented elements. The economic element, for example, triggers different sets of interests and concerns among other states while also expanding the set of institutions that states would consider as part of their response.²⁰⁹ Finally, the crisis was unexpected; it was not something for which states had had pre-established policy or pre-drafted response plans.²¹⁰ The lack of prepared policy or anticipated responses forced states to enact the entire policy planning process in public in a short period of time. This allows observers to obtain a fuller picture of the crisis than might otherwise be possible.²¹¹

This chapter first discusses consensus and capacity as state-level concerns and hypothesizes about how they would affect individual states' behavior. The second section presents a brief background to the crisis and a summary of events during the crisis itself. The third section presents evidence about state behavior on two key issues in the crisis and analyzes this data in relation to the hypotheses. The final section concludes by assessing the usefulness of the consensus-capacity framework at the state level.

²⁰⁹ NATO, for example, is much less of an appropriate institution for the crisis in its early economic phase.

²¹⁰ Kosovo, in contrast, was something that policymakers had begun to expect even as early as 1997; several sources speak of concerns that civil war in Albania would give ethnic Albanians in Kosovo reasons to take up arms against the Serbs.

²¹¹ The Bosnian crisis of 1993-95 is less appropriate on each of these counts. The OSCE did not even exist in its current form during this period, and the EU's CFSP was in the process of being completed. Russia's likely response was very uncertain, and the relevance of the crisis to some great powers was also less clear. Finally, the strongly military nature of the crisis reduced the set of potentially relevant institutions.

Consensus and Capacity as State-Level Concerns

Two main sets of hypotheses exist about how consensus and capacity should matter in individual states' decision-making processes. They address the distinction of preferences over outcomes versus preferences over strategies: Who should be willing to act outside institutions, and who should prefer which of the venues for cooperation.

The distinction between preferences over outcomes and preferences over strategies is important here. States have preferences over the set of possible outcomes in any situation. Outcomes are final conditions or end-states such as the cessation of hostilities, a fresh election, a clear military victory for one side, an end to the refugee flows, etc.²¹² Because the events under consideration are fast-moving and constitute second-order cooperation, however, I assume that these preferences are generally exogenous and fixed in the short run.²¹³

The first subsection below presents hypotheses about which states should prefer extra-institutional strategies of ad hoc cooperation or unilateral action, and under what circumstances. The second subsection discusses hypotheses for how states choose between the institutional venues available to them when they decide to pursue cooperation in an existing group.

²¹² Identifying the sources of state preferences is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

²¹³ States could, however, perceive cooperation as an end in itself, as an outcome over which they hold a preference. Several lines of thought, including one on the 'coordination reflex' in studies of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, suggest that such a preference exists. These authors believe national preferences are malleable through interaction and socialization, but they acknowledge that such change is likely to be slow, measured in decades rather than the handful of months the Albanian crisis persisted. Even for states who have a preference for cooperation itself, their observed strategy/outcome preference should not change over the course of the two or three months of this crisis. These states, however, should be very unlikely to propose unilateral action, and they should be unlikely to propose any action outside of an institution. See (M. E. Smith 2004) and (Glarbo 1999) for prominent examples of this cooperation-as-a-preference argument in the context of CFSP as well as a good review of similar literature.

Acting Outside Institutions

Two forms of activity occur outside of institutions: ad hoc cooperation and unilateral activity. The consensus-capacity framework suggested that extra-institutional cooperation should occur when a cluster of states with like preferences exists, but a general consensus in existing institutions does not. A cluster's similar preferences allow the members to reach a consensus among themselves on a policy response. That cluster of states, however, must have sufficient capacity to undertake the desired action with an acceptable probability of success. Because the participants in an ad hoc action must generate all of their own required capacity from among themselves (no institutional capacity is available), adding many low-capacity states increases transaction costs without substantially increasing the available resources.

H1a: Participants in ad hoc cooperation will belong to a preference cluster.

H1b: States with moderate to high capacity are most likely to participate in ad hoc cooperation.

Ad hoc cooperation thus requires consensus on a smaller scale and some degree of capacity pooling. On the other hand, consensus of any variety is not a necessary condition for unilateral activity. Unilateralism can arise under conditions of consensus or dissensus, though the theory suggests it is more likely under the latter. Actors choosing to take unilateral action generally are not satisfied with either the non-cooperative status quo or the new potential cooperative outcome. The latter group are easy to identify as preference outliers within a given group or organization.²¹⁴ The former group, those unhappy with non-cooperation, may be more difficult to spot, however; their stated preferences could be anywhere on the policy dimension that is not the status quo. The

²¹⁴ Preference outliers have preferred outcomes that lie far from the group's median.

identifying feature for this group is the difference between their (stated) ideal outcomes and the status quo.

The necessary condition for unilateral action is capacity, but a caveat applies. Because all states have the minimum capacity needed to produce declarations or statements, we must distinguish here between unilateral statements (low-intensity behaviors) and unilateral actions (high-intensity behaviors). Hypotheses 2a and 2b reflect this logic:

H2a: Preference outliers with moderate to high capacity should be willing to act unilaterally. High and low intensity behaviors are possible. At moderate levels of capacity policymakers should evidence some concern about capacity constraints.

H2b: Preference outliers with low capacity may be willing to act unilaterally but will only be able to take low-cost actions. Policymakers will be concerned with capacity constraints.²¹⁵

Direct evidence of concern about capacity constraints could take the form of policymaker statements about inability to do particular tasks, lack of resources, or possibly requests for help from states who do have particular forms of capacity.

Venue Preferences

The second set of hypotheses addresses how states choose between existing fora. Even when states *do* decide to cooperate, and *do* decide to cooperate through an institution, they still face the decision of *which* institution to use. In the case of European states and the Albanian crisis, options included the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU), the Western European Union (WEU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and for some aspects of the crisis, the Council of Europe (CE).

²¹⁵ Similar ideas appeared in Chapter 4 as Hypotheses 7 and 8, but testing was deferred to this chapter.

The membership, capacity, substantive jurisdictions, and decision-making rules of these institutions vary dramatically. The combination of these elements will alter the likely type of cooperation that the institution can produce. Differing preference distributions and decision rules will shape outcomes; outcomes will interact with capacity to produce an estimated net benefit of cooperation that states can compare to the status quo and to their own ideal points.²¹⁶ Thus, these institutional differences should allow states to discriminate between them.

H3: Preference outliers should express preferences for institutions or venues where they are pivotal voters, as determined by that venue's voting rule.

H4: States should base their venue preferences on their estimation of the likely cooperative outcome and the estimated deviation of this from their ideal points.²¹⁷

In previous chapters, a state's security identity served as a crude proxy for preference outlier status since it was available cross-nationally and had a definition that was invariant to the issue under consideration. In the case of the Albanian crisis, however, more nuanced measures are possible. In particular, we can identify single policy dimensions at several points in the crisis and order states by their policy preferences on that dimension. By studying several stages that invoke different policy issues, we can vary the set of states that are outliers to see if this affects their stated preferences or behavior. This also allows the substantive content of policy to re-enter the picture; data constraints led previous chapters to ignore this in favor of simply noting whether any cooperation occurred.

²¹⁶ This paragraph summarizes the conclusions of the expected utility framework in Chapter 2.

²¹⁷ In the terms of Chapter 2, these are c and $(b_i - c)$

Background to the Albanian Crisis and Brief Chronology

This section provides a brief overview of the crisis in Albania to set the stage for discussions of state preferences during the crisis. I begin by discussing prevailing economic and political conditions in Albania in the period leading up to the crisis itself. I then discuss the transformation of the situation from an economic crisis to a political disaster and the efforts by other states and institutions to resolve the crisis. The final subsection addresses the implementation of the agreement, the deployment of peacekeeping forces, and the election itself.²¹⁸

Figure 5-1. Map of Albania.



Source: (United States. Department of State. 2008).

