

Joint statement on Ukraine's application against Russia at the International Court of Justice

20.05.2022 - Press release 

Statement on behalf of Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, European Union:

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We, the undersigned, welcome Ukraine's application against Russia before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which seeks to establish that Russia has no lawful basis to take military action in Ukraine on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations of genocide.

In these proceedings, the ICJ issued a significant ruling on March 16, 2022, which orders Russia to immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine. We welcome the Court's ruling and strongly urge Russia to comply with this legally binding order.

Reaffirming our commitment to accountability and the rules-based international order, we hereby express our joint intention to explore all options to support Ukraine in its efforts before the ICJ and to consider a possible intervention in these proceedings.

We strongly believe that this is a matter that is rightfully brought to the ICJ, so that it can provide judgement on Russia's allegations of genocide as basis for its unprovoked and brutal invasion of Ukraine. As the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the ICJ is a pillar of the rules-based international order and has a vital role to play in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We call upon the international community to explore all options to support Ukraine in its proceedings before the ICJ.



Statement | 13 July 2022 | Brussels

Joint statement on supporting Ukraine in its proceeding at the International Court of Justice

Statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and the European Union:

We reiterate our support for Ukraine's Application instituting proceedings against the Russian Federation before the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which seeks to establish that Russia has no lawful basis to take military action in Ukraine on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations of genocide.

We reiterate the importance of these proceedings and urge, again, Russia to immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine, as ordered by the Court in its Order on Provisional Measures of 16 March 2022.

As the Court has repeatedly stated, its orders on provisional

measures are legally binding on the Parties to the dispute. Therefore, failure to comply with the Court's 16 March 2022 Order constitutes a further breach, by Russia, of its international obligations.

We take note of the public statement of 1st July 2022, according to which Ukraine announced that it had submitted its Memorial to the Court.

We welcome once again Ukraine's efforts to ensure that international law is respected and that the Court can fulfill its fundamental function of promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The Genocide Convention embodies the solemn pledge to prevent the crime of genocide and hold those responsible to account. As the International Court of Justice itself stated in its advisory opinion of 28 May 1951 on reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the object of the Convention “on the one hand is to safeguard the very existence of certain human groups and on the other to confirm and endorse the most elementary principles of morality”.

It is in the interest of all States Parties to the Genocide Convention, and more broadly of the international community as a whole, that the Convention not be misused or abused. That is why the signatories of the present declaration which are Parties to the Genocide Convention intend to intervene in these proceedings.

In light of the serious questions raised in this case, and in view of the far-reaching consequences of the judgment that the Court will render, it is important that the States Parties to this Convention be able to share with the International Court of Justice their interpretation of some of its essential provisions.

In closing, we reiterate that Russia must be held accountable for its actions. In this regard, we consider that Russia's violations of international law engage its international responsibility, and that the losses and damage suffered by Ukraine as a result of Russia's violations of international law require full and urgent reparation by Russia, in accordance

We once again call upon the international community to explore all options to support Ukraine in its proceedings before the ICJ.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Romania Has Decided to Intervene in favour of Ukraine at the International Court of Justice in Proceedings against the Russian Federation

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In continuation of the measures taken in support of Ukraine as a result of the illegal war of aggression unleashed by the Russian Federation against this state, the Romanian authorities approved, at the highest level, that Romania will formulate a request for intervention in the proceedings initiated by Ukraine against the Russian Federation at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 26 February 2022, regarding a dispute on the interpretation, application and fulfilment of the obligations set out in the *1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*.

The Romanian démarche to intervene in this process comes at the express request of the Ukrainian side, which was transmitted by Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba to his Romanian counterpart Bogdan Aurescu during the Ukrainian Minister's visit to Bucharest on April 22, 2022 (<https://www.mae.ro/node/58483>).

In the context of these proceedings, Romania will coordinate with other *like minded* states that have taken a similar decision and will cooperate closely with Ukraine's representatives involved in the proceedings at the ICJ.

The decision of the Romanian authorities was communicated by Minister of Foreign Affairs Bogdan Aurescu to his European colleagues and Ukrainian counterpart during the European Affairs Council meeting held in Brussels on 16 May 2022 (<https://www.mae.ro/node/58670>), as an expression of the constant and principled support of the Romanian authorities for the Ukrainian cause.

Romania's decision reflects, once again, our country's constant position in favour of the use of international law instruments and institutions in support of maintaining and restoring international peace and security, as well as its unconditional trust in the fundamental role of the ICJ as a promoter of international justice.

Additional information

On February 26, 2022, Ukraine lodged a request to initiate proceedings against the Russian Federation at the ICJ concerning a dispute over the interpretation, application and fulfilment of obligations under the *1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*.

Ukraine claimed that the Russian Federation falsely invoked acts of genocide in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in order to justify the recognition of the so-called Donetsk P.R. and Luhansk P.R. and to conduct a special military operation against Ukraine. On the basis of these false accusations, the Russian Federation is currently engaged in a process of military invasion of Ukraine, resulting in serious and widespread violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

In an Order dated March 16, 2022, the Court indicated interim/conservative measures, whereby it imposed an obligation on the Russian Federation to immediately suspend military operations commenced on 24 February 2022 on the territory of Ukraine and to ensure that military or irregular units which the Russian Federation would direct or support, as well as any organisations or persons subject to its control or direction, do not take any steps to continue military operations. The Order also provides that both parties shall refrain from any action that might aggravate or extend the dispute before the Court or make it more difficult to be resolved.

In an Order dated March 23, 2022, the ICJ indicated September 23, 2022 as the deadline for the submission of the Memorial of Ukraine and March 23, 2023 as the deadline for the submission of the Counter-Memorial of the Russian Federation.

Under the rules laid down in the Statute of the International Court of Justice, if a case appears to involve the interpretation of a multilateral convention to which States, other than those involved in the dispute are parties, the Registrar must notify those States, and any notified State has the right to intervene in the proceedings.

Romania (as well as the other States Parties to the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*) has been notified by the ICJ Registry that the proceedings initiated by Ukraine appear to raise issues of

interpretation of this Convention, and that those States Parties may avail themselves of the possibility to intervene in the case.

The statement of intervention, which may be made before the date scheduled for the opening of oral proceedings in the dispute in question, involves certain additional procedures on the part of the intervening State.

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Ministerul Afacerilor Externe

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Prima Pagina

Consultările ministrului afacerilor externe Bogdan Aurescu cu ministrul afacerilor externe al Ucrainei, Dmytro Kuleba

Tip: Comunicat de presă

Data: 22.04.2022

Ministrul afacerilor externe Bogdan Aurescu a avut vineri, 22 aprilie 2022, consultări politice cu ministrul afacerilor externe al Ucrainei, Dmytro Kuleba, aflat în vizită în România, la invitația șefului diplomației române.

Vizita ministrului Dmytro Kuleba la București a avut loc în contextul agresiunii militare ilegale a Rusiei în Ucraina și al situației deosebit de grave de securitate și din punct de vedere umanitar provocate de aceasta.

Ministrul Bogdan Aurescu a reiterat sprijinul ferm al României pentru independența, suveranitatea și integritatea teritorială ale Ucrainei, precum și pentru efortul autorităților ucrainene de a respinge agresiunea rusă. Totodată, șeful diplomației române a transmis, și cu acest prilej, poziția fermă a României de condamnare a invaziei Rusiei în Ucraina, ce reprezintă o încălcare flagrantă a dreptului internațional.

La finalul consultărilor, ministrul Bogdan Aurescu și ministrul Dmytro Kuleba au susținut declarații comune de presă, disponibile în format video aici: <http://www.mae.ro/node/58482>.

Transmitem, mai jos, transcrierea declarațiilor de presă ale ministrului afacerilor externe Bogdan Aurescu și ale ministrului afacerilor externe al Ucrainei, Dmytro Kuleba.

Ministrul afacerilor externe Bogdan Aurescu:

Bine ați venit la Ministerul Afacerilor Externe!

Dragă domnule ministru, dragă Dmytro, bine ai venit la București! Bun venit la Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, din nou. Mă bucur că am avut ocazia să ne revedem, să discutăm în persoană în această perioadă extrem de complicată. Vreau să te felicit din inimă pentru activitatea excepțională pe care o desfășori, în beneficiul Ucrainei și al valorilor noastre comune.

Am avut astăzi un dialog foarte consistent pe care, de altfel, îl vom continua după această conferință de presă, un schimb de opinii foarte aplicat despre situația gravă de securitate și umanitară din Ucraina, generată de războiul ilegal, neprovocat, nejustificat și premeditat al Rusiei asupra Ucrainei. Am reiterat sprijinul ferm al României pentru independența, pentru suveranitatea, pentru integritatea teritorială ale Ucrainei, precum și pentru efortul eroic al autorităților ucrainene, al cetățenilor ucraineni de a respinge agresiunea rusă, care constituie o încălcare flagrantă a tuturor obligațiilor internaționale asumate de Rusia.

Nici România, nici Ucraina, nici comunitatea internațională nu pot accepta călcarea în picioare a ordinii internaționale bazate pe reguli, care ar însemna impunerea arbitrarului prin forță.

Exprim și cu această ocazie condoleanțe și regretul profund pentru pierderile de vieți omenești, pentru atât de multele vieți omenești care au fost curmate în această agresiune ilegală, pentru masivele distrugerii materiale din Ucraina, care influențează într-un mod profund negativ viața societății ucrainene. Dramele umane, ororile, suferința prin care trece poporul ucrainean ne-au lăsat, alături de întreaga lume, îndoliați. Suntem alături de poporul ucrainean. Dragă Dmytro, toți cei care au murit uciși în Ucraina sunt, de fapt, frații și surorile noastre, sunt părinții și copiii noștri. De aceea, atrocitățile și crimele de război, crimele împotriva umanității, crimele de genocid nu pot să rămână nepedepsite, iar România sprijină activ eforturile comunității internaționale pentru investigarea acestor încălcări ale dreptului internațional, ale drepturilor omului, ale dreptului internațional umanitar. După cum știți, Guvernul României a decis acordarea unei contribuții financiare voluntare către Curtea Penală Internațională, pentru a sprijini investigația din Ucraina.

De asemenea, am reacționat prompt și consistent, încă de la începutul invaziei ruse, prin numeroase măsuri pentru a oferi adăpost și asistență refugiaților ucraineni, pentru care agresiunea rusă a avut efecte dramatice. Până în prezent, au intrat pe teritoriul țării noastre peste 800.000 de refugiați ucraineni. Asistența acordată acestor persoane, inclusiv celor care au rămas pe teritoriul României, a fost în valoare de peste 63 de milioane de euro, constând în acces gratuit la

servicii medicale, la învățământ - peste 1600 de copii sunt deja înregistrați în sistemul românesc, studenții sunt primiți în universitățile din România – , a constat în măsuri de sprijin pentru copiii aflați în situații deosebite, asigurarea transportului gratuit pe teritoriul României, deschiderea pieței de muncă - sunt peste 2.000 de cetățeni ucraineni care sunt deja angajați în România, după începutul invaziei.

Doresc să vă asigur, domnule ministru, dragă Dmytro, că toți cetățenii ucraineni refugiați în România sunt și vor fi tratați corespunzător, vor avea șansa să-și continue, în condițiile date, traiul normal, până când condițiile vor permite reîntoarcerea lor, în siguranță, în Ucraina. Trebuie să menționez și să salut încă o dată atitudinea de extraordinară solidaritate și ospitalitate a cetățenilor români, care au sprijinit, încă de la primele momente ale conflictului, pe refugiații care au ajuns în România, dar și pe cei care au rămas în Ucraina. Platforma guvernamentală, care a fost creată în acest sens, arată mai mult de 9.200 de inițiative de sprijin din partea societății civile. De asemenea, am trimis mai multe tranșe de ajutor umanitar, combustibil, medicamente, alimente. Amintesc aici mai multe pachete de sprijin: cel din 28 februarie, de 3,4 milioane de euro, din 16 martie, 2,3 milioane de euro, donația celor 11 ambulanțe care a fost finalizată în cursul acestei săptămâni și altele. De asemenea, hub-ul umanitar de la Suceava, care este funcțional din 9 martie, asigură livrarea, în mod constant, de sprijin internațional pentru Ucraina, fiind în prezent tranzitat de peste 31 de convoaie umanitare, adică aproximativ 162 de camioane din numeroase țări europene - Italia, Franța, Bulgaria, Austria, Slovenia, Cipru, România și alte state.

Ucraina trebuie să câștige acest război și sunt convins că-l va câștiga.

Apoi va urma procesul de reconstrucție, după ce conflictul se va fi încheiat. În cadrul acestui proces de reconstrucție, care va fi unul de durată, întreaga comunitate internațională va trebui să acorde sprijin și îl asigur pe colegul meu că România este gata să fie parte a acestui efort susținut.

De asemenea, vreau să transmit, cu acest prilej, felicitări Ucrainei pentru transmiterea răspunsului la prima parte a chestionarului pentru aderare la Uniunea Europeană și vreau să reiterez, și cu acest prilej, sprijinul extrem de puternic al României pentru aspirațiile europene ale Ucrainei, pentru recunoașterea perspectivei europene a acestui stat prieten și vecin. Am transmis și susținut constant, la nivelul Uniunii Europene, atât la nivelul reuniunii șefilor de stat și de guvern, la reuniunile miniștrilor de externe, la care am participat, că Uniunea Europeană trebuie să arate viziune, să arate curaj, pentru a da Ucrainei, precum și Republicii Moldova, Georgiei, semnalul pe care îl așteaptă - și anume acela că sunt îndreptățite să facă parte, cu drepturi depline, din Uniunea Europeană.

De asemenea, mă bucur să salut faptul că astăzi și Republica Moldova a transmis răspunsul la prima parte a chestionarului pentru aderare.

În același timp, știm din propria noastră experiență că parcursul pentru aderare este unul complicat care presupune multe eforturi și reforme. Vom continua să sprijinim în mod activ, în măsura în care va fi necesar, Ucraina, în tot acest proces complex și laborios.

De asemenea, am discutat și despre deschiderea Ambasadei României la Kiev, am informat cu privire la decizia pe care am luat-o – la momentul la care am anunțat acest demers al României, erau opt misiuni ale statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene deja deschise la Kiev. Sper ca pregătirile să se finalizeze cât mai curând și să putem să ne reluăm activitatea în capitala Ucrainei.

De asemenea, am discutat despre creșterea conectivității fizice între statele noastre. Am discutat despre deschiderea de noi puncte de trecere a frontierei, pentru că este nevoie de mai multă conectivitate între noi, pentru a facilita fluxurile de persoane, fluxurile de mărfuri și este, din acest punct de vedere, grăitor rolul pe care, de exemplu, punctul de trecere a frontierei de la Isaccea l-a jucat pentru deplasarea în România a cetățenilor ucraineni afectați de război.

Am luat măsuri legate și de facilitarea comerțului Ucrainei cu alte state - de exemplu, liberalizarea temporară a transportului efectuat de operatorii ucraineni pe teritoriul României - decizie adoptată la 5 aprilie. Am discutat și despre cooperarea în materie de securitate energetică și mă bucur să salut conectarea Ucrainei la rețeaua europeană de electricitate, la data de 16 martie.

Am discutat, de asemenea, și despre faptul că legăturile puternice dintre țările noastre sunt date și de minoritățile noastre înrudite. Am evidențiat comportamentul exemplar al etnicilor români din Ucraina, care au sprijinit efortul comun de apărare a statului ucrainean. Vom continua să ne ocupăm de problemele comunităților române și, respectiv, ucrainene din România, respectiv din Ucraina și sunt convins că vom soluționa toate problemele acestora.

Mă opresc aici. Îmi exprim încă o dată convingerea că, prin efortul nostru comun, putem să ridicăm relațiile noastre bilaterale la un nou nivel, să construim în această zonă a Europei un model de cooperare. Știu, din relația foarte apropiată pe care o avem, și pe care am construit-o în ultimii ani, că sunt nu doar perspective, dar certitudini din acest punct de vedere. Iar perioada aceasta foarte complexă, cu război, cu agresiune, cu suferință umană, nu a făcut altceva decât să apropie și mai mult societățile noastre, cetățenii noștri.

Dragă Dmytro, te rog.

Ministrul afacerilor externe al Ucrainei, Dmytro Kuleba:

Thank you, Bogdan! I really appreciate that you agreed to receive me on the Eve of Easter, as your Prime Minister and your Minister of Defense did. This is yet another example of the real, sincere friendship that we have between Ukraine and Romania.

When it comes to the substance, you almost stole all of my speaking points, I can only subscribe to what Bogdan just said, on all accounts. Let me say just a couple of points, in addition to that.

Every time President Putin tries to stop Ukraine in its development, in its European integration, the only result that he achieves is the speeding up of this process. To my and our deepest regret, every such attempt by Putin comes at a price for Ukraine. But what is happening now is not only another attempt of Russia to maintain its influence in this part of

Europe, in the Black Sea region, not only the attempt to stop Ukraine, it's also the final battle. The final battle for the right of all European nations - and it's not only about Ukraine, it's also about Georgia, about Moldova, about all countries in the Black Sea region - it's our common final battle for the opportunity to live in peace, in prosperity, as part of a whole and free Europe. And I have no doubts, and I appreciate that Bogdan doesn't have any doubts either, that we will win this battle! Ukraine will prevail!

And there are two components which are necessary for us to prevail. The first one is the Ukrainian stamina and courage. The second one is friends, friends who stand by Ukraine in practical terms, who support providing Ukraine with all necessary equipment, who support more sanctions against Russia, who embrace Ukrainian refugees, giving the chance for husbands, fathers and brothers to fight against Russia, knowing that their mothers, sisters, and children are in safety and taken care of. As long as these two ingredients are in place, the victory is getting closer and closer.

And I would like to commend the Government of Romania for shaping a very smart policy, since the beginning of aggression, to provide, to stand by Ukraine.

We all share the Black Sea and this war, as I said, is also about the future of the Black Sea region. Our security is your security. You are helping us, you are also helping yourself. The fair deal that Ukraine offers to the world is simple: you give us everything that we need to fight and to win, and we, in return, contain Putin in Ukraine and defeat him there, so that he doesn't dare to test Article 5 of NATO, and doesn't try to expand further his aggression.

Those in Europe, who believe that this is just a Ukraine - Russia war and Putin will never dare to test Article 5, shouldn't be naive! We, in Central and Eastern Europe, are not naive, we know history. But others should be aware of a very simple fact: the best way to stop Putin is to give Ukraine everything it needs.

During the war, the divisions are all gone. In Ukraine, ethnic Ukrainians, ethnic Romanians, ethnic Hungarians, ethnic Belarusians, ethnic Georgians, Moldovans, Russians, they all fight for Ukraine. Some of them, regretfully, die in the war, in combat, but they understand what they're fighting for: they're fighting not only for Ukraine, but for their own motherlands, for their countries, so that they do not know the tragedy of war. And we respect highly every sacrifice on the battleground. And the Romanian community in Ukraine, while being an inseparable part of a broader Romanian culture, they also fight for their motherland, for Ukraine, and this is another element that brings us even closer, us - Ukraine and Romania.

Now, unspeakable crimes were committed by the Russian army in Ukraine, but unfortunately this is only the tip of the iceberg of all the crimes committed, especially in Mariupol. Romania and Bogdan personally, have vast experience in international adjudication, in the prosecution of international crimes, at international level, so, yes, we discussed how we can use the ICJ - International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, to bring Russia to account for everything it has done, and we will be happy to learn, to work with Romania on this.

I would like, once again, to thank the Romanian Government for embracing Ukrainian refugees. These people could have been victims of the Russian war crimes, and the fact that you allowed them to come to the country saved the lives of many of them.

Now, it would be unfair for me not to mention that, of course, I want all of my compatriots to go back to Ukraine, and to live a new life, and to rebuild the country, and hopefully together we will bring the moment closer to when this will be possible. But let's be objective: some of them will stay in Romania and will start a new life here. I would like to assure you that they will be very committed new members of your society, and the Ukrainian community will fill, will enrich the Romanian society, and will be another joint between our governments.

Thank you for the readiness of Romania to participate in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. We are already thinking about it, we are already building plans; we already have a picture of the new Ukraine that will be built. And this new Ukraine will be a European Ukraine, and the support of Romania in providing Ukraine with candidate status at the nearest opportunity in the end of June is very much appreciated. This will be a Ukraine that will remain a happy home, a home for many ethnicities and nationalities, and this will be a Ukraine that will, together with friends and partners like Romania and other countries, ensure safety and security of the entire Black Sea region.

The final words that I want to use are the following: Please, have no doubts, we will prevail!

But to make this happen rather sooner than later, we need to continue working on all fronts, on every issue, in the fastest way possible to make sure that Ukraine receives everything that it needs, to make sure that all necessary sanctions are imposed on Russia, to make sure that Russia is isolated everywhere in the world! We cannot stop; neither we, nor you, nor anyone else can stop until we all defeat this evil! Thank you!



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Consultations of Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu with Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmitry Kuleba

Type: Press release

Date: 22.04.2022

On Friday, 22 April 2022, Minister of Foreign Affairs Bogdan Aurescu held political consultations with Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmitry Kuleba, who is visiting Romania at the invitation of the head of Romanian diplomacy.

