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Indian newspapers on debacle of Clinton's tour in
the Balkans

December 07, 1999

Creator of world's "moral" order

New Delhi, December 6 - The Balkan tour of the US President Bill Clinton was a debacle. It also showed the feelings of the people in the region about the American politics towards Balkan Peninsula, published today Indian daily newspaper "The National Herald".

The text of Moscow correspondent, Valentin Kunin, titled "In Kosovo, only Albanians like Clinton" says that the visit of the American president to Kosovo and Metohia was "total failure".

The visit of the American president to Kosovo "was not a trip of responsible political leader, but show directed by best Hollywood tradition", says the daily newspaper.

The hypocrisy of the US president is big when talking about multiethnic reconciliation in situation of real humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo and Metohia, and genocide on Serbian people, says the author of the article, adding that the KFOR is doing nothing to stop it.

In five months since the KFOR arrival, 250.000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo and Metohia, reminds Indian newspaper, adding that they had to go because of "crimes of the Albanian bandits".

Kosovo is becoming a lair for the gangs and terrorists in the Balkans, and all that is going on in front of KFOR, writes "National Herald", adding that the lack of KFOR's activity as well as violation of UN Security Council Resoluti-

on 1244 result in ethnically cleansed Kosovo.

"Dainik Jagran" magazine, which is read by almost ten million Indians published an article titled "Kosovo mistake is being felt" which points out that the world realizes more and more that the US policy towards the Balkans is wrong, and that Washington supports the organization of Albanian guerilla in a conflict against a sovereign country.

The US president committed a terrible mistake which can not be justifiedà going to a sovereign and independent country without an invitation, writes Indian magazine adding that he wasn't only visiting the country, but also calling people to dethrone the leadership freely elected.

Clinton has shown by that, estimates the author of the article, the weakness of the present international law as well as he has shown that the USA is a creator of the new world moral order in which KFOR allows KLA to protect only Albanians and kill and destroy Serbs.

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"Start": Bernard Kouschner plays a clown
December 17, 1999

The only contribution to peace....

Skopje, December 17th 1999. (Tanjug) - Bernard Kouschner, the Chief of Civil Mission in Kosovo, plays a clown while armed Albanian terrorists continue killing the non-Albanians and driving them out of the Serbian province of Kosovo-Metohija, the commentators of Skopje newspapers stress today.

Kouschner is now seeking a formula for multi-ethnicity, rather than opposing and punishing those who endanger peace and security in Kosovo with terror and violence, says Skopje newspaper "Macedonia today", pointing out that the exodus of the Serbian and other non-Albanian civilians happened at the same time when KFOR and UNMIK arrived to the province.

Emphasizing that the result of Kouschner's mission was disastrous, marked by killings, pressures and incidents, the commentator remarks that Albanian terrorists are still free, well armed and ready for new crimes.

Skopje weekly paper "Start" points out that one of the reasons why The International Community mission in Kosovo completely failed was because Kouschner "was making certain agreements with the leaders of Albanian terrorists, one of which undoubtedly is Hashim Thaqi".

According to "Start", the French "doctor sans frontiers", Kouschner, is not satisfied only to destroy Kosovo, but he is eager to ruin even Macedonia by supporting Albanians from this area and acting as if he were the governor of this country.

It's unbelievable that Kouschner is not aware of the great gap, intolerance and distrust in the relations between Macedonians and Albanians. Then why is he emphasizing Macedonia as a positive example of a country in which inter-ethnic relations are solved in the best possible way, why is he throwing dust into our eyes by playing a clown and why is he disgracing his country, the paper says.

Macedonian territory was misused many times during the Kosovo crisis, NATO was opening and closing its borders when it felt like it, placed troops and thousands allegedly endangered Albanians here, and now came Kouschner who exceeded even his order-givers, "Start" concludes.

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"Genmin gibao": American expansion, serious threat
to peace
December 17, 1999

Beijing, December 16 - New American "interventionism" and "strategic expansion" of Washington, present serious threat to the world peace and multipolarization process, estimates today the Chinese daily "Genmin gibao".

The newspaper explains that NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia was a "practice of new interventionism" and NATO-American theory of "human rights above the sovereignty" is actually that "new interventionism".

In wide analysis of world issues in 1999, the author says that the last year showed the real intentions of Washington to dominate and establish unipolar world, while the "new strategic concept" changed NATO from "collective defense" organization into offensive military alliance.

NATO-American 78-days bombing of Yugoslavia, under the flag of "humanism", caused lots of losses and victims to that country, stressed the newspaper adding that this action totally violated the UN Charter and norms of international relations, endangering the authority of the UN.