Prelude

Even prior to the collapse of Communism in late 1990, Albania was one of the poorest countries in Europe. Its longtime dictator Enver Hoxha adopted autarkic

²¹⁸ This account is based heavily on Pettifer and Vickers (2007), Vaughan-Whitehead (1999), and Perlmutter (1998). As most of the basic details are common knowledge, I cite only specific facts not ordinarily found in multiple sources.

economic policies through much of the 1980s, prohibiting not just trade with the outside world but virtually all other contact with it as well. After Hoxha's death in 1985 and the fall of his handpicked successor Ramiz Alia in 1991, Albanians entered the transition to a market economy even more ignorant of its workings than other former Communist states.

The combination of desperate economic conditions and ignorance about market economics made Albanians very susceptible to a range of fraudulent investment schemes.²¹⁹ Ponzi (pyramid) schemes swept through most Eastern Bloc countries at some point in the early 1990s, but in Albania they found particularly fertile ground.²²⁰ By late 1996, some twenty pyramid schemes operated in the country, taking in \$3-4 million a day,²²¹ and some had existed for half a dozen years.²²² Experts later estimated that the total investment in the schemes exceeded \$2 billion – which is no mean feat in a country with a GDP around that amount²²³ – and that some half or more of the population received a regular income from the schemes.²²⁴ Despite warnings from the International Monetary Fund, the pyramids continued to operate openly through late 1996.

Meanwhile, on the political front, hard-fought national parliamentary elections in May 1996 drained both parties' treasuries. Both parties turned to various pyramid schemes to raise additional funds. The ruling Democratic Party (DP) was quite overt

²¹⁹ (Jarvis 2000, 46).

²²⁰ Pyramid schemes pay exorbitant rates of “interest” on investments; the ‘pyramid’ structure emerges because early investors must recruit additional participants. Pyramid funds may invest in some productive activity, but crucially, though, the bulk of their “interest” payments come from the principal payments of later depositors. As a result, these schemes are mathematically unsustainable. Once the pyramid exhausts the supply of gullible investors, it loses the stream of income by which it paid interest to earlier entrants. Only early entrants can possibly profit from these schemes – *if* the scheme survives long enough to repay their investment. Later participants will lose their investment entirely; their principal was not invested but was instead used to pay interests.

²²¹ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 194).

²²² (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 4).

²²³ (Economy's losses caused by schemes estimated at 2bn dollars - Koha Jone 1997); (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 192); see also (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 5).

²²⁴ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 204); Jarvis (2000, 46) cites IMF statistics suggesting that two-thirds of the population had invested in the schemes.

about their ties. Posters everywhere proclaimed “With the DP, Everyone Wins” and showed a photograph of the DP’s local candidate surrounded by the names of major pyramid companies.²²⁵ Despite equally heavy (and equally suspect) spending by the Socialists, the election was a landslide; the DP won 122 of the 140 parliamentary seats and handily re-elected the DP prime minister. External observers confirmed widespread electoral fraud, and the Socialists boycotted the new Parliament.²²⁶

October’s local elections were an even bigger fiasco. The Democratic Party, upset by the fraud pronouncements in May’s election, refused to accredit a group of OSCE observers for the local elections. The West saw this as a clear signal that the DP, under Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi and President Sali Berisha, intended to win this election by fraud as well. They were probably right; the DP won 86.9% of the country’s mayorships and communal councils.²²⁷ The shunning of observers, however, and overt fraud made continued support of Berisha’s regime more difficult for Western states.²²⁸

Collapse and Crisis

The first pyramid to collapse was a smaller Tirana-based scheme run by an illiterate Gypsy named Sudja, who had made her fund’s financial decisions by consulting her crystal ball. Sudja’s bank closed in December 1996; Sudja herself was arrested in mid-January for fraud. More seriously, two of the larger funds (Xhaferri and Populli) stopped paying interest in mid-January.²²⁹ When the government arrested leaders of these

²²⁵ See, e.g., (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 197); this particular element of the campaign is widely noted in accounts of the crisis.

²²⁶ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 206).

²²⁷ (Biberaj 1998, 313).

²²⁸ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 6-7).

²²⁹ Significantly, both of these pyramids had close ties to the opposition Socialist Party.

schemes for fraud, citizens believed that the government had done it to steal their money,²³⁰ and the demonstrations outside the kiosks and in Tirana began to include slogans of “down with dictatorship” as well as “we want our money.”²³¹ In a desperate attempt to prevent further collapses, the government froze the two schemes’ deposits (some \$255 mln), began rationing bank withdrawals, and created commissions to reimburse those funds’ investors and to investigate the remaining pyramids.²³²

The government’s attempts to stem the economic collapse and placate citizens failed. January 22 saw thousands of demonstrators “fighting a pitched battle” with police in the streets of Tirana, demanding that their investments be repaid.²³³ Five thousand citizens rampaged in Lushnja on the 24th, burning the city hall and destroying most government offices in their dissatisfaction with government policy. When the foreign minister visited Lushnja the next day, to try to placate the citizens, he was beaten and stoned by a mob.²³⁴ By the 26th, fourteen cities were reporting rioting and violence.²³⁵ On January 27, an estimated 35,000 citizens clashed with riot police in Tirana’s central Skanderbeg Square, calling for the government’s resignation.²³⁶ The same day, in the face of DP supporters marching in Tirana and protests in DP-loyal cities, the DP-dominated Parliament buckled and granted Berisha emergency powers.²³⁷

²³⁰ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 11). The Albanian authorities closed Xhaferri largely at the insistence of Western governments, who had evidence that the nascent Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) had deposited substantial amounts of funds there. Xhaferri’s depositors, however, were heavily concentrated in the southern city of Lushnja, where support for Berisha’s Democratic Party was weakest. This had important consequences later.

²³¹ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 10).

²³² (Standish 1997).

²³³ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 10).

²³⁴ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 210).

²³⁵ (Robertson 1997).

²³⁶ (Dhimjoka 1997).

²³⁷ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 11).

The rosy picture of Albania as the showcase economy of Eastern Europe²³⁸ fell apart rapidly after that. Almost all of the major funds had fallen by February 5, and the largest of all dangled by a thread. Around two-thirds of the population had money invested in the pyramid schemes.²³⁹ A large number had sold their land or farm animals to invest additional money in the pyramids, and many had encouraged their relatives working abroad to send back larger remittances for this purpose too. The Southern part of the country was home to a number of the longest-lived and widely-subscribed schemes; citizens and the local economy were particularly devastated by the collapses.

Government Incompetence and the Escalation of Violence

The sheer extent of the crisis was compounded by the government's refusal to take responsibility for allowing the pyramids to persist and to capture gullible investors. On January 30, the largest scheme placed a letter in the *Financial Times* denying that it was a pyramid, apparently at the urging of the government. One pair of observers describes this as "a complete divorce from reality in the Albanian fiscal world," and the currency plummeted as citizens tried to trade *leks* (the local currency) for dollars.²⁴⁰ Berisha did not admit any responsibility or mistakes on his part until February 15, and even then he insisted that most responsibility rests with the citizens and that the government would not compensate them for their losses.²⁴¹

In the face of this government refusal to address the problem of the pyramids or the devastation they caused, violence escalated and continued to spread through February

²³⁸ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, Chapter 1).

²³⁹ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 217).

²⁴⁰ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 12-13).

²⁴¹ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 210).

and into March. Berisha sacked Meksi's government on March 2²⁴²; but the DP-dominated parliament re-elected Berisha to another five-year term on March 3.²⁴³ This prompted the now-unified opposition to call for more protests, and even DP supporters were beginning to question why the government had remained blind to the schemes for several years. In the South, anti-Berisha forces were highly displeased with the re-election, and they seized small arms and light weapons from army weapons depots on March 3.²⁴⁴

By mid-March, the insurgency had taken on a political slant that had very little connection to the original pyramid scheme crisis. The economic crisis may have provided the initial impetus, but the primary emphasis now was on removing the DP government. 'Salvation committees' in the south, largely using Communist-era political actors and political and military structures as a basis, began taking cities and re-establishing order; rebels controlled fourteen southern cities by March 14.²⁴⁵

As the boundary of rebel-controlled territory crept closer to Tirana, insurgent groups in the north also armed themselves and pushed south. The north was traditionally a bastion of DP strength, and Berisha himself came from there; the south was a Socialist stronghold. But because regional lines in Albania coincided with party lines *and* with ethnic lines, and because a large number of looted weapons were now easily available,

²⁴² (State of Emergency Called as Albania on the Brink 1997).