Minister Dmitry Kuleba's visit to Bucharest took place in the context of Russia's illegal military aggression in Ukraine and the extremely serious security and humanitarian crisis caused by it.

Minister Bogdan Aurescu reiterated Romania's firm support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for the Ukrainian authorities' efforts to repel Russian aggression. At the same time, the Romanian Head of Delegation also conveyed Romania's firm position condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is a flagrant violation of international law.

At the end of the consultations, Minister Bogdan Aurescu and Minister Dmitry Kuleba made joint press statements, available in video format here: <http://www.mae.ro/node/58482>.

Below is a transcript of the press statements by Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu and Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Dmitry Kuleba.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Bogdan Aurescu:

Welcome to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

Dear Minister, dear Dmitry, welcome to Bucharest! Welcome to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs again. I'm glad we had the opportunity to meet again, to talk in person during this extremely complicated time. I want to congratulate you from the bottom of my heart for the exceptional work you are doing for the benefit of Ukraine and our common values.

We had a very substantial dialogue today, which we will continue after this press conference, a very detailed exchange of views on the serious security and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine caused by Russia's illegal, unprovoked, unjustified and premeditated war on Ukraine. I reiterated Romania's firm support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as for the heroic efforts of the Ukrainian authorities and Ukrainian citizens to repel Russian aggression, which constitutes a flagrant violation of Russia's international obligations.

Neither Romania, nor Ukraine, nor the international community can accept the trampling of the international rule-based order, which would mean the imposition of arbitrariness by force.

I also take this opportunity to express my condolences and deep regret for the loss of human lives, for so many human lives that have been lost in this illegal aggression, for the massive property destruction in Ukraine, which has a profoundly negative impact on the life of Ukrainian society. The human dramas, the horrors, the suffering that the Ukrainian people are going through have left us, along with the whole world, in a state of grief. We stand with the Ukrainian people. Dear Dmitry, all those who have been killed in Ukraine are, in fact, our brothers and sisters, our parents and our children. That is why atrocities and war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes of genocide cannot go unpunished, and Romania actively supports the efforts of the international community to investigate these violations of international law, of human rights, of international humanitarian law. As you know, the Romanian Government has decided to make a voluntary financial contribution to the International Criminal Court to support the investigation in Ukraine.

We have also reacted promptly and consistently since the beginning of the Russian invasion with numerous measures to provide shelter and assistance to Ukrainian refugees, for whom the Russian aggression has had dramatic effects. So far, more than 800,000 Ukrainian refugees have entered our country. The assistance provided to these people, including those who have remained on Romanian territory, has been worth more than 63 million euros, consisting of free access to medical services, education - more than 1600 children are already registered in the Romanian system, students are admitted to Romanian universities -, support measures for children in special

circumstances, free transport on Romanian territory, opening of the labor market - more than 2000 Ukrainian citizens are already employed in Romania after the beginning of the invasion.

I would like to assure you, Minister, dear Dmitry, that all Ukrainian citizens who are refugees in Romania are and will be treated properly, will have the chance to continue their normal life under the given circumstances, until the conditions allow their safe return to Ukraine. I must mention and welcome once again the extraordinary solidarity and hospitality of Romanian citizens, who have supported the refugees who arrived in Romania, as well as those who remained in Ukraine, since the first moments of the conflict. The government platform, which was created for this purpose, contains more than 9,200 support initiatives from civil society. We have also sent several tranches of humanitarian aid, fuel, medicines, food. I would like to mention here several support packages: that of 28 February, EUR 3.4 million, that of 16 March, EUR 2.3 million, the donation of 11 ambulances which was completed this week and others. The humanitarian hub in Suceava, which has been operational since 9 March, also ensures the constant provision of international support to Ukraine, with over 31 humanitarian convoys currently passing through it, about 162 trucks from many European countries - Italy, France, Bulgaria, Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Romania and others.

Ukraine has to win this war and I am convinced that it will.

Then the reconstruction process will follow, once the conflict is over. In this reconstruction process, which will be a long-lasting one, the whole international community will have to provide support and I assure my colleague that Romania is ready to be part of this sustained effort.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ukraine on its submission of the reply to the first part of the questionnaire for accession to the European Union and I would like to reiterate, also on this occasion, Romania's extremely strong support for Ukraine's European aspirations, for the recognition of the European perspective of this friendly and neighboring state. I have constantly stated and argued at European Union level, both at meetings of heads of state and government and at meetings of foreign ministers, which I have attended, that the European Union must show leadership and courage in order to give Ukraine, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, the signal they are waiting for - namely that they are entitled to be full members of the European Union.

I am also pleased to welcome the fact that today the Republic of Moldova has also submitted its reply to the first part of the accession questionnaire.

At the same time, we know from our own experience that the path to accession is a complicated one which requires a lot of efforts and reforms. We will continue to actively support, as necessary, Ukraine throughout this complex and laborious process.

We also discussed the opening of the Romanian Embassy in Kiev, we reported on the decision we had taken - at the time we announced Romania's approach, eight missions of the European Union Member States were already open in Kiev. I hope that the preparations will be completed as soon as possible and that we will be able to resume our work in the Ukrainian capital.

We also discussed increasing physical connectivity between our states. We discussed the opening of new border checkpoints, because we need more connectivity between us, to facilitate the flow of people, the flow of goods, and it shows the role that, for example, the Isaccea border crossing point has played for the movement of war-affected Ukrainian citizens to Romania.

We have also taken measures to facilitate Ukraine's trade with other countries - for example, temporary liberalization of transport by Ukrainian operators on Romanian territory - a decision adopted on 5 April. We also discussed cooperation on energy security and I am pleased to welcome Ukraine's connection to the European electricity grid on 16 March.

We also discussed the fact that the strong ties between our countries stem also from our related minorities. We highlighted the exemplary role of ethnic Romanians in Ukraine, who supported the joint effort to defend the Ukrainian state. We will continue to deal with the problems of the Romanian and Ukrainian communities in Romania and Ukraine respectively and I am convinced that we will solve all their problems.

I will conclude here. I express once again my conviction that, through our joint effort, we can bring our bilateral relations to a new level, to build a model of cooperation in this part of Europe. I know from the very close relationship we have, and which we have built up over the last few years, that there are not only prospects, but certainties in this respect. And this very complex period, of war, of aggression, of human suffering, has only brought our societies, our citizens, closer together.

Dear Dmitry, please.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Dmitry Kuleba:

Thank you, Bogdan! I really appreciate that you agreed to receive me on the Eve of Easter, as your Prime Minister and your Minister of Defense did. This is yet another example of the real, sincere friendship that we have between Ukraine and Romania.

When it comes to the substance, you almost stole all of my speaking points, I can only subscribe to what Bogdan just said, on all accounts. Let me say just a couple of points, in addition to that.

Every time President Putin tries to stop Ukraine in its development, in its European integration, the only result that he achieves is the speeding up of this process. To my and our deepest regret, every such attempt by Putin comes at a price for Ukraine. But what is happening now is not only another attempt of Russia to maintain its influence in this part of Europe, in the Black Sea region, not only the attempt to stop Ukraine, it's also the final battle. The final battle for the right of all European nations - and it's not only about Ukraine, it's also about Georgia, about Moldova, about all countries in the Black Sea region - it's our common final battle for the opportunity to live in peace, in prosperity, as part of a whole and free Europe. And I have no doubts, and I appreciate that Bogdan doesn't have any doubts either, that we will win this battle! Ukraine will prevail!

And there are two components which are necessary for us to prevail. The first one is the Ukrainian stamina and courage. The second one is friends, friends who stand by Ukraine in practical terms, who support providing Ukraine with all necessary equipment, who support more sanctions against Russia, who embrace Ukrainian refugees, giving the chance for husbands, fathers and brothers to fight against Russia, knowing that their mothers, sisters, and children are in safety and taken care of. As long as these two ingredients are in place, the victory is getting closer and closer.

And I would like to commend the Government of Romania for shaping a very smart policy, since the beginning of aggression, to provide, to stand by Ukraine.

We all share the Black Sea and this war, as I said, is also about the future of the Black Sea region. Our security is your security. You are helping us, you are also helping yourself. The fair deal that Ukraine offers to the world is simple: you give us everything that we need to fight and to win, and we, in return, contain Putin in Ukraine and defeat him there, so that he doesn't dare to test Article 5 of NATO, and doesn't try to expand further his aggression.

Those in Europe, who believe that this is just a Ukraine - Russia war and Putin will never dare to test Article 5, shouldn't be naive! We, in Central and Eastern Europe, are not naive, we know history. But others should be aware of a very simple fact: the best way to stop Putin is to give Ukraine everything it needs.

During the war, the divisions are all gone. In Ukraine, ethnic Ukrainians, ethnic Romanians, ethnic Hungarians, ethnic Belarusians, ethnic Georgians, Moldovans, Russians, they all fight for Ukraine. Some of them, regretfully, die in the war, in combat, but they understand what they're fighting for: they're fighting not only for Ukraine, but for their own motherlands, for their countries, so that they do not know the tragedy of war. And we respect highly every sacrifice on the battleground. And the Romanian community in Ukraine, while being an inseparable part of a broader Romanian culture, they also fight for their motherland, for Ukraine, and this is another element that brings us even closer, us - Ukraine and Romania.

Now, unspeakable crimes were committed by the Russian army in Ukraine, but unfortunately this is only the tip of the iceberg of all the crimes committed, especially in Mariupol. Romania and Bogdan personally, have vast experience in international adjudication, in the prosecution of international crimes, at international level, so, yes, we discussed how we can use the ICJ - International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, to bring Russia to account for everything it has done, and we will be happy to learn, to work with Romania on this.

I would like, once again, to thank the Romanian Government for embracing Ukrainian refugees. These people could have been victims of the Russian war crimes, and the fact that you allowed them to come to the country saved the lives of many of them.

Now, it would be unfair for me not to mention that, of course, I want all of my compatriots to go back to Ukraine, and to live a new life, and to rebuild the country, and hopefully together we will bring the moment closer to when this will be possible. But let's be objective: some of them will stay in Romania and will start a new life here. I would like to assure you that they will be very committed new members of your society, and the Ukrainian community will fill, will enrich the Romanian society, and will be another joint between our governments.

Thank you for the readiness of Romania to participate in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. We are already thinking about it, we are already building plans; we already have a picture of the new Ukraine that will be built. And this new Ukraine will be a European Ukraine, and the support of Romania in providing Ukraine with candidate status at the nearest opportunity in the end of June is very much appreciated. This will be a Ukraine that will remain a happy home, a home for many ethnicities and nationalities, and this will be a Ukraine that will, together with friends and partners like Romania and other countries, ensure safety and security of the entire Black Sea region.

The final words that I want to use are the following: Please, have no doubts, we will prevail!

But to make this happen rather sooner than later, we need to continue working on all fronts, on every issue, in the fastest way possible to make sure that Ukraine receives everything that it needs, to make sure that all necessary sanctions are imposed on Russia, to make sure that Russia is isolated everywhere in the world! We cannot stop; neither we, nor you, nor anyone else can stop until we all defeat this evil! Thank you!

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Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania

Lithuania formally intervenes in a case at the International Court of Justice

Date

2022 09 13

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Following Lithuania's formal application to intervene in the case Ukraine v. Russia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the Minister of Justice Ewelina Dobrowolska stressed at a press conference that this step is particularly important because in this case charges are made against Russia, i.e., against the state but not against its individual citizens.

According to Ms Dobrowolska, if Russia is held liable in this case, this fact would allow Ukraine to claim damages which is, among others, Ukraine's most important expectation that the Ukrainian Minister of Justice has been raising in all international formats. The funds received as

compensation would help Ukrainians not only to rebuild the country but also to continue to defend its freedom, sovereignty and democracy.

The Minister stressed that Lithuania is the first country to take legal aid initiatives to help Ukraine in order to ensure that justice is not delayed.

The Vice Minister of Justice Gabija Grigaitė-Daugirdė noted at the press conference that Lithuanian lawyers are working hand-in-hand with Ukrainian lawyers seeking to strengthen Ukraine's legal struggle, to express support and to prove once again that the solutions of international law do exist; however, it is important to mobilize efforts and make use of these solutions without delay.

The Vice-Minister stressed that under international law, the International Court of Justice is the only institution that can address issues concerning responsibility of a state.

„All members of the United Nations are bound by the decisions of this Court, so it is very important that non-compliance with these decisions could be addressed by the United Nations Security Council or the General Assembly; this raises hopes that Russia's responsibility for the violation of international law will be established and that reparation for the damage done to Ukraine will be guaranteed”, - said Ms Grigaitė-Daugirdė.

As many as 43 European states and world powers as well as the entire EU have expressed their intention to intervene in this case at the International Court of Justice thus condemning Russia's military aggression and the international crimes Russia has committed.

In this case, Ukraine also asked the Court to establish interim measures, and on 16 March 2022, the Court issued an order whereby it ordered to immediately cease the hostilities committed by military units that are under the direct or indirect control of Russia. Failure to comply with this judgment is a violation of international law.

War crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Russia are also investigated by the International Criminal Court. Lithuania has proposed to the international community to consider establishment of a Special Tribunal on Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

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30 JUNE 2022

NZ to join International Court of Justice case against Russia



HON DAVID PARKER(/MINISTER/HON-DAVID-PARKER)



HON NANAIA MAHUTA(/MINISTER/HON-NANAIA-MAHUTA)

Attorney-General (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/attorney-general)

Foreign Affairs (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/foreign-affairs)

Aotearoa New Zealand will join Ukraine’s case against Russia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which challenges Russia’s spurious attempt to justify its invasion under international law.

Ukraine filed a case at the ICJ (<https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/182>) in February arguing Russia has falsely claimed genocide had occurred in Luhansk and Donetsk regions, as a prelude to its so-called ‘special military operation’. Ukraine emphatically denies a genocide has occurred.

Attorney-General David Parker and Foreign Affairs Minister Nanaia Mahuta announced the government has agreed to formally intervene as a third party in the case at the ICJ, the United Nations principal judicial body based in The Hague.

“As a party to the Genocide Convention and a strong defender of the international rules-based system, New Zealand has a real interest in ensuring the Genocide Convention is properly interpreted and applied. Disputes between states should be resolved by peaceful means, including through the ICJ, and not by the illegal use of force,” David Parker said.

“Intervention enables a country that is not a party to the case to put its legal views before the court,” said Nanaia Mahuta.

“Aotearoa New Zealand has only taken such action at the ICJ once before, in Australia’s 2012 case against Japanese whaling in the Southern Ocean.

“Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine and disingenuous attempt to justify it under the Genocide Convention is a significant threat to basic principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the rules-based international system on which New Zealand strongly relies.

“We are profoundly concerned about the loss of life and human suffering in Ukraine as a result of Putin’s illegal invasion, and seek to emphasise that all countries must uphold the rules of international law and the purpose and principles of the United Nations Charter.

“Aotearoa New Zealand is prepared to play its part in assisting Ukraine and has already done so through a range of diplomatic, military and economic measures,” Nanaia Mahuta said.

Notes

An intervention would include making written and possibly oral submissions to ensure Aotearoa New Zealand’s views on the proper interpretation and use of the Genocide Convention are on the record.

Third Party Interventions will be filed after Ukraine files its substantive case, which is due by 23 September 2022. Ukraine’s case seeks to establish that no acts of genocide occurred in Luhansk and Donetsk and that Russia has no lawful basis to its invasion.

Aotearoa New Zealand recently joined a Canada-led statement (<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2022/05/joint-statement-on-ukraines-application-against-russia-at-the-international-court-of-justice.html>) along with more than 40 other countries which indicated those countries would all consider the possibility of making a third party intervention to support Ukraine.



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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland

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Poland filed a declaration of intervention to the International Court of Justice in Ukraine's case against Russia

16.09.2022

On 15 September 2022, Poland filed a declaration of intervention to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in Ukraine's case against the Russian Federation over allegations of genocide under the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Ukraine v. the Russian Federation).



With this act, Poland has joined – for the first time in its post-war history – contentious proceedings before the ICJ. The declaration is part of Poland's consistent policy of firmly condemning all unlawful actions by Russia and is an expression of our support and solidarity for Ukraine. It complements other actions the Republic of Poland is currently taking in this area, including referral of crimes committed in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court and a request for intervention in the Ukrainian-Russian dispute before the European Court of Human Rights, among others.

Poland's intervention with the ICJ, in keeping with the formal requirements set out in Article 63 of the ICJ Statute, concerns the interpretation of the Genocide Convention, in particular Articles I and IX. With reference to Article IX, the Polish side stressed that this provision also applies to disputes in which a request is made that the ICJ declare that the Convention has not been violated. Thus, if one state accuses another of genocide, the latter may ask the ICJ to declare that the accusation is factually and legally unfounded. With reference to Article I, the Polish side emphasized that unilateral and groundless accusations of genocide constitute an abuse of the Convention contrary to its letter and spirit, and that the Convention requires that measures to prevent and punish the crime of genocide be consistent with international law.

As of 15 September, apart from Poland, relevant declarations of intervention have been made by (in chronological order) Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, Sweden, Romania and France. The full text of the Polish intervention is available on the ICJ website: <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/182/intervention>

Łukasz Jasina
MFA Spokesperson

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland

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Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from [Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#)

Sweden participating in two court cases concerning the war in Ukraine

Published 09 September 2022

Sweden has chosen to intervene (participate) in two court cases concerning Russia's responsibility for violations of international law. A case between Ukraine and Russia on allegations of genocide is pending before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. At the same time, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg is hearing an inter-state case against Russia concerning serious violations of human rights during the war in Ukraine.

"Accountability for crimes committed in connection with Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a high priority for Sweden. Sweden has therefore chosen to participate in several of the court cases currently pending to hold Russia accountable," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

Sweden is a party to the Genocide Convention and has chosen to participate in the case brought by Ukraine against Russia in the International Court of Justice earlier this year. A declaration of intervention submitted to the Court today sets out Sweden's view on the questions of interpretation raised in the case.

The inter-state case before the European Court concerns widespread and serious violations of human rights during the war in Ukraine. A key question in the case is the extent to which Russia can be held

legally responsible under the European Convention on Human Rights for events on Ukrainian territory. Yesterday, the Government decided that Sweden should request leave to intervene in the case as a third party.

In both cases, Sweden will put forward positions that are in line with those of Ukraine. For Sweden, it is of fundamental importance that international law is respected, that accountability for acts of aggression is ensured and that any potential war crimes are investigated. Deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects are contrary to the laws of war. Human rights and fundamental freedoms apply even in wartime and must always be protected.

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← **Thread**

Justin Trudeau ✓

@JustinTrudeau

Officiel du gouvernement - Canada



Canada supports Ukraine's application against Russia before the International Court of Justice. We have been very clear: We stand with Ukraine, and with the brave women and men who are fighting to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. bit.ly/3MEUjnh

Володимир Зеленський ✓ @ZelenskyyUa · May 20

Ukraine government official

42 states took Ukraine's side in the case against Russia at the International Court of Justice and intend to join the proceedings. Grateful to partners who chose the right side of history. The side of truth, international law, and justice. Together, we'll hold Russia accountable.

11:18 PM · May 20, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

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Reply

Justin Trudeau ✓ @JustinTrudeau · May 20

Officiel du gouvernement - Canada

Replying to @JustinTrudeau

To make sure they have the resources they need, and to help stabilize the Ukrainian economy, we've announced additional financial support for Ukraine. This is in addition to the military assistance and humanitarian aid we're providing. bit.ly/3Pwfqdj



216

101

687



Justin Trudeau ✓ @JustinTrudeau · May 20

Officiel du gouvernement - Canada

We've also imposed sanctions on 14 additional individuals who have directly enabled this war and must be held to account. On top of that, we've banned the export of targeted luxury goods to Russia, and the import of targeted





U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

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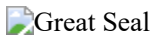
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U.S. Department of State

Daily Press Briefing

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Briefer: JAMES P. RUBIN

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DAILY PRESS BRIEFING
DPB #40
TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1999, 2:50 P.M.
(ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

MR. RUBIN: Greetings. Welcome to the State Department briefing.

Before addressing the question of the meeting between Prime Minister Primakov and President Milosevic, let me say that Secretary Albright called to President Djukanovic of Montenegro on March 29 to express her deep concern about the large inflows of displaced Kosovar citizens and the effects they could have on political, economic and social stability in Montenegro. She indicated that we will be increasing our humanitarian assistance to Montenegro to help care for displaced Kosovars. We are also going to work intensively with UNHCR.

She commended President Djukanovic of Montenegro for his steadfast leadership through difficult times, and underscored that American support for Montenegro is strong and unwavering. She told President Djukanovic that she remains concerned about a possible attempt by Belgrade to oust his government. Any attempt by Belgrade to overthrow the democratically-elected government in Montenegro would only fuel wider regional instability, lead to deeper isolation for the Yugoslavian authorities, and escalate the conflict with NATO.