The author also stressed that there is decisive resistance of "many forces" to the American attempts to strengthen the domination and create a unipolar world. The newspaper estimates that Russia is strongly opposing American pressures and interventions, and that its power to stop the USA is getting bigger.

In the same time, the power of China is getting bigger and its role in peace maintenance and stability in the world becomes more important.

The present contradictory between the USA and Europe and between the USA and Japan are still there, and can grow with strengthening of European power and recovery of Japanese economy, says the author of the text, stating that the majority of the countries, including the countries of the European Union, especially France, vote for multipolar world.

That's why the attempts of the USA to dominate the world, explains the author, are being stopped by many forces and factors, so Washington cannot do whatever it wants. Although the historical orientation towards multipolarization of the world is going to be long and complex, it can't be stopped, says the article.

The newspaper points out two negative consequences caused by NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia. The first one is its influence on relations between the great powers whose trust and stability are reduced". The process of adaptation between great powers, after the cold war, is greatly endangered by NATO-American intervention on sovereign Yugoslavia, estimates the newspaper.

The other one, according to the Chinese newspaper, is expectation that the NATO-American aggression on Yugoslavia "will take into escalation of the arms race". The newspaper also stressed the enlargement of US expenses for military purposes and announcement on development of new anti-rocket systems.

The Chinese newspaper concludes at the end that after 78 days of barbarian bombing of Yugoslavia, NATO had to face toward NATO, in order to find peaceful solution, what is the proof that the UN, according to the estimations of the newspaper, still generally recognized legitimate international institution for peace maintenance.

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"Le Monde Diplomatique": USA undermines international law

December 15, 1999

USA violates international law

Paris, December 15 (Tanjug) - The United States of America violates and undermines the international law by implementing the unilateral policy, refusing multilateral, especially the one practiced by the UN.

This is one of the basic notes of the text titled "United states of America" undermine international law", which was published in December issue of the French monthly magazine "Le Monde Diplomatique".

Author of the text, US expert in field of political studies Phyllis Bennis, confirms his thesis on American usurpation of international law with example of NATO aggression, lead by the USA, on Yugoslavia.

"Marginalizing UN and using NATO as an instrument for intervention in Yugoslavia, the USA violated international law and the UN Charter", reminds Bennis, adding that the USA, which achieved nothing with bombing campaign, but only devastation of the country, now fully shift the responsibility for peace in Kosovo to the UN.

"The US strategy was to throw off the decisive role of the UN, and to shift the responsibility for the bloody happenings after the war to the UN, although the USA was the one who lead the war", writes Bennis.

She uncovered the way the USA uses to block creation of quick and efficient international police forces which could be arranged in Kosovo. She also criticized the USA for depriving the help for Serbia which was devastated in NATO

bombardment.

She also turned to the problem of slow arrival of international police forces to Kosovo and Metohia. Bennis said: "The real problem is that the 3.000 people should be recruited separately by different governments all around the world. And that's because the USA blockade establishment of international police or permanent UN forces for quick intervention, under the authority of the Secretary General, capable to react quickly in a crisis region".

As for the issue of the reconstruction of Yugoslavia, the author of the text published in "Le Monde Diplomatique" says that the government of the president Clinton restricts the aid for renewal of devastated Serbia with change of regime in Belgrade, as well as it forces the other NATO members to act equally". That's how the Kosovo Albanians will get millions of dollars for reconstruction of their towns, while the rest of Serbia won't receive anything.

Phyllis Bennis analyzed the US hegemony policy on samples of Iraq and East Timor, giving following conclusion: "The USA abandon the UN totally. Any legal request from the UN to allow the use of force, the USA change with use of NATO. The USA imposes the rules adopted by them to the world, which has had enough of empires.

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Paula Levi to Bernard Kouchner: Jews of Yugoslavia
are ashamed of your actions
December 15, 1999

Belgrade, December 15 - A Jew Paula Levi addressed an open letter to the Chief of UN Civil Mission, Bernard Kouchner, in which she asked him to tell what made him take a side of the Albanian extremists in their genocidal actions

"You know very well that this is not a revenge, because Serbs have never carried out such vicious acts. The alleged Albanian graveyards, for which you look for, confirm you that. But, they are not there, on Clinton's regret, so all the world knows that you have no excuses for the aggression. So what is the reason that you, being a Jew and whose parents for sure faced Hitler's persecution, support today the genocide over Serbs?" - wonders Mrs. Levi, adding that she couldn't imagine that Kouchner is a Jew.