²⁴³ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 212). In a belated show of disapproval, ambassadors from EU member states declined to attend the swearing-in ceremony. (Fox 1997).

²⁴⁴ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 20).

²⁴⁵ (US employees, citizens ordered to leave Albania 1997). The Partisan popular army tradition was a key element of Albania's World War II experience; it relied on all citizens having a basic knowledge of defense and community-based defense practices. This continued in the formal "civilian military education process" of the Hoxha era, where among other things all citizens were drilled in how to improvise defensive strategies against potential invasion and were given basic training in the use of small arms. See (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 26-27).

outside powers became very concerned about the risk of civil war.²⁴⁶ At a minimum, the looted weapons could easily find their way across the border into neighboring Kosovo and destabilize the situation there further.

Threats to the Outside

Beyond the risk of exacerbating tensions in Kosovo – a prospect which Germany desperately wanted to avoid²⁴⁷ – the Albanian crisis created at least two other threats for the international community. These were the need to protect and evacuate their own citizens from the strife-torn country, and the large numbers of refugees fleeing the economic and/or political consequences of the crisis.

By March 11, Western states had begun to evacuate their nationals from Tirana. By this point, though, the chaos in Albania was so far along that the evacuation process was a mess. Civilian flights from Tirana airport had ceased a week earlier, forcing embassies to make alternate plans.²⁴⁸ Well over a dozen naval vessels from seven countries gathered in the Adriatic, patrolling the waters and serving as landing pads for helicopter evacuations.²⁴⁹ American helicopters came under fire near the Tirana airport,

²⁴⁶ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 27-28). Ethnic Ghegs are concentrated in the northern part of the country and typically vote for the DP (or other parties of the right), and the southern Tosks support the Socialist Party and its Communist predecessor, the People's Party of Albania. In hindsight, Greco disagrees with the immediacy of the civil war threat (2001, sec. 2), though contemporary commentators appear to believe it quite plausible. (e.g., *Irish Independent*, March 1997, various issues). He also cites disagreement (2001, sec. 3) on the risk of the crisis spilling over to Kosovo and Macedonia.

²⁴⁷ (Barber 1997).

²⁴⁸ In one widely reported incident, a British evacuation convoy's vehicles had a pile-up accident as they neared the port at Durres; the missionaries and aid workers were stranded overnight on the beach with armed gangs firing shots into the air all around them.

²⁴⁹ (Greece moves to evacuate nationals from Albanian capital - ER Radio 1997); (U.S. Marines in Tirana to provide security for evacuation 1997); (Miller 1997); (European countries speed up evacuation work in Albania 1997); (Greek Navy conducts evacuation mission in Albania 1997). Sight of the ships often led citizens in areas of mixed political affiliation to think that the ships were an international force intervening on behalf of the DP government, as the government had requested, and as a result the ships' appearance often triggered more looting and violence. Ironically, this destruction was usually led by DP supporters who thought that if the situation could be made to look worse such an intervention would in fact occur. See (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 44).

and the evacuation was suspended until the airport area was more secure. A German helicopter was also the target of hostile fire, provoking the soldiers aboard to fire shots on foreign soil for the first time since World War II.²⁵⁰

Meanwhile, as conflict in the south became more severe, Albanians began to flee in larger numbers. The south had suffered more than the north from the collapse of the pyramids, at least in part because more southerners worked abroad and had invested their earnings in the schemes. It was also much less supportive of the DP than the north, it was home to the largest bases of the Albanian Mafia, and it was closest to Italy. Anyone who could afford to do so paid the Mafia or other enterprising boat-owners to cross the narrow Strait of Otranto to Italy.²⁵¹

The situation in Italy rapidly became dire. On March 9 news sources reported that the flow of illegal immigrants “has not exceeded by much the scores that normally try to make it to Italy on average weeks.”²⁵² By March 15, though, the Italian navy and coast guard had intercepted some three thousand refugees,²⁵³ and another thousand arrived by the evening of the 16th.²⁵⁴ Altogether, over 11,000 refugees arrived in southern Italy over the course of less than a week,²⁵⁵ utterly overwhelming Puglian social service providers and prompting the Italian government to declare a state of emergency on March 19.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁰ Comments in the press speak of the UK effort as being the center of evacuation efforts for all EU citizens. Meanwhile, a US Department of State spokesman describes the whole evacuation as “a coordinated NATO military action.” (Burns 1997). See also (North Atlantic Treaty Organization. North Atlantic Council. 1997).

²⁵¹ By March 20, the going rate was between I£100-400 (Johnston 1997).

²⁵² (Italy sends back 38 Albanians to homeland 1997).

²⁵³ (Thomas 1997).

²⁵⁴ (Ulbrich 1997). The refugees included the crews of three Albanian naval ships (along with many of their family members), the crews of at least three army helicopters, and a MiG plane whose two pilots landed on a NATO airstrip in Italy and asked for political asylum. Berisha’s two adult children also fled to Italy on one of the last commercial ferry departures. See (Walker, Amnesty bid ... 1997, 11); (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 37); (Italy fears refugee influx as two of Berisha's children arrive in Bari 1997).

²⁵⁵ (Perlmutter 1998).

²⁵⁶ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 213).

Efforts at Settlement

Amid this context of escalating violence and rising emigration, Europe belatedly tried to intervene. Both the Italian and Greek prime ministers telephoned Berisha on March 5, urging him to compromise with the opposition's demands. A mediation delegation from the Council of Europe arrived in Tirana on March 6, but its meetings produced little.²⁵⁷ A second delegation, headed by the President of the EU's Council of Ministers, Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo, arrived in Tirana on the 7th for a fact-finding mission.²⁵⁸ Yet a third delegation, this time from the OSCE and headed by former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitsky, arrived on the 8th, after a delay caused by Berisha's threat to refuse to receive the delegation.²⁵⁹ On March 10, an Italian warship in the Adriatic hosted talks with the rebels, trying to consolidate the government's amnesty offer and plan for a Government of National Reconciliation,²⁶⁰ while Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini met with Berisha in Tirana to dangle aid as a carrot.²⁶¹

Berisha finally consented to appointing a Socialist prime minister and named Bashkim Fino to the post on March 9th, but this had little effect on the violence. As the situation continued to deteriorate and fighting reached the outskirts of Tirana, European organizations played a game of 'hot potato' with the idea of an intervention. NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana bluntly stated, "In Albania at the moment, politics has to be done; diplomacy has to be done. It is not for a military operation by NATO or

²⁵⁷ (EU delegation arrives in Albania 1997); (Council of Europe delegation arrives 1997).

²⁵⁸ See (EU delegation arrives in Albania 1997), and the extensive statement issued that night. (European Union. Presidency. 1997). Berisha categorically refused all outside intervention in the early stages of the crisis, hoping to delay it until he had strengthened his position by regaining control of key southern cities and ports. (Walker, Fighting grows as Albania clamp tightens 1997).

²⁵⁹ (OSCE envoy in talks with Albanian opposition 1997).

²⁶⁰ (Italy mediates in Albanian crisis 1997).

