community (approximately 5 percent of the total population), always wary of dialogue, reduced its cooperation with the government still further as the status talks failed to progress. Talks between Kosovar and Serb authorities on issues other than status also lost impetus.

Although faced with limited immediate security challenges, KFOR was shaken in January 2006 when a plane crash killed forty-six Slovak troops flying home from the mission. Through the rest of the year, KFOR ran a series of military exercises aimed at demonstrating its ability to bring NATO reserves into the province on short notice should the situation deteriorate, and to sustain high-intensity operations in two parts of the province simultaneously. These were intended to dispel the poor impression the force made in the March 2004 riots, after which its structure was reformed to emphasize flexibility.

Meanwhile, the UN, EU, and OSCE prepared for a transition from UNMIK should the status talks conclude successfully. An informal steering group, including representatives of the three organizations, and Martti Ahtisaari’s negotiating team held a series of meetings through the year under the chairmanship of UNMIK’s Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). While the OSCE indicated its interest in maintaining a long-term role on governance issues, it was accepted that the EU should take over justice and policing responsibilities from the UN under any future settlement. In April 2006 the European Council mandated a planning team to be based in Kosovo. Deployed in June, this consisted of twenty-four staff, including five police and four justice experts, authorized to operate until the end of the year. By September 2006, EU member states were contributing 608 of UNMIK’s 1,907 police, and it was assumed that any post-status international police presence would be below current levels.

The strategic direction for the international

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**Box 4.11.1 Macedonia**

While planning to reorient its roles in Kosovo and Bosnia, the European Union also reshaped its presence in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in 2006. December 2005 saw the replacement of a two-year police mission, the EU Police Mission Proxima (EUPOL Proxima), with a smaller mission, the EU Police Advisory Team (EUPAT), having a six-month mandate. Police reform was a significant element of the 2001 Ohrid Agreement, which averted civil war between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians. The agreement envisaged decentralization of authority to the local level on issues including policing. EUPOL Proxima was required to balance this political priority with helping the domestic police develop a professional culture and tackle cross-border crime. EUPAT was mandated to support these reforms, emphasizing police relations with the judiciary, and internal control mechanisms.

EUPAT was scheduled to be replaced by a European Commission monitoring team in June 2006. Its operations coincided with the run-up to national elections on 5 July, which were accompanied by low-level but frequent violence in the second quarter of the year. Nonetheless, EUPAT judged that the domestic police were advancing in initiating investigations, working with public prosecutors on organized crime, and coordinating border control. Less progress was made on the decentralization issue, due to both delays in necessary legislation and the resistance of some senior police officers. On concluding its operations in June, EUPAT drafted a series of recommendations for further improvements. While the European Commission duly took over monitoring duties, the July elections failed to produce a majority government, and political attention was temporarily focused on coalition building. In September, the parliament finally passed a police reform law, which had been drafted by the previous government and supported by the EU.

EUPAT thus contributed to real, if slow, progress on implementing the Ohrid Agreement, but events in FYROM may be affected by disputes over Kosovo’s status. The current government excludes former Albanian guerrillas who were backed by Kosovar radicals during the 2001 conflict. While FYROM’s leaders remain committed to moving toward EU and NATO membership, renewed violence in Kosovo could unsettle their plans.