"It is depressing and shameful that in the nearest surrounding of that American eccentric Clinton there are many other Jews: Cohen, Holbrook, Albright, Berger, Rubin, Levi, and finally you", says Paula Levi.

According to her, the malicious Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, was the most vicious one.

"She should be ashamed of her imprudent, demagogic, phobic words, which she spreads around the world as total political anarchist. Although she found a rescue in 1939 in Serbia, she gives it back to Serbs today by bombing them, and that is a pathological case", stressed Paula Levi.

The words of her father, who said that if could choose the nationality, then it would be Serbian, meant nothing to her, said Paula Levi in open letter to Kouchner.

"We, the Jews of Yugoslavia, are ashamed of your acts and we defend from remarks that all around Clinton are Jews by telling that they are not Jews for a long time. That's why we tell you, if it's not too late, to stop and exit the hell of Dante. To speak one, and do another, that is not a characteristic of a Jew", said Paula Levi.

"You acted the same in "Doctors sans frontiers" in Republic of Srpska in Bosnia, and in Kosovo. May it be on your honor. This is a message of embittered Jewish-Yugoslav mothers and grandmothers", stressed Paula Levi in open letter to Kouchner.

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Despotovic, Ruza

Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: dinsdag 1 februari 2000 22:56
Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion
Onderwerp: Care for refugees, displaced people drains Yugoslavia (<http://www.serbia-info.com>)

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Care for refugees, displaced people drains Yugoslavia

February 01, 2000

Insufficient aid of international community <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/18.06._4-m.jpg>

Insufficient aid of international community

Belgrade, January 31 (Tanjug) - Assistant Minister for Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs Mira Nikolic said at an enlarged session of the Drina humanitarian society presidency that Yugoslavia was taking care of some 700,000 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and another 338,000 displaced people from the U.N.-ruled Kosovo-Metohija province.

Nikolic said that, over the past eight years, Yugoslavia had spent a large proportion of its domestic product to finance refugee care, whereas international relief aid had covered barely 10 percent of the cost of their upkeep. She said the cost of food and board in refugee centers in 1999 had stood at 23 million dollars, 9 million of which were put up by the international community.

NATO's armed aggression on Yugoslavia from March 24 to June 10, 1999, further aggravated the serious economic, social and humanitarian situation, caused primarily by years of western sanctions, said the deputy of federal health, work and social policy minister Anka Vojvodic.

Direct and indirect damage from the economic blockade, according to figures of the Yugoslav ministry for development, science and the environment, stands at 150 billion dollars, while damage from the aggression is estimated at 100 billion.

That means, said Vojvodic, that total direct and indirect damage caused by war and sanctions is 250 billion US dollars.

Apart from the one million refugees and displaced people, Yugoslavia has about 4 million people - mostly children, elderly people and invalids - of a population of 10.7 million, who are in need of some form of relief or welfare aid.


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Onderwerp: "NATO was not in war against Yugoslavia"!? (<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/20>)

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Robertson: "NATO was not in war against Yugoslavia"!?

February 11, 2000

Hypocritically hidden truths <<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/dzordzrobertsonjpg.jpg>>
Hypocritically hidden truths

Bucharest, February 10 - NATO Secretary General George Robertson said today in Bucharest that the last year aggression of NATO on FRY "was not a war against Serbia or Yugoslavia"!?

Suppressing hundreds of murdered civilians, devastated houses, schools and hospitals, Robertson said to the journalists as soon as he arrived to Romania the following: "We were not in war against the Serbs".

According to Robertson, it wasn't the war, but the air strikes which were only the way to confine the military power of Yugoslavia.

It was a limited conflict, with limited consequences, and was successfully ended", cynically stated Robertson at a press conference he had with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Petre Romano.

NATO Secretary General came to Romania thanking for support in aggression on Yugoslavia. He also did it in Bulgaria.

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Onderwerp: 00, Letter to President Clinton (<http://news.suc.org/press/suc209.html>)

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Serbian Unity Congress - Letter

February 3, 2000
President William J Clinton,
The White House,
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The news blazed across the nation today of yet another brutal attack on the few remaining Serbs in Kosovo. On this occasion a premeditated attack-military sources called in an "ambush"-took place on a UNHCR bus.

Secretary of State Albright condemned the attack and repeated the mantra that we have incessantly heard over the past months that murders of Serbs must stop. Yet nothing happens. No effective action is being taken to restore law and order on Kosovo society. What has happened is that the illegal NATO war has caused Kosovo to take an immense step backward. Under the NATO occupation, ethnic cleansing of Serbs and other non-Albanian nationalities has been legitimized. We are collaborating in turning this once multicultural province of Kosovo into a monoethnic territory controlled by terrorists and drug traffickers. The damage to U.S. interests is enormous. The damage to our national honor and that of NATO is even greater.