²⁶¹ (Prime minister, Italian foreign minister discuss situation, aid 1997).

anybody else.”²⁶² NATO’s ambassadors discussed and formally rejected the idea on March 11, calling only for the appointment of Government of National Reconciliation as soon as possible.²⁶³ The European Parliament passed a resolution urging an international military response on the 12th, and the Western European Union began to plan for such action. The OSCE debated sending a small policing mission to buy weapons back from the population and dispatched yet another representative to Berisha to discuss the idea.²⁶⁴

On March 13, OSCE mediator Vranisky returned to Tirana for a second round of talks.²⁶⁵ That evening, Berisha and Prime Minister Fino formally asked the Netherlands, which held the EU presidency, to intervene militarily.²⁶⁶ By the next morning, the OSCE’s chair (held by Denmark) publicly described intervention as “probable,”²⁶⁷ though he did not specify which institution would head it. Amid calls from French President Jacques Chirac for the EU to respond (and equal opposition to the idea from German Chancellor Helmut Kohl),²⁶⁸ the WEU met at French insistence to discuss the situation and recommended that planning continue.²⁶⁹

The OSCE meeting on the 15th, however, nearly derailed the emerging plans by passing a resolution “insisting that it was not the appropriate forum to decide on a potential troop deployment.”²⁷⁰ Amid public statements from the United States and

²⁶² (Pettifer 1997).

²⁶³ (NATO voices concern over Albanian crisis 1997). A government of national reconciliation, sometimes called a government of national unity, intentionally includes all major political and/or violent factions.

²⁶⁴ (France tells its people in Albania to get out 1997); (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 44).

²⁶⁵ (OSCE envoy to head back to Albania to mediate crisis 1997).

²⁶⁶ (URGENT Albania lodges formal request for military intervention 1997).

²⁶⁷ (Choppers under fire as foreign police mooted for Albania 1997).

²⁶⁸ (Choppers under fire as foreign police mooted for Albania 1997).

²⁶⁹ (URGENT Albania lodges formal request for military intervention 1997).

²⁷⁰ (Berisha stands firm in Albania chaos, EU hints at force 1997).

Germany favoring Berisha's removal,²⁷¹ the EU's foreign ministers gathered at Apeldoorn. The Albanian situation dominated the agenda of the scheduled meeting, but the results disappointed most observers. The EU's member states could only agree to send a high-level advisory mission to study the situation.²⁷² While they had cautiously accepted the possibility that any humanitarian or civilian assistance mission would require a small protection force, they insisted that any such intervention would first require approval from the UN Security Council.²⁷³

Somehow – none of the sources are very sure how – and after ten more days of additional confusion and shuttle diplomacy, the OSCE finally voted to organize an intervention on March 27. That afternoon, the Italian and Albanian Ambassadors to the UN jointly requested a meeting of the Security Council to obtain a formal authorization for the mission.²⁷⁴ In a meeting hastily convened before the Easter recess, the Security Council approved a three-month mandate for the Multinational Protection Force (MPF), which Italy would lead and organize within an OSCE framework.²⁷⁵ The mission was charged with protecting and providing humanitarian aid and helping to organize new parliamentary elections in June.

The Aftermath

By April 8-9, the Italian parliament approved dispatching troops to Albania until one month after the elections; the Turkish and Romanian parliaments followed within the

²⁷¹ (Berisha stands firm in Albania chaos, EU hints at force 1997); (No German troops sent to Albania: Kinkel 1997).

²⁷² (Albania back from the brink, as EU despatches advisory mission 1997).

²⁷³ (Berisha stands firm in Albania chaos, EU hints at force 1997).

²⁷⁴ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 213)

²⁷⁵ (Italy mediates in Albanian crisis 1997).

next several days.²⁷⁶ Troops began to arrive in Albania on April 15.²⁷⁷ Over the course of the next month, more than 6300 troops from over 11 countries deployed as part of ‘Operation Alba.’ Table 5-1 shows known force contributions.

Table 5-1. Contributions to the Multinational Protection Force, as of 21 May 1997.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Forces</i>
Italy	3068
France	952
Greece	802
Spain	340*
Austria	110*
Denmark	59*
Turkey	774
Romania	100 [#]
Portugal	
Slovenia	100 [#]
Belgium	
Total: 11 states	6556 – 7215)
Source: (Greco 2001) ; * initial deployments from (Pettifer and Vickers, <i>The Albanian Question: Reshaping the Balkans 2007</i> , 68);. [#] projected contributions from (Graham 1997). No estimates of Belgian or Portuguese contributions exist.	

OSCE-organized national parliamentary elections occurred under the supervision of MNF troops and outside observers on June 29. While neither the setting nor the conduct of elections were perfect, the Alba troops did at least ensure a reasonably peaceful environment for the conduct of an election. As expected, citizens removed the DP from office and replaced it with a solid Socialist majority. In mid-June, Italy organized a multilateral donor conference, including representatives of both interested states and international organizations, for the rebuilding of Albania.

²⁷⁶ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 214). Greco (2001) suggests, however, that Italian approval occurred only “only after a harsh political debate that almost brought [Prodi’s government] down.”

²⁷⁷ Pettifer and Vickers (2007, 70-71) discuss this sequence of events as occurring in March. All other sources, including all available news reports and Vaughan-Whitehead (1999), concur that the events occurred in April. The March timeline seems unrealistic as on March 15 the OSCE declared itself an inappropriate venue for troop deployment decisions and the EU ministers had not yet met at Apeldoorn to discuss the possibility of a deployment.

Evaluating Hypotheses About State Behavior

This section presents evidence about two episodes in the Albanian crisis: the outflow of refugees in early March, and European intervention efforts in early and mid-March. While much of the evidence is anecdotal and from secondary sources, it nevertheless allows us to provide at least a preliminary test of the hypotheses. The final subsection evaluates the evidence against the hypotheses.

Intervention

At the onset of the crisis, the Europeans (and for that matter the Americans as well) exhibited an all-around aversion to intervention in the region, with one commentator describing it as a kind of “Balkan fatigue”²⁷⁸ following so close on the conclusion of the Bosnian conflict. As one source noted, “No one is at all keen on wading into such a confused situation,” not even the states that favored an intervention.²⁷⁹ In some part conditions on the ground influenced this reluctance. As Italy argued, intervening while Berisha still held power would be the equivalent of “pick[ing] sides inside Albania,” and this view “was widely shared inside the EU.”²⁸⁰

Developments in the European Union at the time suggest that the EU’s CFSP would have been the logical center for any reaction, and numerous evaluations of the press and public agree with this as well. Despite several attempts, though, the EU was unable to agree on a response. The primary focus of this section, then, is to explore why

²⁷⁸ (Bohlen 1997).

²⁷⁹ (EU and NATO rule out Albania intervention 1997). As Pettifer and Vickers note, “there was very little sense of any agreement [among European states] on how to deal with [the crisis]. In a way this was not surprising, as the rebellion was turning into an armed uprising of the people against a repressive government along lines that had not been seen in Europe since the nineteenth century” (2007: 33).

²⁸⁰ (Barber 1997).

major European states preferred *not* to use the European Union for this task, and how they then established preferences for other strategies to achieve their preferred outcomes.

Venue Preference

The consensus-capacity framework predicts that state preferences over potential venues should be related to their position in the preference distribution in each venue, and to the venue's potential ability to succeed with the proposed or desired action. In the case of the Albanian crisis, determining the states' positions in the preference distributions is complicated: The parties were slow to reach consensus on a venue because they disagreed on the nature of the crisis itself.²⁸¹ Was this a humanitarian situation, or a conflict prevention situation? An effort to prevent a failed state, or to rebuild a collapsed economy? An effort to prevent the resurgence of conflict in the recently-pacified Bosnia, or to prevent it from spreading to neighboring Kosovo? States formed their venue preferences at least in part on the assumptions of different underlying issue areas. Since preference distributions are issue-specific, the choice of underlying issue has implications for how states conceptualized the role and function of any intervention and thus for the creation of consensus on the issue. It also influenced the set of institutions states considered, since not all institutions had jurisdiction on all issues.

Pro-Intervention States

Decision-makers in Italy and Greece generally perceived the issue as one of threats to their own internal stability. For them, continued economic crisis in Albania would lead to an influx of poor migrants, many of whom would probably be armed with

²⁸¹ Greco (2001) in particular emphasizes this as a major obstacle to achieving any form of response.

looted weapons, and possibly to the entry of individuals connected with organized crime. Neither of these situations was particularly attractive.

