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Despite being a short paper the authors have provided a comprehensive survey of the problems of agreeing a long term status for Kosovo. The paper considers all the forms of status, independence, division and fragmentation of Kosovo, against each of which is spelled out the associated difficulties. The paper brings out the entrenched positions of both the Serbs and Pristina and acknowledges the likely reactions of both Montenegro and Albania where one or other will be affected. In particular it notes the difficulty of obtaining UN Security Council agreement for independence asthis would create an unwanted precedent for Russia and China in terms of Chechnya and Tibet respectively. Three possible and realistic solutions are suggested but none of them is argued sufficiently robustly to be convincing.

The authors infer criticism of the Alliance's idealist stance over Kosovo, particularly when considering KFOR's role. The political realities mean that NATO needs to recognise the inevitable change in its role in Kosovo as the UN reduces its involvement. NATO and the EU will then only have residual responsibilities, with the EU leading. However, both Albania and Serbia believe the EU has already failed in Kosovo - a point not explored further by the paper. Meanwhile, KFOR has to retain the capability suppressing opposition to the peace process but has insufficient capability to prevent any major attacks on ethnic minority communities.
The authors conclude that whilst Kosovo is an on-going and intractable problem, nevertheless 'the political art of the possible is in the air'. The depressing aspect is that there is little hard evidence offered in the paper to justify that optimistic view.