The time has come for NATO to look hard at their role and to see that it is wholly counterproductive. NATO's presence in Kosovo is implicating the alliance in genocide against the Serbs, collusion with terrorists, dismemberment of the sovereign state of Yugoslavia and facilitating ethnic cleansing. This shameful role full of deceit, hypocrisy, double standards, broken promises and deception is destroying NATO's credibility as an agent for peace and stability. There is mounting evidence that even our NATO allies can no longer stomach the ignominy of their actions in Kosovo.

Rather than compound the present folly, Mr. President, NATO should withdraw from Kosovo and hand over its functions to a body, perhaps the OSCE, who can administer matters fairly and impartially. NATO has disqualified itself. The sooner it leaves the better.

Sincerely,

Milosh D. Milenkovich
President

cc:

Members of the Congress
Vice President Albert Gore, Jr.
Secretary of State Madeleine Albright
Ambassador James Dobbins, State Department
NATO, UN Security Council
Governor George W. Bush
Senator Bill Bradley
Senator John McCain

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Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion; Annamiek Vermeulen; Dolf Loth
Onderwerp: Serbians struggle against sanctions (http://www.msnbc.com/news/367906.asp?cp1=1)

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Serbians struggle against sanctions

People tired of standoff with West, economic deprivation Image: Yugoslavia-cold
weather <http://www.msnbc.com/news/536745.jpg>
A Serbian refugee from Kosovo tries to sell goods he got as humanitarian aid on a sub-zero day in Uzice, about 120 miles southwest of Belgrade.
<http://www.msnbc.com/Site Elements/clear.gif>

By Edward Cody
WASHINGTON POST

BELGRADE — As a retired pediatrician largely dependent on his government pension, Sinisa Andjelkovic feels the pinch of economic sanctions against Yugoslavia every time he goes shopping. With tangerines at more than \$1 a pound and even potatoes almost as high, Andjelkovic moves through the crowded lanes of Belgrade's Kalenic Market counting his pennies and cursing his luck.

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'We still have not come to the bottom line – hunger, no water, things like that. We can still go downhill from here. It is cruel, but true.'

— IVAN DRAZIC

A lawyer "MRS. ALBRIGHT and Mr. Clinton . . . are doing this to us," Andjelkovic, 73, complained, referring to Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and President Clinton. "I cannot forgive them for this. . . There is nothing we can do to get out of the straits we are in. People stronger than we are fighting over our backs."

Andjelkovic's lament, expressed during a shuffle among the stalls of meat, fruit, vegetables and cheese at Kalenic, could speak for all Serbians today. After enduring sanctions for most of the last decade – and after a U.S.-led bombing campaign last spring that for 78 days pounded the country's infrastructure – people here seem tired: tired of sanctions, tired of deprivation, tired of making do and, most of all, tired of their reputation as a people to be shunned.

A widely predicted winter disaster for Serbia's battered power and energy networks, which some had counted on to push Serbia's 10 million inhabitants to rise up against President Slobodan Milosevic, has not occurred, at least not so far. By ingenuity, discreet purchases and some help from its neighbors, Milosevic's government has kept electricity flowing despite NATO's high-tech strikes against distribution grids. A strong agriculture, supplemented by smuggling, has kept dinner tables full. Russian natural gas has been piped in for heating. And despite U.S. and European Union bans on petroleum sales, so much gasoline has appeared on Serbia's semiofficial free market that prices here – about \$2 a gallon – are lower than in neighboring Hungary.

Recent Post coverage

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<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A22756-2000Feb7.html>> Milosevic Ally Is Assassinated in Belgrade <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A22756-2000Feb7.html>>

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A16786-2000Jan23.html>> Three Serbs Arrested in Slaying of Arkan <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A16786-2000Jan23.html>>

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<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51083-2000Jan15.html>> Accused Serbian War Criminal Arkan Is Slain <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51083-2000Jan15.html>>

"If you put all this together, you have what is happening now," said a European diplomat in Belgrade. "They're going to make it through the winter. . . . Any strategy of squeezing out Milosevic by economic means has very little chance of success."

But in the sullen mood of Belgrade, even survival and warm houses through the winter have become reasons for discouragement. They mean, people here say, that the standoff between Milosevic and U.S. and European leaders seeking his downfall is likely to continue. And those paying the bill will be the same: people like Andjelkovic trying to get by on a stable pension in the face of prices inflating at an annual rate near 100 percent on the free market even though official prices were frozen last year.