From there, though, their treatment of the situation diverged. Greek officials originally preferred that NATO address the situation, and spoke openly of this possibility as early as March 10 though NATO's secretary general had publicly ruled out such an intervention the week before. At a special meeting of NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) convened for discussing the Albania crisis, however, the NAC was only able to agree to a statement calling for a Government of National Reconciliation as soon as possible; they made no reference to an intervention.²⁸² Italy continued to call for NATO intervention even as late as March 13,²⁸³ even though the NAC again said in its March 13 statement that it supported the actions of all other institutions and member states in the situation, and that it urged them to continue and do more.²⁸⁴

NATO, however, does not appear to have been Italian policymakers' first preference. Early comments by Prime Minister Romano Prodi and others suggest that Italian diplomatic effort was first directed at the EU. On March 6, however, Foreign Minister Dini noted disagreement among EU members about the urgency of the crisis, saying "We cannot hide the fact that in the union [sic] are Nordic countries that look on what is happening in the Balkans with a certain detachment."²⁸⁵ When a joint Greco-Italian initiative in the EU in early March apparently failed to reach fruition,²⁸⁶ the

²⁸² (NATO voices concern over Albanian crisis 1997); (North Atlantic Treaty Organization. North Atlantic Council. 1997).

²⁸³ (Italy calls for NATO role in Albanian crisis 1997).

²⁸⁴ (North Atlantic Treaty Organization. North Atlantic Council. 1997).

²⁸⁵ Quoted in (Bohlen 1997).

²⁸⁶ (Premier favours political solution to crisis 1997). The failure of this initiative and of other early Italian bilateral efforts also led Greece to become openly critical of Italy's management of the crisis, thus creating another breach in the EU's efforts to present a unified face to the world. Perlmutter (1998) argues that Italy's efforts to take the lead in this crisis were an effort to demonstrate its ability to perform the kind of

Italians refocused on NATO. NATO was the Italians' second choice, but when the NAC again declined to intervene on the 13th, Italian policy once again made a tactical shift. Prime Minister Prodi began backing off his previous insistence on a military intervention and calling for OSCE involvement instead.²⁸⁷

The Naysayers

Germany's opposition to intervention was strongly contingent on the proposed venue; in particular, its preferences for the EU as a venue appear to be centered squarely on capacity concerns. Kinkel's main argument about why the OSCE was appropriate was because this body – unlike the other two organizations under serious consideration at the time, the EU and the WEU – included both the United States and Russia.²⁸⁸ Kinkel and other German policymakers feared that the situation could turn into Bosnia, where the EU attempted to act alone with an unclear mission, poor military planning, and inadequate coordination. The resulting policy disaster was a serious blow to the confidence and prestige of the fledgling CFSP.²⁸⁹ German aversion to sending troops also echoed this Bosnia argument, with Kohl stating “If we send soldiers, what are we going to give them for a mission?”²⁹⁰ Outside of this, available evidence suggests that Germany primarily saw the situation as an issue of refugee or border control; I return to this point below.²⁹¹

In summary, German preferences for using the OSCE centered on two capacity-based elements. First, the OSCE had a higher capacity for action than the EU because it

foreign policy leadership appropriate to its self-perceived role as a regional power. Despite this, however, Greek diplomats – including particularly the foreign minister himself – were able to capitalize on the situation and substantially enhance their influence inside the new Albania political structure. (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 39).

²⁸⁷ (Italy fears refugee influx as two of Berisha's children arrive in Bari 1997); (Pina 1997).

²⁸⁸ (Berger 1997).

²⁸⁹ (Die EU will Albanien helfen 1997).

²⁹⁰ (Kohl dubious about military intervention in Albania 1997).

²⁹¹ (Barber 1997). The possibility of refugee movement into Kosovo, and particularly the possibility of the movement of weapons, raised strong fears for Germany that the crisis could spread there as well.

could draw on the capabilities (and influence) of both the United States and Russia. Second, as German policymakers argued, the OSCE as an organization had task-specific capabilities that it had used successfully in previous similar conflicts.²⁹² This preference persisted well after the initial OSCE declaration that it was not an appropriate place for troop deployment decisions.

British policymakers perceived the situation very differently than their German counterparts. For the UK, the evidence suggests that the Major government saw the Albanian crisis as an internal problem, for which international intervention was inappropriate.²⁹³ That said, internal politics in the UK itself eventually led to a slight weakening of that resistance. John Major's Conservative Party had close ties to the Berisha's DP, but in early 1997 two scandals about the Tories and the DP broke into the British media and further weakened Major's government.²⁹⁴ In the face of domestic political challenges, and with a general election approaching, Britain's policy of unconditional support for Berisha and unconditional opposition to intervention weakened slowly. In early March, Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind threatened to block foreign aid in response to Berisha's anti-democracy moves, but the threat was widely believed to be non-credible.²⁹⁵

²⁹² See, e.g. (EU-Aussenminister erörtern Hilfsaktion für Albanien Einzelne Mitgliedstaaten bieten militärischen Schutz an 1997). Which conflicts these were is not entirely clear. To the best of my knowledge, the OSCE had not been substantially involved in administering or organizing any international peacekeeping or crisis management efforts during its "CSCE" phase (pre-1995), and the Bosnian conflict was almost exclusively an EU effort.

²⁹³ (MacKinnon 1997).

²⁹⁴ One involved Berisha's gifts to the Queen and Prime Minister on a recent state visit, which he likely had taken illegally from the Albanian State Museum, and the second involved illicit (and under Albanian law, illegal) election assistance from the Tories during Albania's openly fraudulent 1996 elections. See (Ball 1997); (Bevins 1997); (Alderman 1997).

²⁹⁵ (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 25). Indeed, no record exists of Rifkind or Major actually suspending or limiting aid in any way, though Berisha's fall may have occurred too rapidly to allow them to take action.

The ruling parties in these two intervention-resistant states, Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the UK's Tories, had been among Berisha's strongest supporters.²⁹⁶ At least part of the reason that these government parties opposed intervention, then, was probably because any intervention was almost certain to end with Berisha losing office. The aforementioned Italian preference to avoid "pick[ing] sides" within Albania was a common sentiment in the EU, meaning that no intervention to "stabilize the situation" – i.e., to restore the authority of the current government – would be approved. The German concern over refugees, however, seems to have made it willing to sanction an intervention, even if Bosnian ghosts kept it from participating itself.²⁹⁷

The In-Betweeners

Three other states are of interest here: The Netherlands, Denmark, and France, who held leadership positions in the EU, OSCE, and WEU, respectively. Briefly, the Netherlands held the EU's rotating presidency at the time. No evidence exists in available press sources that the Netherlands made any efforts to push the EU as an appropriate venue for an interventionist response, even though reports of Dutch support for intervention ranged from "moderate" to "strong."²⁹⁸ Dutch policymakers did appear to believe, however, that the EU needed to offer *some* type of reaction or response to the crisis, and they pushed for conclusions on the issue at the Apeldoorn meeting.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ (Owen 1997).

²⁹⁷ Greco disagrees, identifying the major deterrent as "skepticism about the effectiveness of any military involvement and ...the fear that foreign peacekeeping troops could become hostage to the domestic political struggle and hence contribute to exacerbate [sic] it rather than facilitate national reconciliation." (Greco 2001, sec. 3).

²⁹⁸ (MacKinnon 1997); (Ulbrich 1997).

²⁹⁹ 'Conclusions' in the EU are summaries of meeting discussions and of any policy consensuses reached during the talks.