We are focused on preserving democracy and stability in Montenegro and we have worked closely with NATO to exercise restraint and care in targeting Yugoslav military capabilities in Montenegro. NATO is not conducting air strikes against the people of Montenegro and Serbia, but against President Milosevic's ability to inflict more human suffering, repression and violence against the people of Yugoslavia.

With that statement, let me say with regard to the questions all of you have been asking all day with regard to Prime Minister Primakov's trip to Belgrade, President Clinton spoke to Chancellor Schroeder in the last hour, and Secretary Albright spoke to Foreign Minister Fischer as well as Foreign Ministers Vedrine and Cook. With respect to the President's call, my understanding is that the President and the Chancellor indicated that they see eye-to-eye on the need to continue in a determined fashion NATO's military operations against the brutal forces conducting this crackdown in Kosovo.

With respect to the details of what the Prime Minister received from President Milosevic, let me say that we regard this suggestion as falling far short of what is necessary in order for NATO to stop its air campaign. We have said what is required. Clearly, the proposals put forward by President Milosevic fall far short of what we think is necessary. Our position is clear: Milosevic must halt the offensive against the Kosovar Albanians, withdraw his forces, and embrace a settlement based on the Rambouillet framework.

QUESTION: Could you give more details on the Milosevic proposal?

MR. RUBIN: As far as I understand it, it's an indication that says he's prepared to pursue a political solution and indicates that if the bombing stops, then he would be prepared to reduce his forces and talk about a political solution. This is far short of what we think is necessary. We do appreciate the effort that Prime Minister Primakov made, and any movement towards our demands would be positive; but we regard this as falling far short.

QUESTION: What's the status of Rambouillet at this stage? I'm thinking specifically of the component which gives the Serbs sovereignty over the territory and ensures it by giving them control of the border posts. As we know now, their stripping all expelled refugees of all their papers. So if you have Serbs controlling the border posts, then they'll never come back in.

MR. RUBIN: We do believe that all the refugees must be able to return to Kosovo.

QUESTION: To follow up, does the Rambouillet plan, in that regard, make sense at this stage?

MR. RUBIN: Well, we don't think simply the fact that the Serb authorities have stripped people of their papers is going to prevent our determination to allow people to return to their homes.

QUESTION: You didn't mention this, but the reports from Europe say that Milosevic suggested a cease-fire. Is that part of your understanding?

MR. RUBIN: It was unclear to me, in my debriefing of what has been proposed, where exactly a cease-fire does or does not fit in. But regardless, we regard the proposals as woefully inadequate. They fall far short of what is necessary for NATO to stop its air campaign.

QUESTION: And on a related subject also, to Milosevic, has this government made a determination whether what is going on in Kosovo now amounts to genocide?

MR. RUBIN: As I indicated yesterday, and you were here, I said that we have very clear indicators that genocide is unfolding in Kosovo. We are looking at a mixture of confirmed and unconfirmed reports at this time. But we don't see any need to await confirmation of genocide; clearly, there are crimes against humanity occurring in Kosovo. Our response to this criminal activity by Milosevic's forces is taking place right now. The full response we are now embarked upon with our NATO allies is fully justified by the crimes against humanity we know are being committed.

QUESTION: Did the Secretary speak to Foreign Minister Ivanov; and if so, did she get a more direct idea of what exactly the proposals are?

MR. RUBIN: As of 3:00 p.m. today, she has not yet spoken to Foreign Minister Ivanov. The meeting just broke a few minutes ago between Prime Minister Primakov, Foreign Minister Ivanov and Chancellor Schroeder and the German Foreign Minister. She immediately got on the phone with Foreign Minister Fischer and then spoke as well to Foreign Ministers Vedrine and Cook. She has not yet spoken to Foreign Minister Ivanov.

The descriptions -- our understanding of this proposal is that they are not based on the demands the international community has set forth.

QUESTION: Today is like the fourth or fifth time in a row that you've had a strong warning from Milosevic about Montenegro, and this one seems to be even stronger than the previous ones. Is the US aware of any plot by Milosevic to try and overthrow the government there?

MR. RUBIN: We have concerns in this regard. We do have information suggesting this is a possibility, and we are determined to make clear our views about it in advance if it is going to occur.

QUESTION: Yesterday you said something like, Milosevic is in danger of losing Kosovo; and today the President, as you know, said that the prospect of international support for Serbia's claim to Kosovo is jeopardized by his current actions. Could you explain what is being said here?

MR. RUBIN: Yes. The fact of the matter is there are some terrible crimes going on in Kosovo. The Serb authorities are committing forced expulsions. We have evidence that houses are burning throughout Kosovo. People are being forced out of their towns and pushed towards the border. We have reports of possible atrocities in many different situations. What has happened is that through this brutality, the Serb authorities are radicalizing the population of Kosovo and making it all the more difficult to imagine a circumstance where the peoples can begin to live together again. We're not saying that's not possible. But clearly the radicalization grows with each atrocity and each brutality the Serbs conduct.

QUESTION: Does that also mean that the United States may not feel as strongly about opposing Kosovo's independence and keeping it within Serbia as a result of these actions?

MR. RUBIN: Our position on independence has not changed.

QUESTION: You are talking about all the refugees have to be returned to Kosovo; but according to all wire reports, all the houses, the villages burned by the Serb's forces. If they return to Kosovo, they don't have any sanctuary.

MR. RUBIN: Well, what we have said is that the Serb forces have to withdraw; the Serbs have to pursue a peace settlement based on the framework of Rambouillet. There were 250,000 displaced persons last fall. When the situation improved, they were able to return to their homes. What we're saying is we're determined that they will be able to return to their homes.

QUESTION: I wonder if you can help me with the middle ground between two of your responses. You say that the population of Kosovo may become so radicalized that it would no longer be able to tolerate control by Serbia; yet, at the same time, the United States does not support independence. Is there something in between there that you are leaning towards that you could tell us about?

MR. RUBIN: No.

QUESTION: They seem to be contradictory. How do you square that?

MR. RUBIN: There is something in between.

QUESTION: There have been reports out of Europe that some of the ethnic Albanians involved with the peace process have been assassinated and are even being targeted. Do you know if there is anything like a hit list, or are these people just being picked up in the general sweeps that are going on; and what are we doing about it?

MR. RUBIN: Well, obviously, we're getting a lot of reports of these kinds of assassinations and target lists. It's very difficult to confirm each one of those reports. We've had some conflicting reports, for example, on the status of Mr. Agani in the last 24-hours and others. Clearly, there are people being killed in Kosovo for who they are and their ethnicity and their moderate position and their role as intellectuals and others. That is clearly going on.

We are continuing, as I think the Pentagon indicated, an air campaign that is now increasingly focused on a wider range of targets, including the capabilities to conduct these kinds of crackdowns and interfering and disrupting the ability of the Serb forces to conduct these crackdowns. As far as these types of crimes are concerned, we are collecting and will continue to collect all the evidence we can to make sure that those responsible are brought to justice. And we are going to share that information with the War Crimes Tribunal.

QUESTION: Jamie, yesterday you said that the ambassador had talked to Thaci. Has she talked to him?

MR. RUBIN: The Secretary.

QUESTION: Right, I'm sorry. You said that the Secretary had talked to Thaci the day before. Has she talked to him again?

MR. RUBIN: No, he called into the Department today and he provided another chilling account of what's going on in Kosovo. He basically indicated that the situation is worse today than it was yesterday.

QUESTION: Could you elaborate on that -- why it is worse, how it is worse?

MR. RUBIN: He said that the killing is more widespread; that there is shelling of a whole series of towns; that the Kosovar Liberation Army is doing the best it can under the circumstances but that it's becoming increasingly difficult. He indicated that people were being held in the soccer stadium in Pristina; that people were being held in two other locations; that several thousand people who had been evacuated from a particular town, whose name I don't have in front of me, are missing; and a number of other reports of that nature.

QUESTION: Are you able to confirm any of these reports, like the people being held in the soccer stadium, which would be an open target, I presume?

MR. RUBIN: We've heard a lot of reports of that. I'm not able to confirm it. What I am able to confirm is that there is widespread fires in Kosovo in many different towns, and the refugee flows we're able to confirm on our own. But as far as that particularly incident, I'm not.

QUESTION: You dismissed what Milosevic offered through Primakov as woefully inadequate and falling far short, and you restated what seems to be the standing US position without any wavering in it. However, did anything occur on the edges of this situation? Has Primakov made any headway to start any sort of a helpful or constructive dialogue? Is there any room, do you see any give at all in Milosevic's position; or is this a one-shot deal that is flatly off the mark?

MR. RUBIN: I wouldn't rule out efforts to continue to convince President Milosevic to reverse course. We're not going to dissuade people from doing so, if he really will reverse course. But what I've said is that the position as we understand it is woefully inadequate; it falls far short.

QUESTION: Do you know if the Russians have said whether they will make an effort?

MR. RUBIN: I don't have any information on their intentions.

QUESTION: I mean, they didn't tell the US they would?

MR. RUBIN: Oh, she hasn't spoken to Foreign Minister Ivanov yet today.

QUESTION: Primakov has a history of freelancing when on these diplomatic missions. Is there any indication that he did come up with any ideas of his own, other than the message he was supposed to deliver?

MR. RUBIN: Well, he wasn't going at our behest, so he wasn't delivering our message. As I indicated yesterday, the United States and Russia have very different views about the appropriateness of the use of force. So I don't expect him to have gone in there and made the case that we would have made for why the use of force is justified.

Primakov and Foreign Minister Ivanov were well aware of the West's and NATO's position with regard to what President Milosevic needs to do to reverse course. The proposal that President Milosevic proffered falls well short of that.

QUESTION: Given the history of fairly good relations between the United States and Russia, would you have expected Prime Minister Primakov to at least telephone some official in this country before he went to Germany or after he went to Germany? What do you make of this extended pregnant period of time before the Russians contact you, and the Secretary's inability to get a hold of Ivanov?

MR. RUBIN: Well, I didn't say she was trying to get a hold of Ivanov, so that information you suggest is incorrect.

Let me say this -- Secretary Albright has been in regular contact with Foreign Minister Ivanov in the last couple of days. She spoke to him yesterday; she spoke to him the day before yesterday; and she spoke to him on Friday. So we've been in regular contact with Foreign Minister Ivanov. As I indicated to you, the meetings just took place with Foreign Minister Fischer and Chancellor Schroeder just in the last hour and a half. Foreign Minister Ivanov was meeting with Prime Minister Primakov and Chancellor Schroeder and then German Foreign Minister Fischer called her immediately afterwards. So we got a read-out through that mechanism. I don't think the Russians had any doubt that the first person that Foreign Minister Fischer was going to call was going to be Secretary Albright, and I would expect Secretary Albright to be in touch with Foreign Minister Ivanov shortly.

QUESTION: No ill feelings, then?

QUESTION: During Secretary Albright's conversation with President Djukanovic, did she explain what is viewed by the Montenegrin people as a contradiction -- on the one hand the United States expressing strong and unwavering support for the leadership of Montenegro, yet on the other, bombing various sites within that province?

MR. RUBIN: I think the leadership in Montenegro understands there are certain targets -- particularly air defense targets -- that are in Montenegro that we can't responsibly leave off our list. But what we have said is we are exercising restraint and care in the targeting of FRY military capabilities in Montenegro.

QUESTION: Is Montenegrin leadership to understand that the bombing campaign in Montenegro is not finished as far as NATO is concerned?

MR. RUBIN: I'm not in a position to specify future targeting.

QUESTION: One other question on Pristina. From the Thaci conversation or anything else, can you say anything more about what's going on in Pristina? There are some reports that an ethnic cleansing campaign has begun there in a couple of quarters where they are literally clearing everybody out, all the Albanians out. Do you know anything about that?

MR. RUBIN: Yesterday, Mr. Thaci told the Secretary that Pristina had become kind of a dead city. We have also received reports since then of people being moved out of certain neighborhoods of Pristina, and we've received some horrible oral reports about what is going on there.

QUESTION: It looks like the Macedonians have again restricted the inflow of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. Does the United States take a position on this? Are you in favor of completely unrestricted inflows?

MR. RUBIN: Well, we have been working very closely with Macedonia throughout this crisis. There were times when refugee flows were restricted and then opened, and we obviously want to do all we can and work with the Macedonian Government to do all we can to make it possible for refugees to be cared for and fed and sheltered.

QUESTION: Have you asked them to --

MR. RUBIN: I don't know what specific direct contact we've had, but we obviously want to be able to work with them in making it possible for the refugees to be taken care of.

QUESTION: There have been reports that the Serbs are holding back men in Kosovo, not allowing them to leave. But I believe last night, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, someone from that group, said that some young women -- reports that young women are being held back as well. Can you elaborate on what you're hearing?

MR. RUBIN: Again, we all, I think, are dealing with the same database of reports, oral reports, that some women are being held back and possibly raped. I mean, it's all very horrific. I just don't have any confirmation of it.

QUESTION: Can we bring two things into this discussion? The Yeltsin speech, the Yeltsin message to the nation, would seem to be heavily critical of the Kosovo operation and conciliatory, for instance, on arms control. Is it about what you expected from the Russian leader; have you had a chance to appraise it? Secondly, this is, I guess, a question for a therapist but if you could indulge the question, is there any size-up here of why Milosevic offered what he offered? Is he beginning to feel the pain, or is he playing some game where he will move back about a quarter of an inch if he can get the bombings stopped? What is he up to, do you suppose?

MR. RUBIN: Well, I'm neither a psychiatrist nor a criminal psychiatrist. Let me say that it's not possible for me to ascertain what his motivations are. The fact of the matter is that the Serbs know precisely what they need to do, and they know how to go about doing it. If they choose to reverse course, then NATO's bombing campaign will stop.

With respect to President Yeltsin, he also indicated that Russia did not have any intention of being dragged into this conflict. He indicated there were certain things they were going to continue to work with the United States and the West on -- certain things that they fundamentally disagreed with. It's much like my answer to someone's question yesterday about our views about the effect this is having on the US-Russian relationship. That is very simple: we fundamentally disagree about the question of whether we should have stood idly by and watched, by doing nothing, when President Milosevic and his military and police forces conducted this massive crackdown on Kosovo.

We think that NATO did the right thing by making sure that Milosevic and his forces pay a heavy price for this kind of brutality and barbarism. The Russians have a different view. Meanwhile, we have common interests on arms control, on highly enriched uranium agreement that was worked on, on the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty. As you know, the IMF Director was in Moscow yesterday, working on economic matters. So we will continue to work together where we can and try to overcome the differences where they exist. They clearly exist on this subject.

QUESTION: Jamie, when you say that NATO and the United States expects Milosevic to agree to a cease-fire, withdraw his troops and embrace the settlement of the Rambouillet framework, are we to understand that to include NATO-led implementation force and, obviously, the cease-fire?

MR. RUBIN: Well, our view hasn't changed on this. In the absence of an implementation force, we have no reason to believe that any agreement would work; because in the past, President Milosevic has not implemented agreements that did not have an implementation force to ensure that they were implemented.

QUESTION: The rhetoric coming out of NATO in Brussels seems to be getting harsher. Yesterday it was, this is compared to possibly the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the end of the Second World War. Today it's being likened to 1975 and Cambodia. Does the State Department or the US share specifically these analogies that are being made in Brussels?

MR. RUBIN: Well, I don't want to comment on every comment a spokesman makes in another part of the world. Let me say that clearly some terrible, terrible things are going on in Kosovo. We're talking about forced expulsions; we're talking about rape; we're talking about mass murder; we're talking about hundreds of thousands of people being moved out of their homes. It's a terrible, terrible thing. Crimes against humanity are occurring, and there are indications that genocide is occurring. There is no need to compare it.

QUESTION: You used genocide -- indicators of genocide yesterday. The White House spokesman, when asked about it, said he'd like to look into it; it has legal implications. Today he said exactly what you said yesterday. It's a term of art but also a legal term. Is there any serious analysis being made within the Administration if this indeed is genocide under international law? Because if it is, there are all sorts of implications.

MR. RUBIN: Let me say we have been and are taking significant action through NATO right now to confront the criminal conduct of the Yugoslav Army and police in Kosovo as a result of the campaign that's going on.

Declaring it genocide wouldn't change our determination to continue to pursue action through NATO.

I fear for my legal hide.

QUESTION: No, you used the phrase "mass murder," and Strobe Talbott, in The New York Times this morning used a phrase, "frenzied slaughter." It implies that you actually have some examples, some facts that you haven't quite maybe given us all the --

MR. RUBIN: Well, I've given you as much information as I can, Roy. I will continue, during my briefings, to provide you as much information as I can in this forum. We are making judgments based on a variety of reporting, a variety of our own information; and we have come to the conclusion that crimes against humanity are occurring.

QUESTION: Jamie, to just follow up on that earlier point, you say you're taking action within NATO. What do you mean by that?

MR. RUBIN: The air strikes that are being conducted every day, the determination we have to see this air campaign through to the end.

QUESTION: In terms of using any sort of prosecutorial means to go after Milosevic or any other members of the Serb leadership, are you doing anything --

MR. RUBIN: No, I think you're mixing apples and oranges there. What I'm saying is that the fact that we know crimes against humanity are occurring has caused us to take military action against the Serbs in a massive air campaign that we're determined to see through the end. Whether or not the formal definition of genocide has been met, there are indicators that genocide is occurring, and our reaction would be the same.

As far as the criminal aspect of this is concerned, let me say this -- we are determined to use all of our available resources to try to determine what's going on there, to try to find the evidence and to make that evidence available so that those who are conducting this criminal campaign are brought to justice.

QUESTION: Do you know what the legal implications are of a finding of genocide?

MR. RUBIN: My understanding is it would be no different than what we're doing right now, which is conducting military operations against the Serbs in Kosovo.

QUESTION: No, no (inaudible) prosecution. The United States took a long time subscribing to the concept of genocide because isolationists felt it would involve the United States in all sorts of international disputes that maybe the US would have a different view of. So if it's genocide, that means the US is obliged by treaty to support, as you said, war crimes, et cetera. It's more than just bombing the Serbs.

MR. RUBIN: It's also to take action, and we are taking action. Our legal scholar in the second row has nodded his head, so I feel much better.

QUESTION: Going back to October '98 and the Holbrooke-brokered truce, up until the start of the bombing, the human rights groups list several hundred people, a number of incidents -- several hundred horrific incidents where approximately 200 or 300 people were killed. Since the bombing began, you've got mass displacement, hundreds of people being killed and so on and so forth. Is there any concern that the NATO cure is worse than the problem to begin with?

MR. RUBIN: We think it would be perverse in the extreme to blame NATO for the conduct and barbarity of President Milosevic's forces. This campaign has been going on for 14 months. There are thousands of people that died over the last year; hundreds of thousands that were forced from their homes. In January of this year, there was a massacre at Racak. We had every reason to believe that President Milosevic had both the intent and the capability to conduct offensive operations during the very time we were negotiating in France. Prior to the NATO air strikes, this offensive operation began.

Has it intensified? Yes, it's intensified. The difference now between now and the last 14 months is that President Milosevic's forces are going to pay a heavy, heavy price for their intent and their capability to conduct this kind of crackdown.

QUESTION: Did the North Atlantic Council today reach any consensus on approving a third phase for the air campaign?

MR. RUBIN: I don't want to get into phases. I believe agreement was reached, but you would have to check with NATO.

QUESTION: Can we go back to Montenegro for a second? Two questions -- you said that there are indications that Milosevic might be trying to topple the government there?

MR. RUBIN: Over the last couple of years, there's been many indications that he has worked with certain allies in Montenegro to destabilize President Djukanovic. We have indications in recent days that that is a risk. It justified the Secretary writing Djukanovic a letter, justified her speaking to him yesterday and making clear the points that I made clear to you.

QUESTION: Okay, just to flesh it out a little more and then to follow up, can you say a little more about these indications?

MR. RUBIN: No.

QUESTION: Okay. There's also reports out of Montenegro that the Montenegrins have been doing some things bureaucratically within their government to separate them bureaucratically from Belgrade -- some legal changes, some parliamentary changes -- that are viewed as quite provocative in Belgrade. Can you talk about that?

MR. RUBIN: Well, all I can say is that we believe that President Djukanovic has been pursuing a democratic program in Montenegro, and has been trying to disassociate his government from the criminal program that has been pursued by the Yugoslav authorities in Kosovo. So the fact that Montenegro is taking steps to disassociate itself from the policies that are being pursued in Kosovo, we regard as a good thing.

QUESTION: Do you think that Montenegro might deserve, perhaps, some sort of greater autonomy from Belgrade?

MR. RUBIN: We haven't changed our position on the status of Montenegro.

QUESTION: I'm not sure I've ever heard your position on the status of Montenegro. Do you have it?

MR. RUBIN: It's on the record and it remains unchanged.

QUESTION: Which record is that?

(Laughter.)

MR. RUBIN: The record we'll provide you after the briefing.

QUESTION: Do you have any refugee counts going into Albania? There have been reports today that it could be up to 100,000.