"It can go on for years," said Ivan Drazic, 40, a lawyer in a prominent 10-person Belgrade firm. "We still have not come to the bottom line – hunger, no water, things like that. We can still go downhill from here. It is cruel, but true."

Milorad Zibkosac, who stands on the sidewalk peddling homemade address books on his day off, feels he has gone about as far downhill as he can. His salary at a state-owned paper goods factory is worth about \$65 – and his rent alone is \$50. To fill in the gaps for himself and his wife, he makes notebooks and address books at home in the evening and hawks them in the street, each for about the price of a pack of cigarettes.

"I was an excellent student," Zibkosac, 34, said through a mirthless smile, "and you see where it got me."

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Economic sanctions imposed after the war over Kosovo have come to be seen here as another chapter in a long political and economic squeeze against Serbia, the predominant republic in the Yugoslav federation. Viewed from Belgrade, the same hardships have been in place more or less throughout a decade of conflict as Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and now Kosovo spun away from central control – with Montenegro showing signs it might complete the breakup soon, leaving Serbia by itself.

The result has been devastation of what had been Eastern Europe's most developed middle class and open dissatisfaction with Milosevic's rule, which is widely blamed for both the breakup and the hard times. "Greater Serbia is only a little Serbia now, and it could get even littler if our daddy takes us into another war," said a disillusioned waiter in Kragujevac, a town 60 miles south of Belgrade.

But even the Serbian leader's political enemies say that there has not developed the strong momentum for a change of government that his adversaries in Washington and European capitals had hoped. And the relative smoothness so far of this crucial winter has left most people more interested in coping with their everyday difficulties than in heeding opposition calls for massive street protests.

"People are in such a state of apathy," complained Ognjen Pribicevic, political adviser to the opposition leader Vuk Draskovic. "There is no enthusiasm."

"The poorer the situation gets, the calmer it is," reasoned Milan Ninkovic, a railway worker who blames Milosevic for the economic troubles but sees little chance of change any time soon.

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Because Serbs rely heavily on electricity to supplement government-provided steam heat, a cold snap in

the last week of January forced several days of power reductions in Belgrade and outages elsewhere. But the danger of a system-wide collapse seems to have been averted, Labus said.

Government engineers, masters of improvisation after a decade of economic stress, installed new switching equipment – some provided by Switzerland and Romania – and moved parts around the country to restore the much damaged grid and keep it operating. “They are smart guys, and they succeeded in repairing the network,” he added. To make up the difference between needs of about 140 million kilowatt hours a day and the 105 million produced domestically, the Serbian government has arranged electricity purchases from Slovakia, Hungary and Bosnia’s Serb Republic in addition to a long-standing swap agreement with Greece, he said. Prolonged cold could still strain supplies, he predicted, because need can rise up to 10 percent as families turn on electric heaters when gas-powered steam heat is not enough.

Despite U.S. urging to the contrary, Hungary has kept natural gas for municipal steam plants flowing through a pipeline from Russia, sending enough to meet half of Serbia’s annual needs of roughly 3 billion square yards, according to Balsa Skadijer, the Serbian ambassador in Budapest. Gasoline, oil and diesel have moved into Serbia in liberal quantities from Bulgaria, Romania and the Serb Republic, Serbian and diplomatic sources said. Although these countries have been pressed to heed the U.S. and EU sanctions, Bulgarian Prime Minister Ivan Kostov assured Serbian journalists last week that withholding fuel would be unneighborly and, he said, Bulgaria is a good neighbor.

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HOLGER JENSEN: Sanctions and dictators

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From Time to Time: Nando's in-depth look at the 20th century
<<http://www.nandotimes.com/ourcentury/front>>

(February 10, 2000 2:44 a.m. EST <http://www.nandotimes.com>) - New year, old problems. Navy Seals boarded a Russian tanker smuggling Iraqi oil out of the Persian Gulf, which explains how Saddam Hussein continues to enrich himself while his people suffer the effects of an economic embargo intended to topple him.

The ship is docked in Oman, where the oil will be sold to defray the costs of the intercept and Omani port fees. But the Russians will get their tanker back and Saddam will remain comfortably in power, his bank accounts hardly dented.

Besides Russian tankers, ships flying many other flags help Saddam circumvent sanctions. By State Department count, 12,000 vessels have been intercepted by American and allied warships since the embargo was imposed after Iraq's conquest of Kuwait in 1990, and about 700 were diverted when found to be carrying Iraqi oil.