In the OSCE, evidence does suggest that Denmark, which held the organization's chair at the time, pushed mildly for the "strike force" option that circulated there.³⁰⁰ How this proposal for a military "strike force" related to the OSCE's declaration that it was not an appropriate venue for military troop decisions is unclear, however. The Danish position on an intervention force – and quite possibly the Danish proposal for it – gained additional support from a number of other states. German leaders seemed to see it as an alternative to the EU, though the German press suggests that Kohl and Kinkel supported the proposal less for the OSCE component and more for its Danish origin.³⁰¹ Additional reports suggest that Spain and Austria also "supported the Danish position" even as early as March 15, when the OSCE passed its resolution of objection.³⁰²

Finally, France was the most active of presidency-holding states during the crisis. In addition to a number of unilateral statements,³⁰³ it made several proposals inside the EU for intervention forces. One joint proposal with Italy explicitly allowed for a non-military intervention.³⁰⁴ In its role as the presidency of the Western European Union, however, French policymakers called extraordinary meetings of that body's Council to discuss the situation. They also tasked the WEU staff with beginning intervention plans. Nothing ever came of this planning, but it was an extraordinarily active response nonetheless, even when compared to typical French foreign policy behavior in regional crises.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁰ (Berger 1997); (Ulbrich 1997). Only German sources provide discussion of this OSCE proposal prior to its enactment; their term is "Schutztruppen."

³⁰¹ See, e.g., (Inacker 1997); (Berger 1997); (Die EU will Albanien helfen 1997); (Kein militarisches Eingreifen in Albanien Die EU schickt Berater nach Tirana 1997).

³⁰² (EU divided on calls for Albania military intervention 1997).

³⁰³ See, e.g., (Albania: plea for European Force 1997); (Fox and Rhodes 1997).

³⁰⁴ (MacKinnon 1997).

³⁰⁵ Pettifer and Vickers (2007, 69) also claim that "[i]n the early weeks of the crisis the Italian and French governments had put pressure on the EU and NATO to organise a military intervention on Berisha's behalf.

In a final odd development, some evidence exists that the neutral states were among the strongest supporters of military intervention, particularly within the EU.³⁰⁶ The source of this preference is not clear, and very little confirmatory evidence is available from these states in their own national presses.³⁰⁷ Perhaps the most plausible explanation for such a preference, if indeed the reports are accurate, is that these states defined the situation in Albania as primarily a humanitarian or human rights issue. Even so, why the EU would be the best available venue for a humanitarian or human rights intervention is not particularly clear. Ascertaining this motive, however, will require policymaker interviews and/or access to documentary records of the crisis; the available secondary literature and contemporaneous news coverage is insufficient.

Unilateral and Ad Hoc Behavior

The consensus-capacity framework suggests that states with greater capabilities are more likely to participate in ad hoc cooperation or unilateral activity. Here I assess the available evidence about states' rationales for unilateral or extra-institutional activity during the crisis.

Unilateral Activity

Unilateral intervention activity was mostly diplomatic. Both the Italians and the Greeks sent their foreign ministers to Tirana to meet with Berisha, and both capitals were

While French rapprochement with NATO in 1997 slightly increases the plausibility of a French preference for a NATO response, the claim is suspect for two reasons. First, Pettifer and Vickers also state (2007, 46) that the majority of French policymaker ("Balkanist") opinion at the time was anti-Berisha. Second, such an intervention would be a blatant instance of 'picking sides' in the crisis, and a substantial amount of additional evidence supports the claim that Italy in particular was reluctant to pick sides.

³⁰⁶ (Ulbrich 1997).

³⁰⁷ The Irish press, for example, is silent on the government's preferences for response. Neither the *Irish Times* nor the *Irish Independent* contain any mention of national preferences on the issue during March or April 1997. The closest is an op-ed in the *Independent* by the minister of state for European affairs, that the crisis itself posed a threat to European security more broadly. (Mitchell 1997).

in regular telephone contact with Berisha and Fino.³⁰⁸ Despite the close ties that both of these states had to Albania – Italy at one point had controlled it as a colony and was its current largest source of foreign investment, and Greece was its largest source of migrant employment and remittances – neither were particularly effective either as bilateral negotiators or as mediators.

Ad Hoc Cooperation

Ad hoc cooperation occurred on several levels during the crisis; here I focus on the decision of states to participate in the Multinational Protection Force ('Operation Alba'). While technically this intervention was organized by the OSCE, sources agree that at a practical level it was an Italian-led operation.³⁰⁹ The lack of any permanent military structures in the OSCE meant, in any case, that the military coordination occurred among states that were not members of a standing group, entirely outside of formal OSCE-supported channels.

None of the parties had a stated preference for using a 'coalition of the willing' model to respond to the Albanian crisis. It appears to be, instead, the fallback option after the other institutional choices were exhausted.³¹⁰ In February 1998, the Balkan Director of the Italian Foreign Ministry stated that "[w]e, Italy, fell back on it because of the lack of response from the established institutions that should have had primary responsibility, NATO, EU, UN, WEU, OSCE, you name it."³¹¹ The ordering of the institutions is

³⁰⁸ See, e.g., (EU presidency banks on political-only solution for Albania 1997), (Premier asks Albanian government to protect Greek minority 1997), (Prime minister, Italian foreign minister discuss situation, aid 1997), (Greek foreign secretary of state to visit strife-torn Albania 1997), (Greek mission aims to calm Albania crisis 1997). Italian prime minister Romano Prodi also made several trips, though these were mostly towards the end of the crisis, to help prepare politically for the Operation Alba troops. (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 213).

³⁰⁹ (Greco 2001); (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 67, esp fn 6).

³¹⁰ (Greco 2001).

³¹¹ Quoted in (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 69).

somewhat telling – even the UN and the largely inactive WEU come before the institution that eventually organized the intervention.³¹² Italy desired an intervention enough to bear the brunt of the costs, but the preference for a coalition over unilateral action suggests that it believed it lacked sufficient capacity to intervene effectively.³¹³

The countries that chose to participate in the coalition are an odd group. Table 5-1 showed the participating states and their troop contributions. Italy was the overwhelming provider, with only French contributions signaling anything near the same level of commitment. Danish commitment appears token – a responsibility of (as well as a link to) the OSCE’s presidency. No available sources shed light on the Austrian or Belgian decisions to participate; neither have any known direct interest in Albanian affairs, nor do sources suggest that either saw the intervention as primarily humanitarian.

The cases of Slovenia, Romania, and Poland are particularly interesting. All three participated in the eventual ad hoc group. Romania repeatedly expressed its willingness to participate in an intervention even before it had been agreed,³¹⁴ and both it and Poland actually created crisis teams at their foreign ministries.³¹⁵ The most plausible explanation for this behavior centers on another international organization, NATO. NATO was scheduled to extend membership invitations to a select group of countries at its summit in July 1997, and all three of these countries (along with Hungary and the Czech Republic) were widely seen as top candidates for invitations.³¹⁶ None of these states had immediate

³¹² Indeed, the speaker does not seem to acknowledge that the OSCE responded at all or was even involved in coordinating the response.

³¹³ The missing capacity may have been as much political as military; no sources suggest that Italian military forces themselves were inadequate.

³¹⁴ (Romania Ready to Join Satabilization [sic] Forces for Albania 1997).

³¹⁵ (Albania anti-crisis team set up in foreign ministry 1997); (Embassy begins evacuating Romanian citizens from Albanian capital - Romanian Radio 1997).

³¹⁶ In this context, the lack of any reported responses from Hungary is somewhat surprising. No evidence exists in the English or French language media that the Hungarian foreign ministry even issued statements.

interests in Albania, but demonstrating their ability to interoperate with NATO forces and their willingness to participate fully in regional security activity would likely have augmented their cases for membership.

Refugees

The issue of intervention is primarily concerned with issues of international security. To vary the issue dimension, I examine the issue of refugees and asylum-seekers during the crisis. This issue involves more aspects of humanitarian concerns. It also, however, engages some elements of internal (domestic) security for the receiving states; the easy availability of weapons and the strength of the Albanian Mafia in the heaviest refugee-sending regions were serious concerns.³¹⁷ As above, I first review preferences over venue among major actors, and then address unilateral and ad hoc activity.³¹⁸

Venue Preference

In 1997, no European institution had explicit jurisdiction over refugee and asylum policy.³¹⁹ Among European institutions, the organization with perhaps the best claim to refugee concerns would be the OSCE, through the ‘human dimension’ of the Helsinki Final Act. Even there, though, no explicit claim to jurisdiction on refugee issues

The Czech foreign ministry made several statements and expressed willingness to consider a military intervention. (Military Intervention in Albania Pointless Just Now - Zieleniec 1997).