MR. RUBIN: UNHCR reports an additional 5,000 have fled into Albania since yesterday's reports. This means that some 70,000 refugees have moved into Albania since March 24, bringing the total to over 83,000 refugees. In addition, some 20,000 have moved into Montenegro in the past several days, bringing that total up to approximately 45,000. UNHCR also reports there are approximately 25,000 refugees in Macedonia, and some 15,000 in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

We continue to work closely with UNHCR and other relief organizations to increase their capacity to respond to the conflict. Secretary Albright was informed the European countries are going to be taking significant steps in the next couple of days to assist the refugees. And as you know from the briefing yesterday, we are stepping up our efforts as well.

QUESTION: Do you have anything out of the pledging conference in Geneva?

MR. RUBIN: I have no new information on that.

QUESTION: Is this in addition to the \$8.5 million announced on Friday?

MR. RUBIN: As I indicated, as Julia Taft indicated yesterday, there will be reprogramming monies available in addition to the \$8.5 million.

QUESTION: Along the lines of the refugee assistance for Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, whomever, have you gotten any requests from any of those governments for American troops to help out with refugee assistance?

MR. RUBIN: I'm not aware of that. Let me say that we are going to be putting together a plan to try to assist the refugees as best we can.

QUESTION: Given the reports of genocide and the war crimes that you say are occurring, how is the United States encouraging regime change in Belgrade, and are you seeking regime change there?

MR. RUBIN: I have nothing new for you on that. We're conducting a massive air campaign. It's been in operation many days, and it will continue until either President Milosevic reverses course or the military objectives are met. Secretary Albright has been very heartened in her discussions with her counterparts that what has happened in the last few days is the images that have been seen around the world of the terrible brutalities and atrocities of the Serb regime have only redoubled the determination of NATO's leaders from all 19 countries to continue this air campaign until it's completed.

QUESTION: Could I follow up? Did you anticipate anything like the scale of what has occurred and the need for a NATO response?

MR. RUBIN: Absolutely. I think we understood completely that the offensive that we expected this spring, knowing of what happened last fall when 250,000 people were moved out of their homes and put into the hills, that we could be dealing with a situation of this magnitude.

QUESTION: Jamie, the Croatian Foreign Minister is coming in to see the Secretary tomorrow. That brings to mind the Bosnia situation and the apparent lack of spill-over. So it's sort of a two-part question. Is the Secretary is it just he that's coming, or is the Secretary going to have now consultations with other Foreign Ministers in the region in Washington? And if Milosevic is keeping his part of the bargain in Bosnia, why do you suppose he is, or is he?

MR. RUBIN: Well, we don't believe Milosevic has been a helpful influence on the situation in Bosnia in recent months; on the contrary, he's played a negative role in trying to stir up political opposition to the agreement there. Nevertheless, we have NATO's SFOR force on the ground that is ensuring its implementation and is there to provide a secure environment for the peace process to work.

The Secretary will meet with Foreign Minister Granic here in Washington. They will meet at the State Department tomorrow late in the morning. The Secretary plans to review developments in Kosovo and to express appreciation for Croatia's forthcoming stand on NATO operations there. She will also review US-Croatian relations and discuss issues related to implementation of the Dayton peace accords.

QUESTION: (Inaudible) -- permission for using their airspace -- have they given permission?

MR. RUBIN: You would have to check that with the Pentagon.

QUESTION: Could I ask another question about the goals, as they now seem to be emerging, of the Milosevic campaign? One of the often discussed theories is that he may be trying to clear Kosovo -- certainly at least the top third of Kosovo -- and to resettle that with Serbs and to have the bottom two-thirds either an empty space or whoever is left there. Is there any indication that you've seen that this is actually his goal, his policy?

MR. RUBIN: As far as what his intentions are, I do not want to make any specific comment. All I can tell you is what we've seen; and what we've seen is people kicked out of their homes, tens of thousands of people on the move, terrible reports of atrocities. But I don't want to speculate further.

QUESTION: (Inaudible) -- partition, because this might also be, at the end of the day, if negotiations ever take place, this is obviously going to be a proposal that people will be making -- to partition Kosovo into a Serb-ethnic --

MR. RUBIN: Our position on basic political configurations in the former Yugoslavia hasn't changed. I have no new positions to provide you.

QUESTION: Follow-up on the previous topic of the alleged Serb atrocities. In light of the reports that you're getting, how realistic is it to work with Milosevic after the campaign ends on peace in Kosovo?

MR. RUBIN: Well, clearly, as the President indicated, the international community is finding his policies increasingly abhorrent. On the other hand, he does now control the military force in Kosovo and in Serbia, and he is in charge. Meanwhile, we are pursuing a democratization policy in Serbia to assist in various ways those who are trying to pursue democracy so that some day Serbia can really be a democracy.

QUESTION: On the KLA, are you getting any reports or information on the status of the KLA now, in light of the Serb offensive? How viable an organization is it now politically and militarily?

MR. RUBIN: Well, clearly, they're having a tough time right now with over 10,000 Yugoslav forces involved directly in an offensive, supported by another 30,000 in the region. They are outgunned substantially with heavy equipment -- 300-plus tanks -- heavy other artillery and armored vehicles that they don't have. They're having a very tough time of it.

QUESTION: Jamie, going back to Bosnia, even the President talked about the similarities between Bosnia and Kosovo. While a lot of analysts think there are similarities, some think there are big differences; one being that while the bombing back in '95 eventually led to Milosevic backing down, in part that's because it came four years into a war -- both sides were tired and exhausted and ready to go to the peace table. But here both sides may not be so willing and they're probably willing to keep fighting. What do you say to that?

MR. RUBIN: Well, there are similarities and differences between Bosnia and Kosovo. One of the big similarities is the brutal policies of President Milosevic. One of the differences is that the international community acted very early on in making sure that we didn't stand idly by as millions of refugees were kicked out of their homes, as they were in Bosnia. The international community got together and is making sure that President Milosevic and his forces pay a heavy, heavy price; that they can't conduct the kind of grisly policies in Kosovo with impunity that they conducted in Bosnia with impunity for many years. That's one of the big differences.

As far as where it will all end up, we're determined to continue this air campaign until President Milosevic reverses course or its objectives are met. That will be different than Bosnia.

QUESTION: Are you really saying that we stood idly by for three years while millions were evicted from their homes in Bosnia?

MR. RUBIN: Well, the air strikes didn't get conducted until 1995.

QUESTION: What does the US make of these appeals by certain prominent Serb politicians that NATO should stop this because they are brother Christians for this coming Holy Week -- not just a Christian holiday but also a Jewish holiday?

MR. RUBIN: I retract the word "idly."

QUESTION: Does that mean you didn't hear the first part?

MR. RUBIN: I heard your question.

QUESTION: Okay. What do you make of these calls? And then an adjunct to that, the Vatican and the Pope have also said that it is bad for this bombing to be going on during this most holy of weeks.

MR. RUBIN: I understand that many of these people didn't think the bombing should start. So that's important information as to the motivations of the speakers who disagree on the rationale and justification and need for the air campaign to begin with.

As far as the religious question is concerned, let me say this -- we obviously respect all religions of the world, and we are going to pursue this campaign based on what's going on on the ground. If President Milosevic is going to be pursuing these crimes against humanity regardless of religious holidays, it would be very unseemly for the West to take into account that the people on the ground aren't getting any advantage of.

QUESTION: The Administration has said the NATO argument is with Mr. Milosevic. Yet every day in Belgrade there are these large gatherings, there are rock concerts and so forth, where thousands and thousands of people come out in support of the policies, wearing targets and so forth. So isn't, in fact, part of the argument with the Serbian people?

MR. RUBIN: The argument is with President Milosevic and those who support his policies, not the Serbian people. I don't believe that all the Serbian people support his policies. Clearly, there was to be expected a certain backlash in the short term. But as people learn more about what's really going on and to the extent they are not blinded by the propaganda and disinformation spewing out of Serbian television, they will find themselves in less and less support for the policies of President Milosevic.

QUESTION: Can we go to another subject? About US policy on an Israeli withdrawal, one reason being that the Israeli Cabinet took those accounts very seriously and it became notations in their meetings yesterday. Could you run us by it one more time? We know there's a parallel situation; if the Palestinians do something, the Israelis have to do something -- somebody has to do something first. There's still an impression -- I don't know how widespread in Israel -- that the US view is the Palestinians have to move first in some additional security areas before Israel would be considered obliged by the US' reading of the Wye agreement to continue the withdrawal. Could you (inaudible) or any version, obviously we can put to rest maybe for a day?

MR. RUBIN: Okay, let me say this. Yesterday, I was asked about a report in a respected newspaper by a very respected reporter, based on a conversation with a senior administration official. I disputed the report because the senior administration official, whoever he or she might be, isn't always right.

Our view -- the view of the State Department and the Secretary of State -- is that our position on implementation of the Wye River memorandum has not changed. The issue is not who goes first. Rather than focus on sequence, the government of Israel should focus on implementing their obligations. We're calling on both parties to focus on a serious process of implementing their responsibilities. If we had a serious process under way, one in which both sides were fulfilling their obligations, we would not be having this discussion.

On the issue of implementation, our position is as follows. During phase one, both sides work together to fulfill their obligations under the Wye River memorandum. Under phase two, the Palestinians have fulfilled some of their commitments, particularly with respect to fighting terror. There are other commitments under phase two that they have yet to fulfill. The Israelis, for their part, have not fulfilled any of their commitments under phase two.

Our view is that both sides should move forward in a parallel phased approach to fulfill all of their commitments under the Wye River memorandum. In short, if we had a serious process engaged right now, we wouldn't be engaged in discussion of sequence.

QUESTION: Today surfaced again another old problem that you might have something on, the US view on: Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem. There's a dispute over them. The Prime Minister is outraged or something, very angry about the situation. There seems to be two types of offices, those that go way back and efforts, perhaps, to establish some presence in East Jerusalem currently. Does the US have a view on this current dispute?

MR. RUBIN: We have seen reports of the closing of offices associated with the Palestinian Authority in East Jerusalem. As with other issues relating to Jerusalem, we regard this as an extremely sensitive matter. We urge both sides to avoid steps that further complicate an already volatile issue, and we do understand that both sides are in contact about it now.

QUESTION: Do you have any interpretation of Oslo and Wye and Hebron, all the above, that bears on whether these offices are supposed to remain open?

MR. RUBIN: Not in front of me.

QUESTION: Jamie, on Israeli withdrawal, I seem to remember that when this came up at the time, you said that --

MR. RUBIN: Which issue?

QUESTION: The question of the next Israeli withdrawal.

MR. RUBIN: Okay, we were just on the offices here. You're stepping back, okay.

QUESTION: I seem to remember that you said that you didn't see any justification for delay in the withdrawal. Now you seem to be saying that the Palestinians also have to take some --

MR. RUBIN: I don't think that's exactly what I said when this first come up. I think I've been quite clear: we want both sides to fulfill their obligations. We believe that the Palestinians have moved forward on some of their obligations, including fighting terror. Both sides now need to focus on fulfilling their obligations.

QUESTION: Could you be more specific on what the Palestinians need to do?

MR. RUBIN: All the obligations and the Israelis --

QUESTION: What are they?

MR. RUBIN: I'll be happy to provide you a copy of the Wye River memorandum.

QUESTION: I have it, but you are the judges of what they have completed and what they have not.

MR. RUBIN: What I said is some of their obligations, including fighting terror, they have been implementing. Let me say, our interest here is not to get into a public squabble and a public scorecard. Our interest is in getting both sides to approach this matter seriously.

QUESTION: One more on it.

MR. RUBIN: Okay.

QUESTION: Which comes to mind -- and I won't get into the difficult background because I think you know it, and I know it. Is any assurance in the midst of going out, or has any assurance gone out to the Palestinians on the withdrawal? Should I go a little further?

MR. RUBIN: Yes.

QUESTION: All right, you don't want the Palestinians to be making unilateral statehood declarations. It's my understanding part of the deal is that the US, who will submit a statement, that it intends to see Israel to continue to withdrawal. Has any assurance like that gone to them?

MR. RUBIN: I haven't heard about that deal.

QUESTION: See, they are concerned also about yesterday. They think that means you've eased back on withdrawal.

MR. RUBIN: I haven't heard about that deal.

QUESTION: But you're not easing back on withdrawal, that's clear.

MR. RUBIN: Our position remains unchanged.

QUESTION: Yes, Jamie, I have two questions, one on Cambodia and one on North Korea. There was a Reuters report this morning which said that Senator Mitch McConnell apparently told Hun Sen in Cambodia that if Khmer Rouge leaders are not tried in an international tribunal, there could be a complete cut off of US aid to Cambodia. I was wondering whether that reflects Administration policy?

MR. RUBIN: I'm not aware that we coordinated that with Senator McConnell.

QUESTION: Okay, and then also, do you have anything on the conclusion of the missile talk sin Pyongyang?

MR. RUBIN: With respect to the missile talks, let me say that we do have a comment on the missile talks. The US and North Korea met March 29-30, for another round of missile talks. The talks occurred in Pyongyang in North Korea, and the US delegation was led by our Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Einhorn. The talks were business like, substantive and detailed. The entire range of missile proliferation issues were discussed and covered. We used the talks to press our serious concerns about North Korea's development, testing, deployment and export of missiles and missile technology and to call for tight constraints on these activities.

In particular, we stressed that further launches of long missiles or further exports of such missiles or their technology would have serious negative implications for US-North Korean relations. The sides agreed to hold another round of talks as soon as possible. We will work out the timing and venue through the New York channel.

It's not surprising to us that we have not yet reached an agreement. For those of you who ask me about the Kumchang-ni talks time after time after time, you know that negotiating with North Korea is a marathon process with our marathon negotiators, and they are determined to continue to pursue our objectives.

QUESTION: This is a follow up to yesterday question, that the Japanese Government has now confirmed that the two ships they shot at were North Korean. Is there a US reaction; and also, did they discuss this at the missile talks?

MR. RUBIN: The United States remains seriously concerned about the incursion of the two unidentified ships into Japanese waters. We have been in close consultations with our Japanese allies on this issue, and we continue to cooperate with Japan on this matter. As regards whether this came up in our discussions with North Korea, we do not wish to comment on this kind of detail of our diplomatic exchange.

QUESTION: Jamie, when you say that further launches would complicate --

MR. RUBIN: Serious negative implications for US-North Korean relations.

QUESTION: Does that include attempts to launch communication satellites or other types of satellites?

MR. RUBIN: Well, what we're talking about is long-range missiles, and we define that our way. A long-range missile is a long-range missile, but I will try to get a technical answer for you.

QUESTION: But when you say that's serious implications for North Korea, does that mean you're going to cancel the potato program?

MR. RUBIN: Well, we have developed an ongoing process with North Korea, a step-by-step program including the agreed framework and all that goes with it that has very serious programs. We have this food aid; we have a lot of other programs. We have always made our policy on food aid based on humanitarian concerns. I don't want to be more specific on what a serious negative implication would be, other than to say that it would have serious negative implications.

QUESTION: I understand you didn't reach agreement in these talks, but can you tell us whether you saw any progress? And can you in some way describe the response of the North Koreans to these points that you put to them?

MR. RUBIN: Well, from our perspective, we achieved the objective of pressing our concern about the North Koreans' indigenous missile activities and missile exports and of calling for tight constraints on these activities. We've only had four meetings to discuss this important and complex issue. We don't think it's surprising that we have not yet reached agreement. They did agree to hold another round of talks as soon as possible, so we're able to continue the process.

It would not be appropriate for me to get into the details of the talks; however, we made our concerns very clear. We have made clear our concerns with both missile exports and with indigenous development and deployment activities. Both elements must be addressed. We've also made clear to the North Koreans the US is not prepared to "compensate" North Korea for stopping destabilizing missile sales it should not be making in the first place.

QUESTION: Can you give us any readout on the meeting with the President-elect of Nigeria today?

MR. RUBIN: Yes, the President, I think, will be meeting shortly or is now meeting with the Nigerian President, so I don't want to give you too much information about that pending that meeting; except to say that Secretary Albright did discuss bilateral issues, including regional security and the challenges Nigeria faces as it moves to inaugurate its first democratic government in over 15 years.

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country. A successful transition to civilian democratic rule there will impact not only Nigeria but the whole region. We hope to work with Nigeria to ensure its successful transition to the economic, political and social leader it can and should be in Africa.

The discussions will be wide-ranging, focusing on how we can best work together with the current government of Nigeria and the President-elect on the challenges and opportunities Nigeria has at hand. These include economic reform, reconstituting democratic institutions, improved cooperation in counter narcotics efforts and Nigeria's role in regional peacekeeping.

QUESTION: Did you say the Secretary will be going to his inauguration?

MR. RUBIN: I have no detail on that plan or non-plan.

QUESTION: Thank you.

(The briefing concluded at 3:45 P.M.)

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Department
Seal**David Scheffer, Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues**On-the Record Briefing on Atrocities in Kosovo released by the Office of the
Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, April 9, 1999

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AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Thank you, Jim. Welcome. My purpose this afternoon is to provide a better understanding of the overall context in which the crimes unfolding in Kosovo have been and are being committed.

Briefly, I want to remind everyone here of our recent statements to this effect so that you can see the chronology of how we have been speaking of this within the last couple of weeks. On Friday, March 26th, the spokesman, Jamie Rubin, issued a statement, indicating at that time within day or two of the start of the bombing, that we are using national technical means to observe the activity on the ground with respect to possible atrocities; and that we put the Yugoslav Army and Ministry of Internal Affairs on notice that attacks are, indeed, being observed.

On Monday, March 29th, spokesman Rubin from this podium described what we concluded were ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity and indicators of genocide occurring in Kosovo. On Wednesday, April 7th, again, spokesman Rubin from this podium put named commanders of the VJ and the MUP, the police,

on notice that we are extremely cognizant of what is occurring with the armed forces and the police on the ground. We know that they're undertaking criminal activity; and that the responsibility of command of those forces is with those named commanders. They have a duty under international law to prevent and punish the actions of their subordinates.

I think I can show you today six of the nine individuals -- photos of those individuals -- who were named by Jamie Rubin on Wednesday. I won't take your time to list through them all, but these are six of the nine that we're able to provide you with visual images of and obviously invite you to take some snapshots of that if you wish.

Also, on Wednesday, April 7th, my report of my trip to the region was released by the State Department, and that's now available on the State website. Finally, I need to note for all of you that the ethnic cleansing and KVM/KDOM reports issued through our facilities are also on the State website. So there's actually quite a bit out there that can be looked at for purposes of specific actions that we've observed and heard reports about on the ground.

Finally, I just want to remind everyone of prosecutor Louise Arbour's letter of March 26th to -- she addressed this letter to 13 top Yugoslav authorities, including President Milosevic. In that letter, she put them on notice that they are responsible in terms of command responsibility for the actions of their forces, their police on the ground in Kosovo; and that she is, in a sense, aggressively investigating those actions on the ground. She also publicly announced the indictment of Arcan on March 31st.

Now, we have sought to provide you what we can, in real time, of what we know from refugee interviews and other sources of information about the criminal actions being perpetrated in Kosovo. I want to place this afternoon those events in a larger context for you, particularly in terms of the criminal conduct of primarily the Serb military, paramilitary and police.

I want to start that context with a quick drop back to 1998, because the criminal conduct that we're concerned about stretches back to March of 1998. It intensified during May and early June of 1998. The Office of the Prosecutor of the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal affirmed its jurisdiction on March 10th of 1998, and again on June 12th of 1998, and again in July of 1998, to the Contact Group that it had jurisdiction over the events in Kosovo; and that those events constituted an internal armed conflict, which is the factual prerequisite for bringing indictments for crimes against humanity or violations of the laws and customs of war. The United States agreed with the prosecutor's statement to the Contact Group that Belgrade's attempt to deny the Tribunal's jurisdiction on grounds that Kosovo is a "police action" is simply wrong both in law and in fact.

In May of 1998, the United States provided \$400,000 to the Yugoslav Tribunal to investigate Kosovo crimes. In late July, August, September and early October 1998, that assault on Kosovo by Serb military, paramilitary and police clearly established the pattern which has now been shown in a much more accelerated and intensified manner in the last few weeks. During that period in 1998, KDOM and NGOs were actually on the ground to report the pattern as it unfolded.

I, myself, reported in September of 1998 that actions by Serb authorities in Kosovo have resulted in widespread burning of settlements, the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Kosovar Albanians and the deaths of many innocent civilians and humanitarian aid workers; and that we concluded serious violations of international humanitarian law were occurring.

Quickly listing those, we saw a scorched earth policy unfolding. We saw over one-third of the villages being damaged. At least an estimated 4,000 houses were severely damaged or destroyed during that period. At least 59 town sustained 50 percent or more damage. There was crop burning, the slaughter of livestock. The level of destruction in September of 1998 rose dramatically. Serb forces also delayed relief convoys, conducted protracted shelling of targets in areas of no military necessity, forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Kosovars. Then in November, I visited Kosovo, saw the destruction myself, as well as recent killings.

We concluded that these attacks served no military objective; and that that points toward the kind of activity prohibited under well established customary international law. The conduct of last year demonstrated a clear capacity and intent on the part of the Yugoslav authorities to commit war crime and crimes against humanity against the Kosovar Albanians. We need to remember this when we examine the ferocity with which similar actions have been undertaken in the last few weeks.