Turkey and Iran also help in the smuggling of Iraqi oil. Turkish tanker trucks openly cross the border of northern Iraq, right beneath the noses of U.S. pilots patrolling Iraq's "no fly" zones, but little is said about it because Turkey is a loyal NATO ally and heavily dependent on Iraqi oil and gas.

Despite the intercepts, the State Department estimates that Iraq smuggles 100,000 barrels of oil daily over and above the \$5.2 billion limit it is allowed to export every six months to buy food, medicine and other essentials.

The value of the smuggled oil, at current prices, is more than \$3 million a day. It's a safe bet that little of this is used to benefit the Iraqi people.

Saddam's personal wealth is estimated at more than \$6 billion, and he is 6th richest on *Forbes'* list of "Kings, Queens and Dictators."

Since the Gulf War, Saddam has built more than 40 palaces and plush vacation resorts for himself, his family and friends. He has also rebuilt missile facilities destroyed by U.S. and British

air raids in December, 1998, and buildings that housed his chemical, biological and nuclear arms programs.

Meanwhile, Baghdad's health ministry says there have been 1.2 million sanctions-related deaths over the past nine years, many of them children felled by inadequate nutrition, lack of medicines and other erosions in the health care system. The figures may be suspect but the suffering is well-documented by nongovernmental aid agencies.

The U.N. Security Council recently offered to lift sanctions within four months if Saddam cooperates with a new weapons inspection system headed by Hans Blix, formerly head of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. But Saddam, who kicked out all weapons inspectors in 1998, has again refused.

Short of going to war there's no way to make him comply. And pressure is building from three of the Security Council's five permanent members - Russia, China and France - to lift sanctions without his compliance.

Slobodan Milosevic is another foe whom sanctions have failed to dislodge.

CIA Director George Tenet told the Senate Intelligence Committee last week the Yugoslav president's hold on power is "not seriously shaken."

He controls the military, his inner circle remains "loyal, or at least cowed," and he has an "effective media machine."

In just eight years Milosevic has started and lost four wars. His dreams of a "Greater Serbia" have led to a lesser Serbia, allied only with an increasingly hostile Montenegro in what's left of Yugoslavia. He has cost the Serbian economy \$50 billion in international sanctions and \$30 billion in war damage, which the West won't repair until he is driven from office.

Yugoslavia is now the poorest country in Europe. Poverty has doubled in the past year, with 64 percent of the population living on less than \$30 a month. And more than half of all Serb workers are unemployed.

While the Milosevic-controlled news media blames "NATO aggression" for Serbia's economic woes, most Serbs blame Milosevic. But he survives by putting loyalists in charge of every level of government and rewarding them handsomely with business monopolies.

The head of the national oil company is also chairman of the Serbian parliament. The prime minister heads an export-import company. And Milosevic himself skims off Serbia's thriving black market, which accounts for a third of the country's gross domestic product.

By now it should be abundantly clear to everyone that sanctions cannot dislodge dictators.

Holger Jensen <<mailto:hjens@aol.com>> is international editor of the Denver Rocky Mountain News.

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Kosovo was a disaster - just as Cook was warned

February 10, 2000

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Boris Johnson, Daily Telegraph

The great thing about the Kosovo war, the point that every schoolboy will remember, is that we won. Oh yes we jolly well did. In spite of all the cynics and the sneerers, as Alistair Campbell might put it, in spite of all the carping from the sidelines about the strategy, we kept on going with our brilliant policy of bombing. We bombed and bombed and bombed for three months, from a height of 5,000ft.

We dropped 23,614 air munitions, and destroyed 372 Serb factories. We killed about 500 Serb civilians and about 560 members of the Serb police force and army in Kosovo. Our great war leader Tony Blair was hailed by returning Albanians with cries of To-nee, To-nee.

Britain was much praised for the bellicosity of the Prime Minister's rhetoric, even if this country contributed only four per cent of the military effort, next to the 90 per cent supplied by the Pentagon. Blair achieved his objectives. It may have been bloody. It may have been tough. It may seem a little curious, in retrospect, that the refugee crisis, when more than a million Albanians

were expelled from Kosovo, actually occurred after the beginning of the air strikes. But never mind. We won because we had to win. Because victory was the only exit. Because Nato's credibility was at stake.

