



Do Bosnians want democracy?

(Letter to the Editor)

In their rejoinder, Gerald Knaus and Felix Martin reiterate their conviction that the high representative's sweeping executive powers now serve only to erode the status of Bosnian institutions and to let local elites evade democratic responsibility. They contend Bosnian society is "democracy-ready" and that the international community should leave well enough alone.

Knaus and Martin remain silent on how Bosnians (other than those shifty elites) see the issue. *Ownership Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, a set of essays and interviews published in 2001 and edited by Christophe Solioz and Svebor Dizdarevic,¹ sheds more light on the debate within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the authors in the volume share Knaus and Martin's commitment to the ideals of accountability and stakeholding. But the authors also engage in the hard practicalities of sequencing and process that Knaus and Martin's idealistic view of Bosnia's electorate sweeps aside. What emerges from these essays and interviews is a recognition that swift disengagement from trouble-spots in transition--Bosnia now, Iraq next year?--primarily serves the interests of foreign politicians seeking a low-cost exit strategy.

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¹ This volume, first published in Sarajevo, 2001, is now available in an augmented edition as *Ownership Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Contributions on the International Dimensions of Democratization in the Balkans*, Baden-Baden, Nomos, ed. by Christophe Solioz & Svebor Dizdarevic, 143 p.

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