³¹⁷ Following the fall of Albanian army arms depots at the end of February, the going rate on the streets for Kalashnikov rifles fell to as little as \$4 (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 46). An open-air arms market (frequented by representatives of the Kosovo Liberation Army) developed on the docks of Vlora (Pettifer and Vickers 2007, 37). Both elements made access to weapons very easy, even for the poorest Albanians.

³¹⁸ I separate the refugee issue from the provision of humanitarian aid for the southern part of Albania. Many commentators conflate the two (e.g., Pettifer and Vickers 2007:37), since the desperate conditions in the south often increased the pressure to flee, but the international responses were quite distinct.

³¹⁹ At this time, the 1992 Treaty on European Union governed EU jurisdiction; the “Justice and Home Affairs” pillar (Pillar III) primarily addressed issues of police and judicial cooperation. The Union later gains some jurisdiction over refugee and asylum policy in the Treaty of Nice (European Union 1999, in effect 2002).

emerged.³²⁰ This absence of jurisdiction helps to explain the lack of any clear venue preference among key actors during the Albanian crisis. The only discussions of Albanian refugees in European fora seemed to be in two contexts: repeated German insistence that it would not take any, and later requests from Italy for assistance in providing for them.

Unilateral and Ad Hoc Behavior

Most of the states bordering Albania took unilateral actions to control potential refugee flows. Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, and Italy mobilized their militaries to seal their borders against potential immigrants.³²¹ Unilateral military action is typically highly resource-intensive. In this case Macedonia and Greece both lacked the resources to block their own borders effectively; press sources spoke openly of gaps in border coverage or of insufficient amounts of troops or equipment to block small passes through the mountains. For these two states, even unilateral action that was not entirely successful was better than either the status quo (do nothing) alternative, in which substantial numbers of refugees would probably arrive. Greece, however, took the additional (and somewhat unusual) step of increasing its number of legal entrance visas during the crisis.³²² This had the advantage of both easing the refugee pressure at the border while also allowing it better control over which individuals entered the country.

Italian interdiction efforts were substantially more robust. The Italian coast guard and navy patrolled the Adriatic and intercepted a large number of vessels. Intercepting the vessels while they were still at sea helped to ensure that the refugees came ashore

³²⁰ At the broader international level, the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross had some minimal authority in the area, but neither were invoked during the Albanian crisis.

³²¹ (Fox 1997).

³²² (Greek mission in Albania to ease crisis by granting more visas - ATA News Agency 1997).

under the control of Italian authorities.³²³ Still, the situation overwhelmed Italian authorities. The arrival of nearly 11,000 refugees in six days,³²⁴ with around 14,000 total arriving since the fall of the pyramids in January,³²⁵ prompted Italy to declare a state of emergency and call for international assistance in providing for them.

The German reaction to the entire Albanian crisis focused almost exclusively on the issue of refugees. In the absence of a land border – or even a sea one – with Albania, and with the suspension of commercial flights out of Tirana, the source of German policymakers' fears is unclear. No obvious rationale exists for why Germany would be the preferred destination for Albanian refugees who left the immediate geographical area, or for why Albanian refugees would be resettled in Germany. The only piece of information cited in the media to help explain this situation is that Germany had recently absorbed some 320,000 Bosnian refugees, substantially more than any other European state, and it was not pleased about this situation. At the EU meeting in Apeldoorn, Kinkel estimated that the Albanian crisis would result in some 120,000 additional refugees. On March 16, he bluntly told the media, "With the current situation we can't take any mentionable number of refugees. Our boat is full."³²⁶ German fears about Albania following the path of Bosnia probably also included issues of refugee resettlement as well as EU military incompetence.

³²³ It also helped to reduce the number of refugee deaths on the unseaworthy ships the Albanians used to make the crossing. As the number of ships remaining in Albania shrank, this became an increasingly important issue. (Peacemaker backs off to avert civil war 1997).

³²⁴ (Perlmutter 1998, 203).

³²⁵ (Vaughan-Whitehead 1999, 214).

³²⁶ (Foreign Minister Says Germany Can't Take Any More Refugees 1997). The source does not state clearly whether these 120,000 included all Albanian refugees to all states, or whether this entire number was expected to flee to Germany.

Analysis

This section evaluates the evidence for the hypotheses established above about consensus and capacity as state-level concerns. I begin with the hypotheses about activity outside of established institutions and then consider hypotheses about venue preference.

Extra-Institutional Activity

The refugee case results in no ad hoc activity, so I proceed directly to hypotheses about unilateral action. For the most part, behavior in this case supports Hypothesis 2a and 2b about the relationship of capacity to unilateral action. Greece, Macedonia, and Italy were preference outliers in the sense that they preferred to act promptly on the issue to avoid any direct effect on themselves. Most other states had no borders with Albania and few interests there, and so they were much closer to indifferent on this issue.

Italy is likely a moderate-to-high-capacity state in this context, and Greece probably has moderate capacity, and so their behavior relates to Hypothesis 2a.³²⁷ This hypothesis expected that high and moderate capacity states would be willing to act alone and to take high-intensity actions like military mobilization, and that states with more moderate levels of capacity would do so but express concerns about their own capacity to do so effectively. As the evidence above showed, Italian sources clearly expressed both willingness to act unilaterally and constraints on their ability to do so. While no reports exist of Greek policymakers expressing capacity concerns, media reports documented above suggest that it was an issue.

Hypothesis 2b relates to low capacity states, such as Macedonia. It expected that these states would only be able to take low-intensity actions. Macedonia provides mixed

³²⁷ These are my global assessments of capacity in components relevant to refugee control, based on my knowledge of these states' militaries and governments, and on contemporary media reports.

support for this hypothesis, but its behavior does support the consensus and capacity framework more generally. Macedonia also mobilized its military to seal its border with Albania. Few outside actors had any confidence in the Macedonian military's ability to do this effectively, and indeed media reports about its weak coverage surfaced along with Greece's. The issue of refugee control, however, was highly salient for Macedonian policymakers. Even though the likely success of border operations was fairly low, the utility of that action was weighted by the high level of salience. The net result was a willingness to take high-intensity forms of unilateral action even under conditions where the action was not likely to achieve the actor's ideal point.

The intervention case showed the opposite pattern of extra-institutional activity: very little unilateral activity (Hypotheses 2a and 2b), and substantial amounts of ad hoc coordination (Hypotheses 1a and 1b). In the intervention case, we see some support for Hypothesis 1a, which suggested that participants in ad hoc cooperation would be part of a preference cluster, and moderate support for Hypothesis 1b about the expected capacity of acting states.

The bulk of the states who participated in the Multinational Protection Force (MNF) were moderate to high capacity states. France is clearly high-capacity, and Italy and Spain are moderate-to-high capacity. These three states account for close to three-quarters of the MNF troop commitment. Turkey and Greece probably classify as moderate capacity; Portugal, Belgium, and Denmark have small but well-equipped and highly trained militaries, which probably puts them in the moderate category as well. All

four of these moderate capacity states are highly integrated into NATO's interoperable command structure, which may reduce or discount any disparities in capacity.³²⁸

One unusual case of a state in the outcome preference cluster who did not participate in the ad hoc group deserves some discussion. The intensity of Germany's preferences not to see Albania collapse into a refugee-generating civil war might have led us to expect its participation in the intervention force, particularly since Germany would under most circumstances be a high-(or high-to-moderate) capacity actor. Its absence from the coalition is somewhat difficult to explain on the basis of available sources. Media sources, particularly in the German press, carry repeated statements by policymakers that they 'did not want this to turn into Bosnia,' but the meaning of this comparison is not clear.³²⁹ It may have referred to the refugee costs imposed on Germany, to the lack of confidence and credibility in the CFSP that the crisis caused, to German psychic pain that resulted from inability to stop the genocides in the former Yugoslavia, or something else entirely. Whatever this analogy meant to Kohl and Kinkel, it was sufficiently negative to block German involvement in the intervention.