The pattern was established in 1998. Indeed, one might consider what happened in 1998, as a practice run for what was unleashed with remarkable speed and thoroughness in the last few weeks. Milosevic and the Serb leadership are trying to bring to closure what they began in 1998.

Now, the events of the last few weeks exceed in magnitude and ferocity all that occurred in 1998. Without question Serb assaults on the civilian population of Kosovo are widespread and systematic. Let me point you to the definition as provided in the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal Statute of crimes against humanity. That definition is not very hard to understand:

"Persons can be prosecuted -- those who are responsible for the following crimes when committed in armed conflict, whether international or internal in character, and directed against any civilian population. It includes: murder; extermination; enslavement; deportation; imprisonment; torture; rape; persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds and other inhumane acts."

Many of these crimes are being committed in Kosovo. There are also clear violations of the Geneva Conventions and of the Laws and Customs of War. In particular, I would point you to destruction of civilian property as a major factor.

A consistent pattern of reports from refugees and other sources of information indicates that Serb forces have been responsible for criminal violations of international humanitarian law throughout much of Kosovo. These violations include -- first, forced expulsion of large segments of the ethnic Albanian population on a scale not seen in Europe since World War II. Serb forces are systematically expelling ethnic Albanians from both villages and the larger towns of Kosovo, including from many places that had not been scene of any previous UCK or KLA activity or fighting. At least 800,000 Kosovars probably are internally displaced.

At this time, I would like to point to the map the my colleague, Pierre Prosper, is putting up. This ethnographic map shows you about 20 sites, which are the blue triangular sites, that we have been able to locate internally displaced sites of significant magnitude. Also on this point -- also on this map, I'd like to point out that it's interesting if you -- and this will pertain both to what I'll be talking about in a minute which are the yellow dots that the destruction of towns, as well as the internally displaced sites which are the blue triangles -- you'll notice that eastern Kosovo, as well as the very northeastern quadrant of Kosovo, as well as these two areas here, are generally devoid of either destruction or internally displaced persons. You'll notice that those are areas where there is a relatively small percentage of Kosovo Albanians in residence.

So the dramatic, I think, feature of this map is the systematic character of going after the Kosovar Albanian areas of Kosovo without much appreciable damage or internally displaced populations from those areas that are largely populated by Serbs.

Now, under this issue of forced expulsions, I can give you some details if you wish of more details about that particular violation, but it does include forced removal of Albanians from their homes at gun point; destruction of all official and identifying documents; cramming of Albanians into trains; infliction of unsanitary conditions on the trains, et cetera.

The second major category, I would describe as detention and summary execution of military-aged men and mass executions. Refugees have provided accounts of summary executions in at least 50 towns and villages throughout Kosovo. Some accounts refer to large numbers of Kosovars being killed in apparent massacres. At least one report appears to have been corroborated. The summary executions of approximately 100 men at Velika Kruska. The bodies of some 70 ethnic Albanians ranging in age from 14 to 50 were discovered by internally displaced persons on April 1st.

Now some of the details are killings of intellectuals and leaders; separating fighting-aged men from the group; killing of fighting-aged men; causing of serious bodily harm; and mass executions.

Now the third major category brings us to burning and destruction of civilian homes and villages. This brings us back to this map. The yellow dots, we've been able to confirm with overhead imagery, are villages and towns that have been torched or otherwise destroyed by gunfire during this most recent conflict. You can see the large number. We have counted about 220 sites indicated on this map. But as of today, we've counted 250. It is a dynamic number that continues to rise.

I'd like to show you just a couple of photographs, imagery. This is damage to buildings. This graphic illustrates systematic destruction of a neighborhood around a mosque in Grejkovce. The mosque is also heavily damaged -- and that's located right here -- but you can actually still see the smoke rising from the burned area of the town. The next image is a damage to buildings in Kosovska Mitrovica, and the graph illustrates before and after imagery of the systematic destruction of residential homes at that location. The homes are on the edge of a village. They were originally built of concrete and stone.

Of course, you'll notice here the absence of any battle damage, any cratering or any damage to any of the land around these homes. Clearly, it's not a battle scene. These homes would have appeared to have been simply because of the nature of the occupancy of those homes.

I believe there's one other photo or image that we did not get up during my reference to internally displaced persons, but it's a very interesting one. Let's go back to IDPs for a moment because I want to describe this to you. This graphic illustrates numerous tents and campsites in central Kosovo. Some of the many sites located throughout five valleys within the Laupusnik Mountain range, sheltering tens of thousands of IDPs. This is actually a more narrow shot of what is present in the larger area. These IDPs stretch throughout this valley. They're without permanent shelter. What you are seeing are some of their vehicles, tents, et cetera that they have

been able to bring with them. They are exposed in this area. Typically, one can discern VJ or police who are in the area around these IDPs and placing them at obvious risk.

With respect to the destruction of civilian property, the third category that I pointed to you, I just want to point to what we believe we have incontrovertible evidence of the burning of residential areas in most of the larger towns and cities of Kosovo and in many of the villages, i.e., those areas of Kosovo that I outlined on the map that I showed you earlier.

Now, if you take the totality of this information that we have acquired so far, we believe that it creates the basis for stating that there are indicators of genocide unfolding in Kosovo. Now, some questions have been raised recently about the provision of evidence to the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal. Let me confirm to you that we are providing information as quickly as we possibly can to the Yugoslav Tribunal during a period of very dynamic action on the ground.

The procedures that were established several years ago were procedures that related typically to events that had occurred some time in the past. Therefore, there was a very methodical procedure of cataloging and providing that information to the Yugoslav Tribunal. Under these circumstances, with a situation that is happening so quickly, we have accelerated those procedures, and we are starting to flow that information to the Tribunal as quickly as you can.

I have spoken directly with the deputy prosecutor, Graham Bluett. I've spoken with the chief of investigations to confirm to them and to obtain their confirmation that this information is starting to come in, in real time, and as quickly as we can possibly get it to them. But we do need to follow the necessary provisions under Rule 70 and other procedures to provide information to the Tribunal, and they understand that.

I would also like to say that the United States Government, as part of its contribution to the Kosovo Verification Mission, is assisting in the collection of information for the Tribunal in the field with respect to interviews with refugees. We thus have people on the ground doing those interviews. Their interviews are being given to the Tribunal -- the records of those interviews.

The Tribunal, in my opinion, seems fully committed to a vigorous investigation of the events in Kosovo. I have just recently confirmed that with the officials of the Tribunal to my satisfaction. So with that I think I will leave the formal briefing. Jim, how would you like to proceed?

QUESTION: There are so many questions that could and should be asked. So let me try to just ask one or two. When you hold these commanders up as potentially responsible -- the nine -- is it based on them giving orders or setting a climate, an atmosphere, permissive? Do they actually tell the troops to go out and kill civilians? I ask that for a purpose, because then how and why don't you bring your same accusation against Milosevic, who is the ultimate commander? Why do you stop short? I ask this against the back-drop of a government that made a big fuss over Bosnia and the major accused are still free in Bosnia. So your track record suggests some lack of resolve once the firing stops.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: No, I would beg to differ, Barry. The answer is really quite simple. On March 26th, Prosecutor Arbour named Milosevic directly in her communication to not only Milosevic but the 12 other top leaders of the government in Belgrade. We firmly support what she did. We look primarily to the prosecutor of the Tribunal to take actions of this character.

So therefore, what I can confirm to you is that we found Prosecutor's Arbour's communication on March 26th to be an entirely appropriate communication by the prosecutor of the Tribunal, alerting Mr. Milosevic and other leaders of exactly the points that we then found it useful to alert the Kosovo-level commanders of precisely the same points.

QUESTION: So is it the U.S. Government view that Milosevic is potentially guilty of war crimes?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: President Milosevic has political responsibility for the conduct of these forces. Let me just say this --

QUESTION: Political sounds like a cop-out.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: No, there's nothing contradictory here, Barry. Neither these commanders that we've identified, nor Mr. Milosevic, nor anyone else is being fingered by the United States Government for criminal responsibility as individuals. That's the job of the prosecutor. We have not identified these individuals as anything other than commanders of forces that we believe are committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Kosovo.

So therefore, we're simply stating the facts. These guys are commanders. Under the laws of war, they have command responsibility. We've stated very clearly that the responsibility for what takes place in Kosovo does stretch back to Belgrade and to the leadership in Belgrade.

QUESTION: Isn't that tantamount to an accusation?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Not at all. The job of indicating someone for criminal culpability is the job of the prosecutor --

QUESTION: But that's an indictment. I mean, anyone can accuse anyone of anything else. That doesn't take a Tribunal to do that.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: But we're not accusing anyone in any of these statements.

QUESTION: Why not, though?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Why should we? That's the job of the prosecutor.

QUESTION: But -- well, the prosecutor's job is to take an accusation and turn it into an indictment --

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Look, from 1993, we've strongly supported the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for Yugoslavia, whose job and responsibility is to do precisely that, to investigate, draw up indictments and prosecute. That is not the job of the United States Government.

QUESTION: Why is it taking so long? I mean, Milosevic's track record -- as the Secretary of State herself has said -- is long and quite demonstrable. Why is there not an indictment today?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Prosecutor Arbour has actually answered that many times on the public record. I think if you look at her public statements, we would be very understanding and supportive of what she has said publicly about this. She will undertake investigations as she sees fit in the most professional manner possible. We have a very high degree in confidence in how she is actually conducting her investigations.

QUESTION: Can I just follow-up? Your statements were quite dramatic in its indictment of the Serb forces for a pattern of abuses. It seems to me that if it is quite so certain that a year ago we saw what is now a practice run for this -- what's going on now and -- I mean, aren't your words also an indictment of the international community for not acting sooner?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Absolutely not. The United States Government in early August initiated discussions and actions within NATO that resulted in an ACTORD in early October to respond to what was occurring on the ground. So it wasn't as if we were sitting aside and not reacting to the criminal activity that was occurring on the ground. We were reacting to it.

We also -- in terms of the judicial side of the matter -- the investigative side, in May of 1998, we were the first country to commit a very large, voluntary contribution to the Yugoslav Tribunal to initiate Kosovo investigations - - exclusively Kosovo investigations. We have been at the forefront of the international community in encouraging the Tribunal to continue to focus on Kosovo. So I don't see us not acting. In fact, I see us acting.

QUESTION: Well, I'm not saying that the United States didn't act. I mean, obviously, you have been at the forefront of a lot that's gone on. But on the other hand, the international community did not seriously move with military action to try to stop this -- the Serb offensive in Kosovo until now.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Well, I will leave actually to others to comment more broadly on your point. I would only say that I have a great deal of confidence in how our government acted in 1998 to respond as quickly as we could to these actions, both in terms of our engagement with NATO and in terms of our effort to get talks underway with President Milosevic.

QUESTION: You said -- in preface to your remarks -- that the conduct last year demonstrated a clear capacity and intent. How does that fit in with the Administration's line in the last several weeks that they were surprised at how quickly this unfolded and how ferociously the acts are committed on the ground?

If you all were so clearly aware of the capacity and the intent, how was it that you were surprised when this actually came out?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: No, the intent that I was describing for 1998 was not some specific intent that in March and April of 1999 within a two-week period he would sweep through Kosovo with this kind of ferocity. But I think that what was demonstrated in 1998 is that the Serb authorities clearly demonstrated a will and a capacity to assault the civilian population of Kosovo in an egregious and criminal character. But it is true that no one could have predicted -- I think -- with a great deal of accuracy that within a two-week period he would have unleashed his army with this kind of ferocity.

QUESTION: Ambassador Scheffer, given what you said earlier following up on that, why couldn't they predict? Wouldn't there be human intelligence on the ground? I mean, this isn't North Korea; it isn't Iraq. Why wouldn't you know he would be doing something like this?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Well, all I will say is this, that I, myself, recognized before March 24th and 25th when the bombing began that the massing of the forces and the village by village decimation that was going on by units of the Yugoslav Army and police that were coming into Kosovo, clearly started to demonstrate to me that the horror of 1998 was starting to be repeated.

Now if we had not launched that bombing campaign, I have every degree of confidence that we would have seen the sweep occur anyway.

QUESTION: But not on that, but just that element -- were you surprised or not surprised by what has taken place?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I don't understand why the issue of surprise is so pertinent to everyone. The fact is it happened, and we're trying to respond to it happening. It's just hindsight analysis.

QUESTION: I want to go back to the role the US is playing with the tribunal. If it's not the US role to investigate, how is it exactly that you've been able to come up with these nine names? I mean, surely that takes investigation, so the US has been doing some investigation. You've gone there yourself and interviewed these people. So I don't understand why the US is not in a position to directly accuse whoever it wants or whoever it thinks is doing this stuff to the Tribunal.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: It's the job of the prosecutor to investigate precisely an individual's relationship to criminal activity. We can provide the prosecutor with a great deal of information. It is not the job of the United States Government to make that determination. It is the job of the prosecutor, looking at the evidence, to make that determination.

What we can do is set the context for the prosecutor by ourselves as a government, concluding that the facts on the ground clearly demonstrate criminal activity. We can point to who commands these forces, but then we leave it to the prosecutor to actually arrive at determinations that would result in indictments.

QUESTION: The Pentagon, today, talked about an incident in which Serb forces gathered women at Dakovica barracks and apparently raped them and killed them. Do you know anything about that?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I really don't. I've only heard the report. I know nothing further than what has been reported and as you have stated it.

QUESTION: Can you give us a breakdown of percentage -- the map that you had up there earlier -- the villages burning -- what percentage of villages, what percentages of the towns; and also, displacement internally and externally, just a bigger picture of that.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: We're trying to determine that percentage as you speak. We don't have it yet because there's so much coming in. All I know is with what percentage we had in September of 1998, and I, myself, will be interested to compare now what percentage. We know it's much greater. We just don't actually know what that percentage is. In terms of -- did you ask for percentages of IDPs, was that it?

QUESTION: Yes.

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I actually don't have the figure, other than the IDP number -- I just don't have it for you. I just know it's in the hundreds of thousands. What percentage that is of the Kosovo population, which was 1.7 million the last time I heard, we're looking at about 330-340,000 IDPs that we're guesstimating at this time.

QUESTION: Refugees -- I mean I heard a figure earlier of 1.1 million?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Yes, there the numbers reached to a million or so, but I would leave that to others in this building to get you the exact figures on those.

QUESTION: Also, one other thing, you mentioned that you're now getting this information -- I think you were referring to villages burning or whatever -- real time, so you can actually -- can you explain that a little more?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Well, we're using, obviously, national technical means. I can't go into any details of that, other than to say within the last couple of weeks, we've been able to determine with a great deal of accuracy, what's burning.

QUESTION: I'm sorry you said 330-340 in internally displaced -- because I thought earlier you said 800,000?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: No. That's a total number -- well, can we have someone else check those figures, Jim, because 800,000 is a total internally displaced in their totality in this conflict.

QUESTION: Can you talk a little bit -- you had the map earlier with the blue triangles, and you made the point how you didn't see some of this destruction and expulsion activities in places where there aren't ethnic Albanians. The stated goal of the Serbian forces is to go after the KLA, which some officials have called a terrorist organization. To what degree is the discrepancy between the areas where there are expulsions and the areas that you pointed out that weren't expulsions a factor of where the KLA is? Wouldn't one think that the KLA would be dispersed within the ethnic Albanian populations as opposed to the Serbian populations of Kosovo?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I think all I will say on that is there's an enormous number of non-KLA civilians living in these areas. What we've noticed both in August and September as well as in this campaign is that villages are being destroyed long after we've seen any indication of KLA activity anywhere near that village. It's very much long after their presence, that the destruction is actually taking place. In fact, in some of the extreme areas in the north and in the south, where there has never been any record of KLA activity, the villages are being torched anyway.

QUESTION: In your opinion, is it fair to say that the sweep of the VJ and the MUP that began with the bombing was primarily undertaken uproot ethnic Albanians, as opposed to targeting the KLA? Is that their primary intention?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I don't see how you can reach any other conclusion. When you assault a civilian population with this severity and so systematically -- as I described in my April 7th report -- that is not a military action against a guerrilla force. That is an assault, wholesale on a civilian population. I can't think of a better example of it, frankly, than what has unfolded in Kosovo in the last two weeks.

MR. FOLEY: Other questions?

QUESTION: What indication do you have about the extent of the planning of this sweep that existed, you know, right prior to the bombings? Does this seem to you something that was meticulously planned weeks or months in advance?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: I don't care to comment on that other than to say if you look at how it has unfolded on the ground, it's very, very difficult -- if not impossible -- to conclude that what happened on the ground was anything other than planned. This was not a spontaneous action -- village-by-village. It was a sweep. In fact, within villages and towns, it was neighborhood by neighborhood. I, for one, don't see how that could happen without it having been planned and pursuant to a policy.

QUESTION: How much does that make a difference -- the extent of the planning in terms of the severity of possible charges -- possible charges that could come against?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: Let's just say that obviously, if you can demonstrate a well thought out plan that has an intent behind it, then -that's why we point to indicators of genocide. But I want to emphasize that regardless, you can have a very well planned campaign of crimes against humanity, and there is no question that that's what's unfolded in Kosovo.

QUESTION: Do you have any estimates, how many ethnic Albanians have been killed? I thought before the international observers were forced to leave that the number was about 2,000. I wonder if you have any estimates now?

AMBASSADOR SCHEFFER: That was the number that really rose from 1998, when we actually had monitors on the ground and were able to keep a far more accurate count. I think it would be very problematic to speculate at this time on a number. It simply -- I fear -- would be too low if I did speculate. I think we have to wait to find what the death count is.

QUESTION: Thank you.

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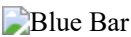
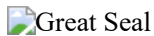
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**Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and
U.K. Foreign Secretary Robin Cook**

Press Conference
Washington, D.C., April 22, 1999
As released by the Office of the Spokesman
U.S. Department of State



SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Good morning. Let me welcome you here. Foreign Secretary Cook and I have had, already, a very useful meeting. The Foreign Secretary is here, of course, for the NATO summit, which begins tomorrow and marks the biggest invasion of Washington since what we diplomats refer to as the "unpleasantness of 1812."

(Laughter.)

Fifty years ago, another distinguished British Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, came to Washington. He said, in signing the NATO treaty, that "at last, democracy is no longer a series of isolated units; it's a coherent organism." The intervening years proved the wisdom of those words, as NATO provided the shield behind which a generation of our citizens grew up and grew old in peace.

Today, too, NATO stands united. And nowhere is that unity stronger than in the enduring friendship between the United States and the United Kingdom.

This morning, we have reviewed plans for the NATO summit; we have discussed the latest developments in Kosovo. NATO's position is rock-solid: we will persist until the conflict in Kosovo can be ended on the terms we have set. We will help care for the people of Kosovo made refugees by Milosevic's depredations and we will help them return and rebuild.

Let me just say how disgusted I was to hear Milosevic repeat in an interview broadcast last night his big lie; that refugees from Kosovo are fleeing NATO's bombs, not Belgrade's ethnic cleansing. That will certainly be news to the refugees, who are giving eyewitness accounts of the atrocities perpetrated at Milosevic's order.

Milosevic can deny the truth, but he cannot change it. The truth is that his forces are responsible for the worst crimes committed in Europe in more than half a century. In that connection, we will do all that we can to share information with the War Crimes Tribunal and to see that those who commit atrocities are held accountable.

We're considering new economic measures designed to deny Belgrade the ability to wage war on its own people, such as an embargo on oil products. We will do our part in a broader initiative to bring the Balkans fully into the mainstream of a Europe whole and free.

The United States, Britain and others have put forward very good proposals. We must now move forward on a coordinated effort to consolidate democracy, promote economic growth and support those who strive for peace across Southeast Europe.

With respect to the question of ground forces -- a subject of much speculation amongst all of you -- let me tell you where we are. We are confident that a sustained and relentless air campaign can achieve our objectives, and I think that most recently the targets of the Socialist Party headquarters and command and control centers are evidence of the continued damage that our air campaign is doing.

We do not favor the deployment of ground forces into a hostile environment in Kosovo. We do, however, believe it is prudent to update our plans and assessments and to support Secretary General Solana's efforts to do so.

Events in Kosovo have shown clearly why we need a strong and adapted NATO with new members and new capabilities, ready to take on new missions. The Foreign Secretary and I discussed the remaining summit issues, and I welcomed Prime Minister Blair's ideas on strengthening the European pillar of our alliance to help make Europe more able to act effectively while maintaining its strong links to NATO.

NATO's fundamental purpose -- safeguarding the ideals, interests and territory of its members -- is unchanging. At its foundation are enduring ties of trust and friendship between America and its allies. No bond is stronger than the one we share with the United Kingdom, and none is more certain to endure for another 50 years and beyond.

And now, my good friend, the Foreign Secretary.

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: Thank you, Madeleine. I'll just gloss over 1812 and we can put that one behind us.

(Laughter.)

But I do want to go back 50 years, and I welcome Madeleine's reference to Ernest Bevin, the distinguished previous Labor Foreign Secretary. Fifty years ago, NATO was born out of the defeat of fascism in Europe. This weekend we'll be commemorating those 50 years of security which we have brought to Europe and to the free world. But just as we were born out of the defeat of fascism, NATO cannot tolerate the rebirth of fascism within Europe. And that is what we are witnessing at the present time.