And for most people that will be enough and they will pass over the present anniversary of the Rambouillet talks with magnificent indifference. But there are some zealots who still take an interest in the Kosovo conflict, and they may try, over the next few weeks, to make themselves heard above the din of big stories, like Sophie's fox fur hat. There are those, like Robin Cook and Tony Blair and Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright, who believe this war represented a beautiful innovation in foreign policy. Shorn of vulgar accretions such as national self-interest, or even strategic purpose, this was the first exclusively moral war. It was fought for purely humanitarian reasons (even if, ahem, the first and most important effect of the air strikes was to precipitate a humanitarian disaster of biblical proportions). It was the first assertion of the New World Order, in which liberal values could be imposed in spite of such figments as international law or national sovereignty; like the EU's ostracism of Austria. Then there is another group of people who take an interest in the anniversary, people who believe, like me, that the Kosovo war was a cataclysmic cock-up, and who believe it is an amazing tribute to the manipulative skills of the Blair government that Cook and Albright are not this week being burnt in effigy across the civilised world for their grotesque bungling.

What did the war really achieve, at a cost of £800 million for weapons alone? We certainly got "Yugoslav troops out". The Third Army and the MUP policemen have returned to Serbia. As it happens, the withdrawal of the army so terrified the Serbs and other non-Albanians in Kosovo that 265,000 of them also fled, some of them being killed by the advancing Albanians, and some 80 Orthodox churches being destroyed by the KLA.

Blair was also right to say that we have got "our troops in". In fact, we have got many thousands of them there for the foreseeable future, policing a new Ulster where the language is (more) unintelligible to the squaddies. They are finding it very difficult to stop ethnic killings in places such as Kosovska Mitrovica, which are now taking place at a higher rate than before the bombing began. They are discovering what we had been told all along; that the KLA are a bunch of thugs, masterminding, among other things, a white slave trade via Italy to the brothels of Brussels. One Nato soldier has already been accused of rape of an underage girl, and there is evidence that some troops are already being dragged into the KLA's criminal syndicates.

And Blair has been wholly vindicated in pledging to get the "refugees back home". Except, of course, that many of the million have returned to ruined homes.

How did this disaster occur? Through straightforward diplomatic error by Cook and Albright. When British diplomats in Belgrade saw the text of the Rambouillet agreement, with its proviso that Nato troops should be allowed throughout Serbia, they were amazed. They knew that Milosevic could not accept it. When they heard that air strikes were threatened, they advised against, since they did not believe that Milosevic would fold after a few days. They could not see the logic of withdrawing the monitors from Kosovo just as the air strikes began.

After all that bombing, and all those casualties, we seem merely to have switched one tyranny for another, with our own soldiers now permanently caught in the crossfire. We have caused an exodus of Serbs, gypsies and others, at least some of whom may have been entirely innocent. If Western politicians try to extract any kind of credit from this outcome, they should be pelted with copies of the Rambouillet accord.

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"Panorama": KLA rules Kosovo, not KFOR

February 11, 2000

KLA persecuted them from Kosovo [<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/mediapanorama.jpg>](http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/mediapanorama.jpg)

KLA persecuted them from Kosovo

Rome, February 11 (Tanjug)- The so-called ethnic-Albanian KLA is in command in Kosovo and Metohija, despite the presence of the KFOR international forces, the Italian weekly Panorama said, commenting the continued violence against the non-Albanian population in the province.

Citing the OSCE report for December, Panorama said the violence was organized by militant KLA separatists. "The doubtful guerrilla movement has been accused also of cooperating with the Kosovo and Metohija mafia," the Milan weekly set out.

The Human Rights Watch shares the opinion that orders for the violence in Serbia's southern province come from the militant KLA and KLA members are the perpetrators of the most brutal crimes there.

The journalist of "Panorama", Elisabeth Burbo says that one of the officials of the UN organization personally told her that since last July, KLA carried out organized ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

...he anti-democratic and violent KLA, which is now unpopular among Kosovo and Metohija Albanians, themselves, is stronger than ever before," the weekly Panorama said.

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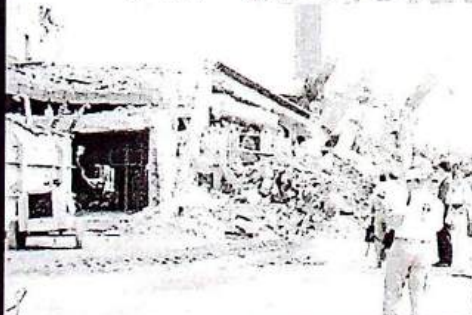
The KOSOVO Conflict



Consequences



for the Environment



& Human Settlements

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Consequences for the Environment & Human Settlements





The
KOSOVO
Conflict

Consequences
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UNEP/UNCHS (Habitat) Balkans Task Force

Foreword

The twentieth session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1999 was an important landmark in the development and policy focus of the organisation. The meeting strongly endorsed the re-orientation of the corporate objectives of UNEP and focused UNEP activities into five core areas of concentration.