Finally, some participation in the ad hoc intervention group appears to have come from states outside (or only marginally in) the preference cluster and seems unrelated to issues of consensus or capacity for the intervention itself. Instead, the actions of Slovenia, Poland, and Romania – all of whom are moderate-to-low capacity actors –reflect some type of cross-institutional, inter-temporal signaling. Their actions appear to be motivated by some discounted hope of future benefits in another institution rather than by benefits

³²⁸ Austria, however, is clearly a moderate-to-low capacity state. As I am not able to locate justifications for its behavior in the available sources, I relegate explanations for its participation to later work.

³²⁹ An informal poll of several dozen Germans provided roughly equal levels of support for each of these three arguments.

from Operation Alba itself. By participating in the Albanian intervention, they (probably) hoped to shift NATO members' beliefs about their willingness and ability to participate in regional security efforts. These altered beliefs would in turn influence the establishment of consensus in NATO about their readiness for membership.

The consensus-capacity framework does not anticipate or theorize about cross-event – and so implicitly inter-temporal – logrolling or signaling.³³⁰ It treats each event that emerges as reasonably separable from other events. One of the ways in which the consensus-capacity framework improves on earlier understandings of state foreign policy behavior is that it explicitly relates the full range of possible foreign policy outcomes on a particular event or issue to one another. This helps to close the gap between policymaker behavior and scholarly treatments of the foreign policy or cooperation decision making process. This case study draws attention to the need to expand the framework to accommodate the shadow of the future. States expect future relationships with each other in these various contexts. Concessions with implicit future reciprocation are a normal part of diplomatic life; future studies of foreign policy cooperation in particular should address this fact.

Venue Preference

Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5 speak to different factors that influence states' decisions as they from preferences over existing institutional fora. Hypothesis 3 suggests that preference-outlying states should pursue their preferred policies in institutions where their votes are pivotal. In the case of intervention in Albania, German resistance to action through the EU appears to have been critical in causing states to consider seriously a

³³⁰ Within each event or institution, however, the use of side payments to influence consensus would not conflict with the framework's logic.

different venue. The existence of both a formal unanimity decision rule and an explicit national veto in CFSP meant that German threats to block cooperation were credible.

The UK's behavior provides somewhat contradictory evidence. The Major government was adamantly against intervention. It had several opportunities to block an intervention, notably the EU, NATO, and the UN Security Council.³³¹ If it were that strongly against intervention, why did it not use the veto available to it in the Security Council? The OSCE decision rules are largely consensus-based, meaning that so long as no state openly objects, a decision passes. Objection in this forum, too, would have reached the UK's ideal point, yet it declined to do so. In short, the UK could have obtained its ideal outcome through unilateral action – a veto – in any of the institutions that considered the matter. Instead, it allowed the intervention decision to pass from NATO and the EU, where its veto power was firmly entrenched, to the OSCE, where veto power is weaker. The most likely explanation for this behavior is that Berisha's hold on office had weakened to the point where no British unilateral action could obtain the ideal outcome of keeping him in office. In that context, a veto would be obstructionist and unproductive, if not even counter-productive, if the crisis developed further.

Hypothesis 4 argued that states will prefer the institution where the expected cooperative outcome deviates the least from their own ideal point. We see some evidence for this in Germany's behavior. German policymakers wanted an outcome where *someone* intervened but they themselves were not obligated to act. An intervention organized through the EU would not have had these qualities. Germany would have faced

³³¹ The UK is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and as such it has the ability to veto any Council decision.

strong pressure to participate in any CFSP-based intervention, and the EU's budgeting rules would have assessed all member states to pay for the intervention.

Italian behavior, on the other hand, does not fully support this hypothesis. Italian preferences for which institution should intervene shifted several times over the course of the crisis. For Hypothesis 4 to be supported in this instance, Italy would have had to be very uncertain (or else poorly informed) about its partners' preferences. It would have had to mis-predict probable outcomes in not one but probably three institutions (NATO, EU, WEU), so that as states revealed more information about their own preferences, it could update its perceptions enough that the preferred strategy changed.

Shifting Italian venue preferences and willingness to act unilaterally do, however, cast doubt on the existence of an underlying preference for cooperation among European states.³³² While the foreign ministry official quoted above identified a number of European institutions that Italy would have preferred to see act, Italian officials did not hesitate to threaten unilateral action during the weeks of frantic but ultimately unsuccessful diplomacy preceding the intervention. Indeed, Italy's decision to mount naval patrols in Albanian territorial waters was an instance of unilateral action during this period that sent a strong signal to other states of its willingness to act in Albania. For Italy, cooperation in an institution seems to have been a preferred strategy rather than an end in itself. The most preferred outcome was an intervention, but with whom and under what flag was an open question.³³³

Mixed support for these hypotheses probably results, at least in part, from the absence of primary source material. The content of negotiations inside international

³³² For this claim, see (M. E. Smith 2004); (Glarbo 1999).

³³³ In short, the question about Italy's behavior reduces to why it did not anticipate the difficulties in NATO and the EU, and go straight to the OSCE instead.

organizations rarely becomes public. Without access to policymakers' privileged knowledge, establishing firm support for some of the hypotheses is quite difficult. Future research should attempt to draw on these sources.

Finally, in the refugee policy issue, we find evidence of a different factor operating in states' preference formation processes, jurisdiction. At the time of the crisis, no European organization had formal jurisdiction over refugee and asylum policy. We observe no efforts by states to coordinate their policy on this issue: The preferred venue was *no* institution. While drawing inferences from silence in the historical record is difficult, the very strong results of the statistical analysis in Chapter 4 suggest that such an inference would be appropriate in this case (see, e.g., Table 4-6). An institution's jurisdiction appears strongly related to states' decisions to use it.

Conclusion

This chapter used the case of Albania's collapse in 1997 to examine the foreign policy behavior of individual states. It drew hypotheses from the consensus-capacity framework about how states form preferences over the set of available venues, and about who should participate in extra-institutional foreign policy activity. It examined two issues within the case, refugee policy and the question of intervention, to multiply the observations and provide variation on the independent variable of issue area.

Support for the capacity hypotheses is fairly strong. States of moderate capacity did express concerns about the ability of various coalitions to achieve specified cooperative goals, and they also expressed concern about their own inability to carry out high-intensity unilateral actions satisfactorily. Lower-capacity states, however, did not

publicly make these kinds statements on their own behalf, though press accounts include statements to that effect. Lack of evidence for this may be as much an issue of media-source-induced selection bias as it is an issue of non-behavior by the weak states. Contrary to expectations, lower capacity states were willing to take higher-intensity actions with even a low probability of success, provided that the issue's salience was high enough to compensate for the low success rate.

Somewhat less support exists for some of the consensus-based arguments, however. At least in part, this seems to come from a reluctance on the parts of the British or Germans to exercise a public veto in the EU or, in the case of the UK, the UN Security Council. Other states, though, did act strategically in the pursuit of their most preferred outcomes. France, for example, tried to manipulate the issue of intervention into the jurisdiction of a smaller organization in which it currently held the chair. Using the power of the chair could have helped France to obtain its ideal form of intervention.

Evidence from these cases suggests that being a member of a preference outlier cluster is neither necessary nor sufficient for predicting participation in high-intensity extra-institutional cooperation. German non-participation shows that cluster membership is insufficient, and the participation of NATO candidates Poland, Slovenia, and Romania shows that it is not necessary either.

This chapter has explored the underlying politics of the institutional outcomes examined in Chapters 3 and 4. The hypothesized mechanisms of the consensus-capacity framework generally appear to operate as expected in the case of the 1997 Albanian intervention. In the absence of primary sources, though, and in particular without interviews with involved policymakers, showing direct causal connections is virtually

impossible. Future work should aim to incorporate this type of data into the existing case, and to test the model in other cases.