In 1945 when we looked at the Europe that we inherited, it was a Europe scarred by genocide, by mass deportation of peoples, by ethnic confrontation and ethnic aggression. The tragedy is that we witness all of those again in Kosovo today.

Over the past three weeks, I have met a number of Kosovar Albanians in London. They all bring the same tales of the savagery from Kosovo. Earlier this week, I met one man who was one of the last to leave Pristina. He described the methodical way in which that town was emptied by Milosevic's thugs -- district by district; time after time families being told the same thing, that they have five minutes to get out of the house. If they looked wealthy, they were also told that if you have 5,000 DM, we will allow you to take your father with you; how much value do you put on your mother, that you would take your mother with you.

We cannot tolerate the return of the doctrine of ethnic superiority to Europe; nor can we tolerate the aggression that's been practiced by President Milosevic's forces without conveying a clear signal of encouragement to dictators around the world. That is why it is so important that we make a stand in Kosovo.

I agree absolutely with the point that has already been made by Madeleine Albright that President Milosevic lies when he says that the Kosovar Albanians have fled NATO's bombing. Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of refugees have come out of Kosovo over the past month. Not one has said that they were fleeing from NATO bombs. All have said that they are fleeing from President Milosevic's special police and from his paramilitary thugs.

That is why we have given an undertaking that we will pass all our information to the War Crimes Tribunal, including our own intelligence, in order that they can come to a judgment as to who is guilty of those war crimes and bring to justice before the International Tribunal those who have been guilty of the atrocities within Kosovo.

I want to make, also though, a message not of shock and revulsion alone, but of determination that we are going to reverse the atrocities and the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Our air campaign is being effective; it is cutting off the communications of the Yugoslav Army; it is making them run low on fuel; it has denied them air cover, so that much of the time they stay in hiding rather than venture out into the open.

I am in total agreement with the point that has already been made by Madeleine Albright that we are not going to commit ground forces in a hostile environment; nor do we need to. Time is our greatest ally. As President Milosevic gets weaker with the passage of time, so too, does the strength of our case for returning the Kosovars under international protection.

This weekend, NATO will demonstrate its resolve to complete the job to which we have set our hand. The best basis for that resolve is the unity of the Alliance. I want to end with a particular word of appreciation for the contribution that has been made by Madeleine Albright to building that unity and strengthening that resolve.

I think we've spoken almost daily for four weeks now, Madeleine, and I know also that Madeleine speaks equally frequently to my colleagues in France and Germany and Italy, and has built up a great respect throughout Europe as a person who has provided leadership among the foreign ministers to ensure that unity in the Alliance and the resolve to complete the task. Nobody worked harder than Madeleine at Rambouillet to try and achieve peace, and nobody should forget that President Milosevic had every opportunity to resolve this issue through dialogue.

It was his refusal to negotiate in good faith that produced the conflict. And now that we are in that conflict, it is vital that for the sake of the refugees -- and for the sake of the Alliance -- we make sure we secure our objective of enabling the refugees to return, of forcing President Milosevic to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and securing the entry of an international military presence which will help us to rebuild Kosovo and create a free and democratic Kosovo.

QUESTION: You both made rather straightforward statements about ground troops, appearing to rule them out. But the speculation, as the Secretary described it, is based on statements by the British and French, and also based on the fact you haven't won the war and it's taking a long time to deliver that knock-out punch and to get at the Serb troops who are torturing those people you talk about. So is there something between the lines here that we miss when the Secretary refers to plans being looked at again this weekend? Is there some nuance here about ground troops? Could everybody have interpreted French and British statements incorrectly, as if the use of ground troops is on the table? The US has said no; that's great. But following the French and British positions has been a little difficult. Could you give us some help?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Let me just make one comment and then let Robin respond. I think it is inappropriate to rule anything out, and we have not done so.

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: I would absolutely agree with that.

First of all, we're both quite clear at some point ground troops will be required in Kosovo; indeed, we agreed to that at Rambouillet even before the commencement of the present military conflict. We have always said that ground troops would be necessary in Kosovo to guarantee security and a cease-fire in Kosovo.

I have to say, after the last four weeks, it will be necessary to give the refugees the confidence to return to have that international military presence.

We are also absolutely clear that we are not sending in troops to fight their way in in a ground force invasion. That has never been on. Therefore, what will happen in the future and the endgame -- to make sure when the time is right, when it's appropriate, when it is safe to commit those ground troops to guarantee a cease-fire in Kosovo -- that will be a NATO decision. It will be one that will be taken jointly. And there is no difference between us in the need to make sure we do some preparation so we are ready when that moment comes.

QUESTION: Are you now not using -- or why are you not using the term "permissive environment?" You've used the word "hostile" -- that you wouldn't want to send ground troops into a hostile environment. But what about the permissive environment; is that still on the table, as it were, or can you sort of live with a permissive-minus, as it were?

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: I'm not sure what a permissive-minus would be. First of all, nobody goes in in a hostile environment. Secondly, no problem if we get agreement from Belgrade. Sure, there may be circumstances in which Belgrade has not signed a formal treaty in which it may be appropriate to go in. But what is a permissive environment and what is an appropriate time to go in is a judgment that we can only make when that time comes. It's a judgment we'll make together; it's a judgment we'll make with the military on board.

QUESTION: But do you need a formal agreement from Belgrade to allow troops in, or will you consider sending troops in in a non-permissive environment?

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: I'm not sure that we would necessarily make it an absolute condition that there has to be a formal treaty signing with a ceremony and photographs. But at what point is appropriate to go in is a matter we have to judge with care and with very clear regard to military advice.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you had said earlier -- I believe it was before Parliament -- that it is possible to conceive of circumstances in which it may be feasible to commit ground troops. Could you elaborate on that and explain what you meant by that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: I think I've been elaborating about that since we started questions. I'm not sure that there is that much fresh that I have to add to what I said. But let me just repeat for the ones that doubt: no ground troops that have to fight their way in; yes ground troops to guarantee a cease-fire; when it would be appropriate to commit those ground troops will depend on a judgment as to what the circumstances are in Kosovo and how near we are to that cease-fire.

QUESTION: How, then, is NATO going to look at revising its policy on ground troops if there's still no way that it's going to agree to send in ground troops that have to fight to get into Kosovo? How does this revision occur? What gets revised?

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: I don't think anybody's proposing we revise the policy. I mean, the policy that I have spoken to is one that we jointly share and that our allies are on board for. Obviously, we want the

military to be ready for contingencies and to make sure that they're ready for all options. But that doesn't mean to say the policy is changing.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I think, first of all, as you all know, there were assessments made last fall about the situation on the ground. We believe that it is prudent for those military planners and assessors at NATO to take as a statement of fact to recognize the current situation and provide for NATO an update in their assessment and plans. That's what's happening.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, you spoke about considering new economic measures, and you did mention the oil embargo as one of them. Are there any other economic measures that are under consideration?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, let me say that we are particularly focusing on oil because that is the way that forces move around. As you know, some of the targets have been specifically against oil refineries. Therefore, we have agreed, in these many, many conversations, that basically it didn't make a lot of sense for us to be bombing refineries and at the same time not doing enough to prevent the access of oil by sea.

So the EU decided on an oil embargo. We believe that additional steps can be taken whereby each country in interpreting its laws can, in fact, search and visit the vessels that are on the Adriatic, which in no way would interfere with neutral shipping.

I think we are looking at a variety of other ways, but I'm not prepared to discuss any more details.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, regarding the 20,000 Kosovar refugees that the US has agreed to take in, first, can you tell us how it will be decided who will come to the US? When will they come? And also, why the change of heart -- not going to Guantanamo Bay?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, let me say that I think we are looking to families and those who have families that there can be reuniting and a sense that many of the European countries that are undertaking this kind of a reception of the Albanians do not have the same kind of status that we do in terms of temporary. We wanted to be on the same footing to show the generosity of spirit of the American people, as the British are showing.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, on the European pillar, ten days ago or so I read your Brookings Institution speech as not favoring the European pillar. You were saying that it would tend to create a split within NATO. Has there been an evolution of your position on that?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I think you misread my speech. We have always favored a European pillar, we just don't want it to be separate from NATO. We have argued for the fact that there should be no de-coupling, no duplication and no discrimination. But we do believe that there is great value in having a European pillar, but not outside of NATO.

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: May I just add briefly to that? Britain would not be proposing the initiatives being done on European security if we felt that was in any way a threat to our alliance with the United States. We believe that if Europe is better able to make its security contributions to the Alliance -- and perhaps also manage some crisis management of its own in Europe, where it is appropriate to do so -- that is a strength for the Alliance; it is not weakening the Alliance. The last few weeks have reminded our people how very much we need that alliance with the United States.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, speaking of revising plans, is there any revision of plans being looked at in terms of air drops of humanitarian supplies to the internally displaced inside Kosovo?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Again let me say -- and we have had this discussion -- we are very concerned about what is happening to the people inside Kosovo, concerned about their physical condition as well as where they're living and whether they have enough to eat and medicines. We are looking at a variety of ways to get supplies to them.

As we talk about the potential ways, we do talk about air drops. But I think that we have been told by the experts that is not a slam dunk, as we would say -- that it is difficult --

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: Pardon?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: It is an American term, basketball.

(Laughter.)

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: Oh, I see.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Just to show that I know about sports terms. But basically one can't be sure that it will accomplish the goals and that the airplanes can actually deliver to the places that are necessary.

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: Can I just add to that? I think it's a great shame that President Milosevic did not use his interview yesterday to come clean on what is the state of those refugees in Kosovo, to tell us about the conditions, to confirm whether or not it is true they are short of food and water and have been living in the open -- in some cases, for three or four weeks.

We are reviewing all possible ways in which we can help them, but it is a very difficult task to do so from outside Kosovo. But let's not lose sight of whose responsibility their fate is. President Milosevic keeps claiming that they are his citizens and that Kosovo is his territory. Very well; they are his responsibility. He will be held to account for what happens to those refugees.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I can't resist reading one paragraph from this incredible interview. This is Milosevic's words.

"Everybody's running away because of bombing -- Serbs, Turks, Gypsies, Muslims; of course, Albanians, their number is biggest. Everybody's running. Deers are running, birds are running, everybody's running away because of bombing. Bees are running; everybody's running away. And who can ask to understand a civilian population cannot play the role of hero, staying in their places when bombs are going down. That's not possible. And you know that before the 24th of March, when they started damn bombing, they started their dirty aggression against this country, there was no one single refugee."

I think --

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: There were 400,000 already before it began.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Yes. Thank you.

FOREIGN SECRETARY COOK: Thank you.

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SPEAKERS IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY URGE EVEN-HANDED APPROACHES TO CRISES

38-48 minutes

29 September 1999



Press Release GA/9616

SPEAKERS IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY URGE EVEN-HANDED APPROACHES TO CRISES

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"Rwanda demonstrates what Kosovo might have become, had we not intervened in 1999 and Kosovo demonstrates what Rwanda might have been, had we intervened in 1994", Bronislaw Geremek, the Foreign Minister of Poland, told the General Assembly this afternoon as it continued its general debate.

"We have learned that what should not repeat itself is the unacceptable inaction which occurred in the past", he stressed. Could the new outbreaks of conflict in Kosovo and East Timor have been averted and was there the political will to head them off in the future? The international community had the same responsibility to all ethnic groups, yet in Kosovo, while the ethnic cleansing of Albanians by Serbs had been stopped, Serbs and Roma were now under threat.

Donald McKinnon, Foreign Minister of New Zealand, said a comparison between East Timor and Kosovo was inevitable. Collective action to stop a humanitarian disaster should never be held hostage to the veto. Otherwise the Security Council would lose its credibility and relevance. The world must never again witness horrors such as those in Kosovo, while the Council remained impotent. The credibility of that body depended largely on its being seen as even-handed in its attention to crises wherever they occurred, whether the Cable News Network (CNN) was there or not.

voluntary funding to finance new peacekeeping operations was disturbing, warned the New Zealand Foreign Minister. That could mean that regions that did not attract donor support would not receive the response to which they were entitled. All operations must therefore be put on an equal financial footing by means of assessed contributions. Also, the largest contributors' arrears to the peacekeeping and regular budgets continued to cast a shadow over the Organization.

Yerodia Abdoulaye Ndongas, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, said Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi had invaded his country, claiming to defend their borders but actually committing genocide and plundering his country's cobalt and diamonds. Those resources were now trading on the Stock Exchange and people were buying

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them, even though they came from bloody hands. The three countries should go home. He called upon the international community to intervene to stop the invasion, and said that countries acting against the principles of the Charter should not attend the Assembly.

Expressing concern about diminished cooperation for development and a hardening of attitudes, Seymour Mullings, Foreign Minister of Jamaica, said the challenge to the banana regime established within the framework of the Lomé Convention and the ruling of the World Trade Organization panel on that issue underlined the indifference of some countries to the plight of others. The banana controversy signified the extent to which the interests of small producers were at the mercy of those in a position of dominance in the world economy and world trade.

Malam Bacai Sanha, President of Guinea-Bissau, said the conflict in his country had deeply shaken his people and led to massive flows of refugees, as well as devastation of socio-economic structures. An emergency programme was needed in his country to ensure lasting peace and economic development. He made an urgent appeal for support in his country's efforts to restore the constitutional order.

Also speaking in today's debate were the Foreign Ministers of Tunisia, Armenia, Gabon, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Lithuania, and Antigua and Barbuda.

Statements in exercise of the right of reply were also made this afternoon by the representatives of Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Assembly will continue its general debate tomorrow, at 10 a.m.

The General Assembly this afternoon continued its general debate. The President of Guinea-Bissau as well as the Foreign Ministers of Jamaica, Poland, New Zealand, Tunisia, Armenia, Gabon, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lithuania, and Antigua and Barbuda were expected to speak.

Statements

SEYMOUR MULLINGS, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, expressed concern about diminished cooperation for development and a hardening of attitudes. The banana regime established within the framework of the Lomé Convention and the ruling of the World Trade Organization panel underlined the indifference of some countries to the plight of others. The economies of some Caribbean States faced a danger not only to their prospects for economic stability and growth, but to their very survival. The banana controversy signified the extent to which the interests of small producers were at the mercy of those in a position of dominance in the world economy and world trade.

He said that another discouraging trend was the reduction of levels of development cooperation. In the case of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), technical assistance had been shrinking over the last five years. The process under way was directed at generating cost savings and pooling resources, without increasing the quantum of funding available for development cooperation under United Nations auspices.

Jamaica was also concerned about the growing trade in weapons, terrorist activities, and drug trafficking. He welcomed preparations for the first international conference on small arms.

Turning to international security, he endorsed the Secretary General's quiet diplomacy. International law affecting the sovereignty of States should not be brushed aside. The Security Council should not be ignored in favour of unilateral action. Expressing support for peace efforts in West Africa, Angola, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia, he said Jamaica expected the States in his own region to solve their disputes by peaceful means. The continued embargo against Cuba carried the risk of conflict. He called for dialogue, normalization of relations and an end to policies of confrontation and exclusion.

BRONISLAW GEREMEK, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, asked whether the new outbreaks of conflict in Kosovo and East Timor could have been averted. Was there the political will to head them off in the future? If the answer was positive, what should be done to translate political commitment into action in a concerted and effective way? How should the system of

defenceless in the face of genocide and persecution? The Charter had been born of the lessons from a devastating world war. Most of today's conflicts, however, were of an intra-state nature. "Can we tackle the new challenges with existing concepts and notions only?" he asked. "We have come to accept that absolute sovereignty and total non- interference are no longer tenable." There could be no sovereign right to ethnic cleansing and genocide. "What should not repeat itself is the unacceptable inaction which occurred in the past Rwanda demonstrates what Kosovo might have become, had we not intervened in 1999 and Kosovo demonstrates what Rwanda might have been, had we intervened in 1994."

The international community's responsibility was the same with respect to all ethnic groups, he said. In Kosovo, the ethnic cleansing of Albanians by Serbs had been stopped and reversed, but Serbs and Roma were now under threat in Kosovo. It was not easy to reflect adequately the primacy of the human person and human rights in international law. First, there were still too many cases where the practice of curbing and limiting human rights to preserve political power hid behind hypocritical lip-service to those rights. Second, the legal framework of intervention, which should enable quick and effective action, was too often distorted by selective and subjective interpretations. On the one hand, the banner of humanitarian intervention should not be used as a pretext for imposing political control and domination from the outside. On the other hand, the principle of humanitarian intervention had to be fairly and consistently applied to avoid double standards.

He said the development of international law should uphold the basic truth that a sustainable and secure world order could only be built on the freedom of the human being. Armed intervention was a sign of the failure of cooperative methods. "We support wholeheartedly the efforts to foster a new culture of prevention." The world still needed the United Nations; the Organization needed a new vision and a reinforced commitment to the principles of the Charter on the part of Member States. Those actors who were closer to events and had a larger stake in regional stability might be more willing to react promptly and with greater determination. Thus, the key was closer political and operational cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations. The process of United Nations reform needed to be deepened and accelerated. "Let us think anew on how to strengthen the authority of the Council, and how to preclude a possibility that its decisions are ignored or mis-implemented by individual States".

He said that a few weeks ago two young African stowaways had frozen to death in a flight from Conakry to Brussels. They had left behind a moving letter addressed to "you and officials of Europe", which said: "Help us. We suffer enormously in Africa. As children we have no rights.

and be in Africa the same way that you are in Europe." There was no appeal more eloquent than those words of despair written by children. "We need to find the right solutions to social and economic despair", he stressed. Social failure and frustration caused conflicts and destabilization. "We must think about how to integrate social and economic programmes within the general imperative of a new culture of prevention."

MALAM BACAI SANHA, President of Guinea-Bissau, said Africa was seeing an increase in the number of conflicts. West Africa had not been spared, having undergone a number of fratricidal crises, including those in Liberia, Sierra Leone and his own country. Among the most important causes of the crises were the ineffectiveness of State authority, bad governance, violations of human rights, non-compliance with the principle of separation of powers between sovereign bodies, corruption, and deterioration of living conditions, as well as frustration and despair in the fight for freedom.

The events of 7 June 1998 had resulted from such causes, he said. That tragedy had deeply shaken his people and led to massive flows of refugees, as well as the devastation of economic and social structures. Now the people of Guinea-Bissau wished to live in peace, fully enjoying their fundamental rights. His country wanted to promote peace and national reconciliation on the basis of democracy and the rule of law. He was also pleased to announce that a conference on national reconciliation had recently been held. Elections were scheduled for 28 November. However, an emergency programme was needed to ensure lasting peace and economic development. He appealed urgently for support for his country's efforts to restore the constitutional order. He stressed the importance of positive relations with the countries of the subregion, including Senegal and Guinea.

Continuing, he expressed solidarity with the people of East Timor and demanded that their right to self-determination be respected. He appealed to the international community to step up their assistance towards the rebuilding of East Timor. His Government also supported the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the search for peaceful solutions to crises in Africa. The situation in Angola was a cause of concern; energetic action was needed to restore peace there. The situation in the Middle East also deserved particular attention. He hoped that the embargo against Cuba would soon be lifted.

DONALD MCKINNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, said the Security Council's response to today's problems did not always increase confidence in the Organization. The Secretary-General's remarks about the need to reconcile universal legitimacy and effectiveness in defence of human rights were most timely. East Timor and Kosovo represented

to be a contributor to the multinational force in East Timor. The people responsible for crimes against humanity there should be brought to account. The overriding objective now must be to ensure the realization of the outcome of the ballot and East Timor's transition to independence. It was clear that the United Nations would be indispensable in laying the basis for East Timor's future.

Comparison between East Timor and Kosovo was inevitable, he said. Collective action to put a stop to a humanitarian disaster should never be held hostage to the veto. Otherwise the Council would lose its credibility and relevance. New Zealand had never accepted that narrow interests of any one of the five countries should be able to override the will of the clear majority of members. The world must never again witness horrors, such as those in Kosovo, while the Security Council remained impotent. The credibility of the Council depended in large part on its being seen as even-handed in its attention to crises, wherever they occurred, whether CNN was there or not. For much of the past year, the Council had been virtually paralyzed on the important question of the disarmament of Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. The reason again has been the divisions among the permanent members who could block any action by veto. That was unacceptable. Regarding the reform of the Council, he added that he was not convinced that a more equitable representation would be achieved if the regional groups continued to reflect the political geography of the 1960s. New Zealand was looking forward to joining a regional group, which would include its Asia/Pacific neighbours.

In New Zealand's immediate region, he continued, the United Nations had demonstrated its ability to respond by supporting the regionally inspired peace process in Bougainville and assessing the needs of the population in the Solomon Islands. As the United Nations must be able to respond effectively, the trend away from financing new peacekeeping operations by means of assessed contributions and an increasing reliance on voluntary funding was disturbing. In practical terms, that was likely to mean that those regions which failed to attract donor support, would not receive the response they were entitled to. For that reason, all operations must be put on an equal financial footing by means of assessed contributions. Also, the largest contributor's arrears to the peacekeeping and regular budgets continued to cast a shadow over the Organization. As for official development assistance (ODA), he applauded the efforts to turn the situation around and to put the UNDP on a more secure footing with more clearly defined priorities.

SAID BEN MUSTAPHA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, said that the issues giving rise to the security problems confronting Africa should remain a top priority. Strong international support

end to the bloodshed in the continent, alleviate the sufferings of Africans and ensure security, peace, stability and prosperity. The Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution had achieved encouraging results that reflected the determination of African countries to rely, first and foremost, on their own capabilities to solve the problems which threatened their security. The Mechanism needed stronger financial and technical support from the international community, to enhance its capacities and develop its efficiency.

He said there could be no stability without sustainable development. Despite the relentless efforts undertaken by African countries in the political, economic and social fields aimed at improving the situation of their peoples, there were still many difficulties preventing many countries from implementing their development programmes. The African continent urgently needed strong and continuous support, on the basis of their national priorities.

The year 1999 represented a landmark in Tunisia in the consolidation of the democratic process, he said. It would be marked by pluralistic presidential and parliamentary elections, based on full transparency and freedom of choice for its citizens in the framework of the respect of law. He reviewed his Government's efforts to promote women's freedom, consolidate the protection of children, and enhance the protection of other vulnerable groups.

Calling for recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, especially its right to an independent state with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, he stressed the importance of resuming negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. He called for Israel's complete, unconditional withdrawal from South Lebanon and the Syrian Golan. He also called for a speedy and final lifting of the embargo against Lybia. Finally, he said Tunisia expected the reform of the Security Council to lead to fulfilment of the requests of the developing countries, primarily African countries, to have permanent representation.

VARTAN OSKANIAN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, said it was evident all countries of the world would continue to be substantially affected by globalization. Markets would continue to specialize and widen through trade, there would be larger division of labour, and more efficient, diversified allocation of financial resources, which would increase overall productivity and raise living standards. No country would benefit spontaneously and automatically from the process, however. The major tasks before governments was to develop and pursue sound policies and appropriate structural adjustments to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization. Sound domestic economic planning and reforms were critical, while regional cooperation and integration were essential.

economic, cultural and political transformations, both within States and among them. Neither would allow itself to be marginalized. Rather, lasting stability and prosperity based on a sense of solid and shared emergent values would be achieved through close regional cooperation, whether political, economic or security based. As a young republic in transition between the nightmare of a totalitarian single-party State and an emerging democratic, free market and open society, Armenia was simultaneously faced with three tasks. It had to consolidate its State structures, move its economy forward and resolve a territorial conflict over Karabagh.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) played a key role in finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, he said. It had been actively involved in defining the elements for a durable peace and stability in the Transcaucasus. It was trying to reconcile seemingly incompatible principles. At issue was the need to distinguish between stability and the forced maintenance of the status quo. Conflating the two was neither wise nor practicable in the long run, and a political status quo was neither inherently permanent nor a viable policy for stability, which required a mechanism accommodating an evolutionary, dynamic process of managing change. Those issues concerning Armenia's affairs were among the fundamental phenomena of countries that needed the attention of a world preoccupied with immediate crises.

JEAN PING, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon, said that some nations steadily acquired prosperity and progressed while others, many of them African, seemed destined to become ever more destitute. There were 1.5 billion people around the world who lived on less than a \$1 a day, 1 billion who were incapable of reading and writing, and 3 million Africans who lived on the fringes of the global village. There were also those who were reduced to slavery in modern times, at the mercy of moneylenders. It was crucial that the debt problem be analysed not only in terms of socio-economic indicators but also in terms of the measures that States must employ to combat poverty. While his Government praised the initiative by the Group of Seven industrialized countries and the Russian Federation to cancel the debt of the most heavily indebted countries, the criteria for eligibility were very restrictive. The rich North had not only a duty but an interest in making sure that its poor southern neighbours could take advantage of the opportunities presented by globalization.

The time had come to seriously tackle the unavoidable problem of poverty eradication, he said. The Organization must promote enhancement of living standards, full employment and social development. The Organization's efforts to maintain international peace had been severely put to the test, particularly in Africa. Nonetheless, there were some encouraging signs in certain African

East. However, more efforts were needed in Angola due to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) lack of adherence to agreements. Somalia was also still without state institutions. The illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons hampered development, peace and security and encouraged the phenomena of child soldiers and racketeering.

Gabon was not immune to the of armed conflicts that plagued Africa, he went on. Some countries paid heavy prices for their solidarity with peoples driven from their homes and countries. Even though it had lived in peace and had never experienced war with another State, Gabon shared the burden of war. Large migratory flows into his country had led to internal disruption; it had recently accepted 50,000 refugees. His President had recently proposed the creation of an African centre for emergency humanitarian intervention.

Although Gabon was the only sub-saharan country where financial and monetary institutions were classified in the highest bracket of middle-income countries, its development indicators were similar to those of many other African countries, he said. It had opened its economy, lifted tariff and non-tariff restrictions, and set up new stable and legal institutions to encourage investment. The stage had been set but the actors had not yet made an entrance; investors had avoided Africa so far.

ALLAN CRUICKSHANK, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tourism and Information of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, said that the argument that the United Nations had outlived its usefulness and now existed only as the world's most expensive debate club, was the argument of big, powerful nations who could afford to take that position. For small, vulnerable developing countries, however, the United Nations and other multilateral organizations were important buffers in the interplay between finance and politics in the international arena. "The operating budgets of many transnational corporations are far greater than the national budgets of developing countries like my own", he noted. "We are all painfully aware that the international development agenda is controlled by these corporations."

He said the benefits of globalization had not been evenly distributed, and that developing countries continued to be marginalized. While he respected the general thrust towards open markets, competition and free trade, the economic survival and social stability of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remained closely linked to the banana trade. In fact, banana exports accounted for 50 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the Windward Islands, but Windward Island exports accounted for only 1 per cent of the world trade in bananas. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines provided 40 per cent of the employment for the banana industry.

developing States continue to be against powerful countries and their mega- corporations." The United States disregard for that situation was inexplicable. The consequences of such a stance would be economic and social dislocation manifested by increased unemployment, impoverishment of farmers, crime and the erosion of basic human rights and dignity.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was resolute in its opposition to the international drug trade, he said. The Government had moved bilaterally and with member countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to establish agreements of mutual assistance in criminal matters. His Government recognized its own limitations in confronting the enormous power and resources of drug traffickers; it had signed an agreement that allowed foreign authorities to pursue such criminals in its territorial waters. It had also enacted financing regulations to ensure against laundering of drug money.

He condemned the transshipment of hazardous material through Caribbean territorial waters, and said that implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action was imperative to his country's survival. Finally, he called for remodelling of the Security Council along democratic lives.

YERODIA ABDOULAYE NDOMBASI, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, expressed concern about the ongoing invasion of his country. Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi had invaded the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 2 August 1998 without being provoked. Since then, they had been violating the principles of Article 2 of the Charter. They claimed to defend their borders but they had turned into genocidal killers. They wanted his country's rich cobalt and diamond resources. Those materials were now trading on the Stock Exchange and people were not refusing to buy them, although the sellers had bloody hands.

The invaders had arrived just when the Congolese were rebuilding their country, he said. Since they had crossed the Congolese borders, his people had suffered many atrocities. Many were hiding in the forests to escape massacres. Many children could not be vaccinated because Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi had destroyed vaccines sent by the United Nations. He urged the United Nations

Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, if they were his country's friends should go home because "they have nothing to do with our country". He called upon the international community to intervene to stop the invasion. He stressed that countries acting against the principles of the Charter should not attend the General Assembly. Despite the ceasefire agreement signed on 10 July 1999, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi had never stopped their massacres and atrocities.

should be able to find common ground in Charter principles and the defence of humanity. Just last year, Angola, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and East Timor had posed new challenges to the United Nations and made the international community re-evaluate its actions in conflict prevention, the role of the Security Council and its interaction with regional organizations.

The reform of the Council was urgently needed; too often had it been accused of failures in the maintenance of international peace and security, he said. Its efficiency could be enhanced by improving its representativity, legitimacy and credibility, which could promote wider acceptance of its decisions. There were two most qualified industrialized countries which could become permanent members of the Security Council. Developing nations deserved additional seats in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

The United Nations needed resources and cooperation to fulfil its mandate to maintain international peace and security, he continued. Lithuania had signed the Stand-by Agreement at the beginning of 1998. A substantial part of its contribution was comprised of well-trained civilian police, who would serve in Kosovo. A comprehensive set of political measures would have to be elaborated to be approved at the Millennium Summit. New instruments were needed to ensure accountability for gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity.

Weaponry and armaments could be reduced by common actions, regardless of borders, he said. Although there was a consensus that weapons of mass destruction must be eliminated, nuclear disarmament was unacceptably unstable. Conventional arms also destroyed lives. Europe was blessed with good regional security instruments. The proposed European security charter would further build on the ideals of democracy, peace and unity.

PATRICK ALBERT LEWIS (Antigua and Barbuda) said globalization could severely reduce the sovereignty of the weakest States. There had been a sad lack of attention to the pace, direction and content of liberalization, taking into account different levels of development and the need to build up national capabilities. Protectionist devices such as subsidies, guaranteed markets, and production-ratio and price-level controls were provided for farmers in the dominant economies. But when former colonial countries provided preferences to their previous colonies of exploitation, they were challenged in the World Trade Organization by multinational enterprises. There was no more blatant example of that than the actions of Chiquita in regard to the Caribbean banana producers. The United Nations should stand up to the encroachment of multinational enterprises that attempt to stifle the lifeblood of legitimate and sovereign countries.

country's first country cooperation framework, on the basis of Antigua and Barbuda's per capita income in 1998 and its rank in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report. But there had been no mention of the fact that Antigua and Barbuda ranked extremely high in the vulnerability index, due in part to the damage inflicted upon the islands by frequent hurricanes. To narrowly base the environmental, economic and developmental health of the twin island State on per capita income and to ignore the persistent problems confronted by most Caribbean small island developing States was unfair and unjust.

He said that there was an urgent need for the World Trade Organization to apply special and differential treatment to small island States, as it did to least developed countries. There was also a need to set up a disaster fund. "Whereas the existing mechanisms address the purpose of relieving immediate suffering and agony, they are woefully insufficient for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Statements in Right of Reply

JOSEPH MUTABOBA (Rwanda) said that after hearing the baseless allegations by the Foreign Minister from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he felt compelled to set the record straight. The international community was well aware of the tragedy endured by his country. It would take too long, however, to respond to the Congolese Minister's long and confusing speech. The first aggression had been against Rwanda. Armies had been allowed to re-group and re-train from refugee camps located along the border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those armies had been fed and granted refugee status in violation of the Charter. In addition, large numbers of Rwandans were held hostage, with the support of the ex-President of the former Zaire, Sese Mobutu.

He said the Congolese leadership could not deny the assistance against Mr. Mobutu which they had sought and received from Rwanda and other countries. They had even acknowledged this in writing, accepting assistance from several friendly countries. There was a need to distinguish between fact and fiction, perception and reality. President Laurent Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had to answer in a court. The Congolese speaker had referred to Rwandans today in vile terms. The last time he had heard such an inflammatory speech was in a market in Ethiopia.

He said the cycle of impunity was still taking place. He asked the Assembly to continue efforts to resolve the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as the problem of disarming the criminals who were responsible for the genocide still remained

Democratic Republic of the Congo was well known. It had been clearly enunciated in the General Assembly, the Security Council and other forums. Ugandan troops were in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a result of the agreement between the two countries, an issue which had been discussed as recently as last week before the General Assembly. "I shall not waste any more time on that issue."

He categorically denied the false, malicious and gratuitous statements made against Uganda by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He reiterated that Uganda abided by all the principles of the Lusaka Accords.

He also reminded the Congolese speaker that, without the gallant efforts of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo would still be Zaire, "ruled by Mobutu and his cronies". And the Minister himself would most likely be "hiding somewhere in the jungles of the Congo".

Finally, he said that the "unnecessary diatribe" by the speaker from the Democratic Republic of the Congo was in violation of the letter and spirit of the Lusaka Accords, which had been signed by the speaker's own President. ANDRE MWAMBA KAPANGA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that there had been genocide in Rwanda in which 500,000 had died in 1994. However, that genocide had been perpetrated by Rwandans against Rwandans on Rwandan soil. Not a single Congolese had gone there to kill Rwandans. The Democratic Republic of the Congo had received Rwandan refugees who had created desolation and extreme poverty in his country. The genocide did not mean that Congolese should tolerate Rwandan soldiers in the Congo perpetrating further death and genocide. The underlying reason for the presence of Rwandans and Ugandans in the Congo was the resources that were available.

He said his country had committed itself to respecting the Lusaka Accords and would see that its terms were applied. It was not the Democratic Republic of the Congo that was guilty of holding up implementation. Today, Uganda and Rwanda were amassing troops, bringing in weapons and occupying other parts of his country, even after signing the Lusaka Accords. That showed that they were not committed to peace. After signing the Accords, his Government had requested the Council and the United Nations to send a peacekeeping force as soon as possible so that peace could prevail in his country and the rest of the region.

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Transcript: Clinton addresses nation on Yugoslavia strike

March 24, 1999

PRESIDENT CLINTON: My fellow Americans, today our armed forces joined our NATO allies in airstrikes against Serbian forces responsible for the brutality in Kosovo. We have acted with resolve for several reasons.

We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive.

We act to prevent a wider war, to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe, that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results.

We act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now, we are upholding our values, protecting our interests, and advancing the cause of peace.

Tonight I want to speak with you about the tragedy in Kosovo and why it matters to America that we work with our allies to end it.

First, let me explain what it is that we are responding to. Kosovo is a province of Serbia, in the middle of south eastern Europe and about 160 miles east of Italy. That's less than the distance between Washington and New York, and only about 70 miles north of Greece.

Its people are mostly ethnic Albanian and mostly Muslim.

In 1989 Serbia's leader Slobodan Milosevic, the same leader who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade, stripped Kosovo of the constitutional autonomy it's people enjoyed, thus denying them their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives. For years, Kosovar's struggled peacefully to get their rights back. When President Milosevic sent his troops

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and police to crush them, the struggle grew violent.

Last fall, our diplomacy, backed by the threat of force from our NATO alliance, stopped the fighting for awhile, and rescued tens of thousands of people from freezing and starvation in the hills where they had fled to save their lives. And last month, with our allies and Russia, we proposed a peace agreement to end the fighting for good. The Kosovar leaders signed that agreement last week.

Even though it does not give them all they want, even though their people were still being savaged, they saw that a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war.

The Serbian leaders, on the other hand, refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. As the Kosovars were saying yes to peace, Serbia stationed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive and in clear violation of the commitments they had made.

Now they've started moving from village to village, shelling civilians and torching their houses. We've seen innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with bullets. Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up, and shot in cold blood. This is not war in the traditional sense. It is an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people, whose leaders already have agreed to peace.

Ending this tragedy is a moral imperative. It is also important to America's national interests. Take a look at this map. Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity.

To the south are our allies, Greece and Turkey. To the north, our new democratic allies in Central Europe. And all around Kosovo, there are other small countries, struggling with their own economic and political challenges, countries that could be overthrown by a large new wave of refugees from Kosovo.

All the ingredients for a major war are there. Ancient grievances, struggling democracies and in the center of it all, a dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the Cold War ended, but start

Strike on Yugoslavia**The Conflict:**

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new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division.

Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved? How many Americans would not have had to die?

We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. The world did not act early enough to stop that war either. And let's not forget what happened. Innocent people herded into concentration camps, children gunned down by snipers on their way to school, soccer fields and parks turned into cemeteries. A quarter of a million people killed, not because of anything they had done, but because of who they were. Two million Bosnians became refugees.

This was genocide in the heart of Europe, not in 1945, but in 1995. Not in some grainy newsreel from our parents' and grandparents' time, but in our own time, testing our humanity and our resolve.

At the time, many people believed nothing could be done to end the bloodshed in Bosnia. They said, "Well, that's just the way those people in the Balkans are." But when we and our allies joined with courageous Bosnians to stand up to the aggressors, we helped to end the war. We learned that in the Balkans, inaction in the face of brutality, simply invites brutality. But firmness can stop armies and save lives.

We must apply that lesson in Kosovo, before what happened in Bosnia, happens there, too.

Over the last few months, we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully. Secretary Albright has worked tirelessly for a negotiated agreement. Mr. Milosevic has refused.

On Sunday, I sent Ambassador Dick Holbrooke to Serbia to make clear to him again on behalf of the United States and our NATO allies that he must honor his own commitments and stop his repression or face military action. Again, he refused.

Today, we and our 18 NATO allies agreed to do what we said we would do, what we must do to restore the peace. Our mission is clear -- to

demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course, to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo.

In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

Now I want to be clear with you, there are risks in this military action -- risk to our pilots and the people on the ground. Serbia's air defenses are strong. It could decide to intensify its assault on Kosovo, or to seek to harm us or our allies elsewhere. If it does, we will deliver a forceful response.

Hopefully, Mr. Milosevic will realize his present course is self-destructive and unsustainable. If he decides to accept the peace agreement and demilitarize Kosovo, NATO has agreed to help to implement it with a peacekeeping force.

If NATO's invited to do so, our troops should take part in that mission to keep the peace, but I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.

Do our interests in Kosovo justify the dangers to our armed forces? I thought long and hard about that question. I am convinced that the dangers of acting are far outweighed by the dangers of not acting -- dangerous to defenseless people and to our national interests.

If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation as a license to kill. There would be many massacres, tens of thousands refugees, victims crying out for revenge. Right now, our firmness is the only hope the people of Kosovo have to be able to live in their own country, without having to fear for their own lives.

Remember, we asked them to accept peace and they did. We asked them to promise to lay down their arms and they agreed. We pledged that we, the United States and the other 18 nations of NATO would stick by them if they did the right thing. We cannot let them down now.

Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way as these people were massacred on NATO's doorstep. That would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.

We must also remember that this is a conflict with no natural national boundaries. Let me ask you to look again at a map. The red dots are towns the Serbs have attacked. The arrows show the movement of refugees north, east and south. Already, this movement is threatening the young democracy in Macedonia, which has its own Albanian minority and a Turkish minority.

Already, Serbian forces have made forays into Albania from which Kosovars have drawn support. Albania has a Greek minority. Let a fire burn here in this area, and the flames will spread.

Eventually, key U.S. allies could be drawn into a wider conflict -- a war we would be forced to confront later, only at far greater risk and greater cost.

I have a responsibility as president to deal with problems such as this before they do permanent harm to our national interests. America has a responsibility to stand with our allies when they are trying to save innocent lives and preserve peace, freedom and stability in Europe. That is what we are doing in Kosovo.

If we've learned anything from the century drawing to a close, it is that if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure, undivided and free.

We need a Europe that is coming together, not falling apart. A Europe that shares our values, and shares the burdens of leadership. That is the foundation on which the security of our children will depend. That is why I have supported the political and economic unification of Europe. That is why we brought Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO, and redefined its mission. And reached out to Russia and Ukraine for new partnerships.

Now what are the challenges to that vision of a peaceful, secure, united, stable Europe? The challenge of strengthening a partnership with a democratic Russia, that despite our disagreements, is a constructive partner in the work of building peace. The challenge of resolving the tensions between Greece and Turkey, and building bridges with the Islamic world.

And finally, the challenge of ending instability in the Balkans, so that these bitter, ethnic problems in Europe are resolved by the force of argument, not the force of bombs. So that future generations of Americans do not have to cross the Atlantic to

fight another terrible war. It is this challenge that we and our allies are facing in Kosovo.

That is why we have acted now -- because we care about saving innocent lives, because we have an interest in avoiding an even crueler and costlier war and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.

Our thoughts and prayers tonight must be with the men and women of our armed forces, who are undertaking this mission for the sake of our values and our children's future.

May God bless them, and may God bless America.

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CRISIS IN THE BALKANS: THE PRESIDENT***CRISIS IN THE BALKANS: THE PRESIDENT; Clinton Underestimated Serbs, He Acknowledges*****By John M. Broder**

June 26, 1999

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President Clinton acknowledged today for the first time that he had underestimated Serbia's ability to withstand the NATO bombing campaign.

In a lengthy news conference this afternoon, Mr. Clinton said he had believed that President Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia would submit to allied demands after "a couple of days" of bombing and halt the Serbian assault on Kosovo.

NATO and the Administration were initially criticized for that miscalculation of Serbian stamina, and then for failing to have a strategy for a prolonged air war, a campaign that ultimately lasted 78 days.

Until today, the President and his top advisers did not concede that they were wrong in their initial expectation that Mr. Milosevic would capitulate after a few days of limited air strikes.

Mr. Clinton said he had come to realize, once Mr. Milosevic withstood the first days of bombing, that the conflict would last for many weeks until the damage compelled the Yugoslav leader to relent in his campaign of terror in Kosovo.

Mr. Clinton said he had been "surprised and heartbroken" by the destruction of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade by guided weapons from an American B-2 bomber, an incident that continues to strain relations between the United States and China.

"I had no earthly idea that our system would permit that kind of mistake," Mr. Clinton said.

On another matter, Mr. Clinton said he had misspoken earlier this year when he said he had been presented with no evidence of breaches of security at United States nuclear weapons laboratories during his tenure in office.

"I think my choice of wording was poor," Mr. Clinton acknowledged today. "What I should have said was I did not know of any specific instance of espionage, because I think that we've been suspicious all along."

He said new information had since come to light, including that of the transfer of highly classified computer codes relating to nuclear weapons design and testing from a secure computer to the personal computer of a Chinese-American scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The President took no position on a recommendation from his intelligence advisory board that nuclear weapons design work be made independent of its current bureaucratic home, the Energy Department, or given greater autonomy within the agency. "I have asked our people to look at it," he said.

He declined to answer a question about the peace talks in Northern Ireland, where militant groups on both sides of the conflict are required to disarm by July 1 under terms of an agreement signed in April 1998.

The parties are in intense negotiations, the President said, and time is short to resolve longstanding issues. "This is a very serious, serious period, and I do not want to say anything that would make it worse," he said.

He was asked several questions about Kosovo during the 75-minute news conference. He grew passionate when asked why he would not consider providing aid to rebuild Serbia, which was significantly damaged by the allied air campaign.

He has said before that no Western aid will flow to Belgrade as long as Mr. Milosevic remains in power. He repeated that pledge today and delivered a lectern-pounding admonition to the people of Serbia.

"What the Serbian people decide to do, of course, is their own affair," the President said. "But you know, they're going to have to come to grips with what Mr. Milosevic ordered in Kosovo."

He continued: "And then they're going to have to decide whether they support his leadership or not, whether they think it's O.K. that all those tens of thousands of people were killed and all those hundreds of thousands of people were run out of their homes and all those little girls were raped and all those little boys were murdered. They're going to have to decide if they think that is O.K., and if they think it's O.K., they can make that decision, but I wouldn't give them one red cent for reconstruction if they think it's O.K., because I don't think it's O.K."

Mr. Clinton also emphatically rejected a reporter's suggestion that the United States and NATO were guilty of war crimes for killing Yugoslav civilians and destroying electric stations and waterworks. "NATO did not commit war crimes," Mr. Clinton said. "NATO stopped war crimes. NATO stopped deliberate, systematic efforts at ethnic cleansing and genocide. And we did it in a way to minimize civilian casualties."

He said that the allied bombardment had been the most accurate in the history of warfare and that civilian deaths had been minimal.

The Administration has not released an estimate of civilian deaths caused by the NATO air campaign, but one official said the preliminary tally was in the "low hundreds." The Pentagon estimates that allied attacks during the Persian Gulf war of 1991 killed several thousand Iraqi civilians.

Serbian reports have estimated civilian deaths at 1,200 to 2,000.

Mr. Clinton said he had been fooled by Mr. Milosevic when they last met, at a luncheon in Paris in 1995 when leaders were gathered to sign the Dayton peace accords that ended the war in Bosnia. Mr. Clinton said he had thought that perhaps Mr. Milosevic was not responsible for the atrocities and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia that left an estimated 250,000 dead and 2.5 million homeless.

"It was a delightful and interesting lunch," the President said. "And I thought, well, you know, maybe he had some distance between the extreme activities of the Serbs in Bosnia.

And then he went right out and did it all over again, and I mean with people directly under his control."

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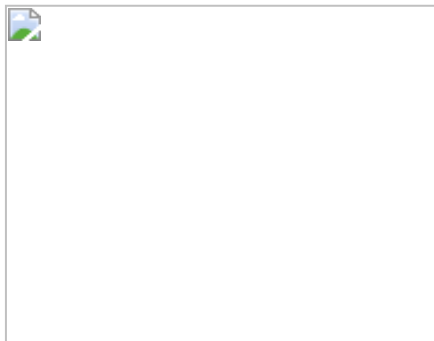
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Clinton 'disturbed' by reports of Serb atrocities

March 30, 1999
Web posted at: 12:24 p.m. EST (1724 GMT)



WASHINGTON (CNN) -- President Clinton is "very disturbed" by reports of Serb atrocities against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and has "redoubled his resolve" to continue NATO's round-the-clock air campaign against Yugoslavia, his spokesman said Tuesday.

ALSO

[Thomas Pickering interview](#)

"We have heard reports of atrocities, and we have clear examples of ethnic cleansing," White House press secretary [Joe Lockhart](#) said. But he said the Clinton administration could not confirm that genocide was taking place in Kosovo, a Serbian province.

"We see potential evidence of genocide and that evidence will continue to be collected" for possible use in war crimes trials, Lockhart said.

Yugoslav officials say the thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees leaving Kosovo are fleeing not from atrocities, but from fighting between the Yugoslav army and "terrorists" of the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army.

Definition
<p>Genocide: "The systematic killing of, or a program of action intended to destroy, a whole national or ethnic group." Source: Webster's New World College Dictionary</p>

Lockhart said the Clinton administration had not heard whether Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov had been successful in his mission to Belgrade to find a diplomatic solution to the Kosovo crisis.

Lockhart repeated comments made earlier in the day by Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering, who told CNN the United States is neither optimistic nor pessimistic about Primakov's talks with Yugoslav President [Slobodan Milosevic](#).

In a separate interview, Pickering rejected a suggestion that the bombing will not succeed and that NATO ground troops would be needed to force Milosevic to sign a peace agreement.

Clinton was expected to comment on the week-old NATO offensive during a Tuesday afternoon appearance at the State Department.

Correspondent Chris Black contributed to this report.

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Kosovo's Cruel Realities

By Salman Rushdie

August 4, 1999

In the wake of the Gracko killings, British Prime Minister Tony Blair has appealed to the Albanians of Kosovo to set aside their enmities. "We fought this conflict," Mr. Blair said in the provincial capital Pristina last Friday, "because we believe in justice, because we believed it was wrong to have ethnic cleansing and racial genocide here in Europe towards the end of the 20th century, and we didn't fight it to have another ethnic minority [the Kosovan Serb minority] repressed."

These are good-hearted, high-minded, decent words, the words of a man who believes he has fought and won a just war, and for whom "justice" includes the idea of reconciliation. But they also indicate a failure of imagination. What happened to the Albanians in Kosovo was an atrocity whose dark effect on the spirit may lie beyond the power of decent men such as Mr. Blair to wish away. What happened may be, quite simply, unforgivable.

Tragically, this is not the first such imaginative failure. In the conflict's early days, many Kosovar Albanians also failed to grasp the scale of the horror that was coming their way. In many villages, the men decided to flee, convinced that Milosevic's army was intent on massacring them. They vanished into the woods, over the mountains, out of the army's murderous reach.

But they made one miscalculation: they left their families behind, unable to believe that their wives and children and infirm grandparents would be at risk from the advancing soldiers. The human capacity for the atrocious proved greater than these other human beings were able to foresee.

Now let us imagine the refugees' terrible return at the conflict's end. Nervously, hoping for joy, they near their village. But before they get there they understand that the unimaginable has occurred.

The men of this village must now face a truth in which profound shame and humiliation mingle with great grief. They are alive because they ran away, but the loved ones whom they left behind have been murdered in their stead. The bodies which they now carry in farmyard carts to the burial ground speak accusations through their shrouds.

The village's survivors tell the returned refugees the story of the massacre. They tell them how some of the Serbs in the village put on Serbian army uniforms and used their local knowledge to help the killers flush out the terrified Albanians from their bolt-holes. No, they said, don't bother to search that house, it has no cellar. Ah, but this house, there's cellar under that rug, they'll be hiding in there.

These Kosovan Serbs have fled now. But Milosevic doesn't want them in Serbia, where they are the living proof of his defeat. And Mr Blair, too, wants them to go home and be protected by K-FOR. They are

reluctant to return, fearing vengeance. And guess what? They're right. They're right and Tony Blair, with his vision of a new Kosovo -- "a symbol of how the Balkans should be" -- is wrong.

I supported the NATO operation in Kosovo, finding the human rights evidence in favor of intervention to be powerful and convincing. Many writers, intellectuals, artists and left-leaning bien-pensants thought otherwise. One of their arguments was, if Kosovo, then why not Kurdistan? Why not Rwanda or East Timor? Oddly, this kind of rhetoric actually makes the opposite point to the one it thinks it's making. For if it would have been right to intervene in these cases, and the West was wrong not to, then surely it was also right to defend the Kosovans, and the West's previous failures only serve to emphasize that this time, at least, they -- "we" -- got it right.

The anti-intervention camp's major allegation was and is that NATO's action in fact precipitated the violence it was intended to prevent; that, so to speak, the massacres were Madeleine Albright's fault. This seems to me both morally reprehensible -- because it exculpates the actual killers -- and demonstrably wrong.

Set aside all emotion and look at the cold logistics of Milosevic's massacre. It quickly becomes apparent that the atrocity had been carefully planned. Now, one does not make detailed plans to wipe out thousands of people just in case a speedy response to a Western attack should be needed. One plans a massacre because one intends to carry out a massacre.

True, the speed and enormity of the Serb attack took the NATO forces by surprise (another failure of imagination). That doesn't make it right to blame NATO. Murderers are guilty of the murders they commit, rapists of their rapes.

But if "we" were right to go in, and the war was indeed fought for idealistic motives, the idealism of the present policy looks increasingly starry-eyed. The reality, as reported by experienced foreign correspondents who have returned from Kosovo to say that they have never seen anything like it, is that there are few Serbs left in Kosovo, and it is probably impossible to protect them.

The old, multicultural Sarajevo was destroyed by the Bosnia war. The old Kosovo is gone too, very probably for good. Mr. Blair's ideal Kosovo is a dream. He and his colleagues should now support the construction of the free, ethnically Albanian entity which seems like a historical inevitability.

The aftermath of a war is no time for dreaming.

Salman Rushdie is a British novelist and essayist.

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NATO, British leaders allege 'genocide' in Kosovo

Refugees pour across borders

March 29, 1999
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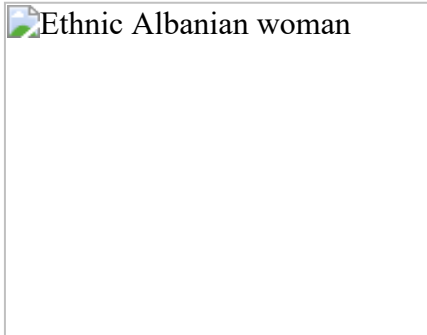
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PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (CNN) -- As frightened Kosovars continued their exodus by the thousands Monday, some international leaders said that Serb actions against ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia amount to genocide.

"We are confronting a regime which is intent on genocide," said British Defense Secretary George Robertson.

NATO said it is gathering evidence of genocide to present to the international war crimes tribunal for possible prosecution.

More than 500,000 ethnic Albanians have fled what NATO calls a "scorched earth policy" by Yugoslav forces in Kosovo. Many have reported witnessing executions, including the killings of parents or



An ethnic Albanian woman stares out the window of a vehicle as she crosses into Macedonia on Sunday

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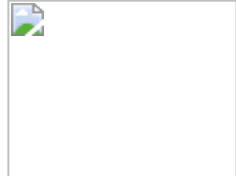
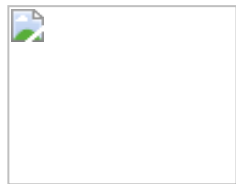
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children. In some cases, refugees said whole neighborhoods were wiped out, and homes were torched.

Some Kosovars crossed into Albania on tractors and on foot Sunday, clutching their children. One woman said men from her village were taken two by two, and shot. Her own son was killed, she told CNN.

"I've seen massacres in Kosovo," an elderly refugee told CNN on Sunday. "I've seen the Serbs cutting people's throats."

However, the reports of atrocities could not be independently verified. Yugoslavian officials denied that war crimes were taking place, and attributed the flow of displaced people to NATO airstrikes, saying Kosovars were fleeing the NATO attacks.

NATO Secretary General Javier Solano planned to meet with representatives of the European Union on Monday to develop an emergency plan to meet the needs of the refugees.

More than 1 million may be displaced

One Kosovo official estimated the number of displaced could exceed 1 million. Serbs "are continuing their policy of ethnic cleansing on a grand scale," Bajram Gecha of the Kosovo Crisis Committee told CNN on Sunday.

"Whether we like it or not, we have to admit that we are on the brink of a major humanitarian disaster in Kosovo, the likes of which have not been seen in Europe since the closing stages of World War II," said NATO spokesman Jamie Shea.

Shea expressed concern that the majority of refugees are women and children. "What happened to the males between the ages of 16 and 60?" he asked.

Senior U.S. administration officials, NATO representatives and humanitarian groups have said a calculated campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo has intensified since the beginning of NATO's military campaign against Yugoslavia.

"I think it's genocide by any definition, but specifically genocide by the definition of the convention against genocide which over 100 countries are parties to, including the United States, Europe and Yugoslavia," said Barry Carter, a professor at the Georgetown University Law School.

The U.N. convention signed in 1948 says genocide involves an intent to destroy -- in whole or in part -- a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.

But so far, in the United States, the Clinton Administration has used the word "genocide" sparingly, and only in connection with the war crimes tribunal, saying it will assist in efforts to prosecute anyone responsible

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for ordering and carrying out war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide in Kosovo.

The 1948 convention says signatory nations may ask the U.N. to take such action as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide.

KLA representative cites 'concentration camps'

A senior representative of the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is fighting for Kosovo's independence from Yugoslavia, says Serbian police and paramilitary forces are herding people into concentration camps and conducting mass executions.

In a telephone interview on Sunday with CNN from his hiding place near Pristina, Hashim Thaqi, one of the KLA delegates who signed the Western-brokered Kosovo peace deal, pleaded for intervention by NATO ground troops to stop the violence.

"Only NATO troops can save the people of Kosovo from further catastrophe," Thaqi said. "This is the hour of need for Kosovo."

Thaqi said 20,000 people from the town of Drenica, including elderly women and young children, have been taken to an undisclosed location. He said 20,000 residents of another town were taken to a munitions factory, where they have been held for four days.

"We can openly say there are concentration camps in Kosovo now," he said. "It is of utmost importance that humanitarian groups and journalists see the truth for themselves."

Verification of reports difficult

Independent verification of ethnic Albanian claims of human rights abuses is difficult because most international observers, humanitarian workers and journalists have either left Kosovo or were expelled by Serbian officials.

Thaqi said 30 people were executed in one town Saturday night and 22 teachers were hanged in front of their students in another area. He estimated that 500,000 ethnic Albanians had fled into dense woods, and he said thousands were trying to flee across the province's borders into neighboring countries.

In Pristina, the provincial capital, Thaqi said there appeared to be a systematic campaign to wipe out the ethnic Albanian population.

"Pristina today is almost a dead city. There are executions happening," Thaqi said. "Many intellectuals are being killed, and whole neighborhoods are being ethnically cleansed by the paramilitary forces, Serbian military and police forces."

"The shops and houses are all being burned," he said.

Thaqi said KLA fighters have not fled the province and are "trying to defend the civilian population." He said they have met with some success in parts of Pristina.

People taken in trucks, Kosovars say

Kosovars escaping from the city of Pec into nearby Montenegro also said Serbians had committed mass executions in the streets, taken many people away in covered trucks to undisclosed locations, and moved into the houses from which they evicted ethnic Albanians, eyewitnesses told CNN.

That Serbians have reportedly subjected a city the size of Pec, with about 90,000 inhabitants, instead of smaller villages to such efforts suggests they have an organized plan for the removal of ethnic Albanians, some Kosovars told CNN.

Refugees heading into Albania gave similar accounts of violence and terror. Albania is ill-equipped to handle the influx of thousands of people. As many as 20,000 were expected Monday.

"Fortunately, I thank God, I saved my 15-year-old son," said Fehmije Haxhiolli, who escaped into Albania with an extended family of 30. "I put a dress on him and a shawl, and the Serbs thought he was a woman."

Haxhiolli said the Serbs told the family they would be shot if they were still in Kosovo the following morning.

U.N. officials characterize the situation in Albania and other economically poor border states as desperate, predicting the current steady flow of refugees could turn into a massive flood.

Yugoslav minister denies ethnic cleansing

A top Yugoslavian official denied that his country is committing an ethnic cleansing.

"We need the Albanians in our state," Deputy Prime Minister Vuk Draskovic told CNN. He insisted Kosovo rebels provoked Serbian attacks, and gave a long list of what he said were historic Albanian transgressions against Serbians.

"Who committed genocide against whom?" he asked.

The Yugoslav army and Serbian special police forces were pursuing ethnic Albanians relentlessly, NATO said, chasing them from their homes before burning houses to the ground.

Ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova was believed to be in hiding, U.S. officials said.

Alleged paramilitary link

The Serbs' attacks have worsened, NATO said, since bombings began last week. NATO's campaign was launched to try to force Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to sign a peace agreement that would stop the conflict between the Serbs and ethnic Albanians who make up the majority of the Kosovo province.

NATO said its bombing campaign would continue in an effort to stop "genocidal" attacks.

NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said Sunday that NATO had received reports that a notorious Serbian paramilitary force known as the Tigers, linked to atrocities in Serbian campaigns in Bosnia some years ago, is operating in Kosovo.

But Zeljko Raznjatovic, the leader of the group, denied NATO's allegation that he was in the war-torn province.

"I am here in Belgrade," said Raznjatovic, otherwise known as Arkan, in an interview with Reuters television Sunday.

Correspondents [Mike Hanna](#), [Chris Burns](#), [Matthew Chance](#), [Jonathan Aiken](#) and [Andrea Koppel](#) contributed to this report.

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April 13, 1999

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By **ROGER COHEN**

BERLIN -- Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder was elected chairman of the Social Democratic Party Monday, but the margin of his victory clearly reflected some uneasiness over Germany's participation in NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia.

At a party congress in Bonn called to elect a replacement for Oskar Lafontaine, the former finance minister and Social Democratic Party leader who quit politics last month, Schroeder gained 76 percent of the vote in an uncontested ballot.

The vote followed a vigorous speech by Schroeder in which he said that "the genocide in Yugoslavia cannot be met with pacifism" and that Germany must stand by the ethnic Albanian "victims of expulsion, rape and murder."

The chancellor's words did not by any means convince all the delegates of a party whose pacifist wing resisted the deployment of Pershing missiles on German soil in the 1980's and continues to regard war as inherently wrong.

"This NATO military operation is based on the age-old misconception that there is such a thing as a just war," said Henning Voscheran, one of the party delegates. But a motion from his wing of the party demanding an immediate cease-fire was rejected.

Before the vote, Schroeder made it clear that he would be satisfied with 80 percent backing. He thus fell short of his target, as close to one quarter of the delegates voted against him. The vote was 370 in favor, 102 against, and 15 abstentions. Of all postwar Social Democratic leaders, only Lafontaine in 1995 was elected with a smaller majority.

After three weeks of bombing, opinion polls show that about two-thirds of Germans support the country's participation in the NATO attacks. But in a country whose postwar mantra was long that "only peace" would go out from German soil, the return to war remains a sharply divisive issue.

In essence, Schroeder's "Red Green" coalition of Social Democrats and Greens has argued that Germany had two guiding doctrines after the fall of Hitler's Reich: no more war, and no more genocide. In the Balkans, the two have come into conflict, and the government has decided that the latter principle must take precedence.

Both Schroeder and his Green foreign minister, Joska Fischer, have been firm in defending Germany's role in the NATO attacks, repeatedly using very harsh language to describe the acts of the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic. But uneasiness in both governing parties is still evident.

The vote Monday made Schroeder the Social Democratic Party's eighth chairman since World War II and the first since Willy Brandt to be chancellor and party leader at the same time. In theory, he should now be in a stronger position to push through reforms aimed at deregulating the German economy that the left wing of his party opposes.

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POLISH LEADER VOICES SUPPORT FOR BOMBING

By **DOUGLAS TURNER**

Apr 24, 1999

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Poland's Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek, here for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit, is voicing strong support for the continued bombing campaign against the Serbs and the return of the Kosovars to their homeland.

"Several times in our history we have experienced the tragedy that has been visited on Kosovo," Buzek said in a briefing with reporters Thursday night. "We understand the suffering of the people. There is no question that what is going in Kosovo is genocide.

"Every time Poles have experienced this kind of thing we have looked for some kind of help and it has not always come."

Buzek, whose nation was inducted into NATO March 24, said "more and more people in Poland support our NATO membership since the campaign for Kosovo has begun."

Although the bombing campaign has not yet been successful in stopping the atrocities, he said, it has weakened the regime of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, and "it should not be interrupted."

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Poland was not ready to support the commitment of NATO ground forces to the campaign, he said.

Buzek said Milosevic should be tried for war crimes, but hesitated to pass final judgment on him pending the development of evidence. Buzek, 57, a chemistry professor, formed a Solidarity-led government two years ago.

A large measure of credit for Poland's admission to NATO should go to Polish Americans who lobbied the White House and Congress for its inclusion, he told reporters who write for newspapers from middle American cities with large Polish American populations.

"Poland has waited 200 years to become a family of democratic countries (and) we want the integration with the alliance to go smoothly and quickly.

"Poles never lost their love of freedom, and their affection for the Western democracies," he said.