Central to this new rationalised policy focus is the commitment by UNEP to enhance and strengthen its capability in the fields of information, monitoring, assessment and early warning. This crucial decision is at the heart of UNEP's role within the United Nations family as the catalytic organisation for the environment. It positions the organisation to be able to respond and be available for effective and objective neutral scientific assessments in such areas as natural disasters and man-made environmental problems.

In keeping with this Governing Council decision and at the strong recommendation of the United Nations Inter-agency Humanitarian Needs Assessment Mission, which visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia under the leadership of UN Under-Secretary-General, Sergio Vierra de Mello, the Joint UNEP/UNCHS (Habitat) Balkans Task Force (BTF) came into being. It was charged with the task of urgently carrying out a detailed assessment of the environmental and human settlements impact of the conflict.

BTF was a joint initiative between UNEP and UNCHS (Habitat) and in line with the mandate of UNCHS to focus on normative functions, the task force integrated a human settlements component working alongside the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Pekka Haavisto, the former Finnish Environment and Development Cooperation Minister, agreed to serve as BTF chairman. He quickly set about pulling together an international group of experts to work in conjunction with the Nairobi headquartered in-house UNEP and UNCHS teams. I should like to thank Pekka Haavisto for his personal commitment and hard work in carrying out this role.

Throughout the BTF process some sixty experts have been involved in the assessment missions. They were drawn from a wide range of different backgrounds and experience and included input from six UN agencies and departments, 19 countries and 26 NGOs and scientific institutions.

One of the central requirements of the BTF project was that its activities should not divert resources from existing UNEP and UNCHS programmes in other parts of the world. To this end, I am pleased to be able to report that the entire BTF operation has been funded from additional voluntary contributions ensuring no dilution of activities to existing priorities and commitments. My thanks go to those donors who contributed finance and support in kind.

The results and recommendations of the BTF make interesting reading. They highlight the linkage between environmental pollution and humanitarian assistance. This report also demonstrates the need for environmental and human settlement planning in conflict management. I am convinced that such a neutral, objective and scientific assessment of the real situation on the ground in a post-conflict situation is essential. This approach provides a much-needed and reliable source of information to the peoples affected. It also provides a management tool for the international community as an integrated part of the needs assessment requirements in the overall emergency humanitarian effort in war-torn areas.

Klaus Töpfer
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme
Acting Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements



6 Recommendations

The following recommendations are aimed at highlighting activities that are urgent to halt or mitigate the further degradation of the state of the environment in FRY, and diminish the risks to human health.

The main responsibility for clean-up efforts rests with the FRY authorities. Nevertheless, the international community must be ready to take action when urgent humanitarian needs are in question, or when and where the democratic development of the entire region could be enhanced.

An unhealthy and dangerously polluted environment does not provide a sound basis for the well-being of human populations or for business and trade. However, the implementation of the recommendations will not only depend on the availability of funds; political concerns related to the international embargo of Serbia will also have to be taken into account. In the current context, international assistance for reconstruction will only be available for the Republic of Montenegro and Province of Kosovo. However, the hot spots of special environmental concern identified in Serbia will require immediate action from a humanitarian point of view.

The recommendations made by BTF are based on the findings of the technical field missions, Desk Assessment Group, and extensive discussions within an international network of individual experts and organisations. They also take into account ongoing initiatives, such as the projects implemented by FOCUS.

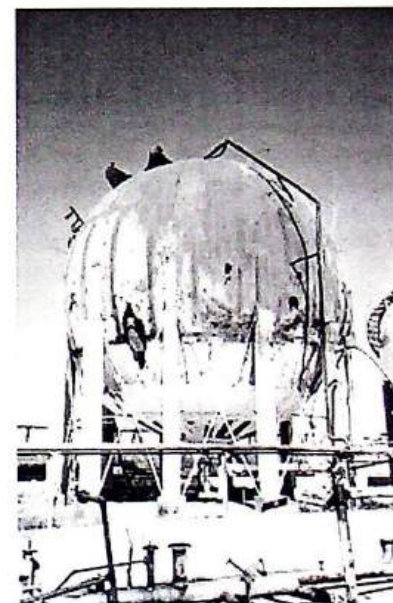
The recommendations distinguish between short-term actions aimed at immediate clean-up, and longer-term recommendations, also taking institutional strengthening, reconstruction and resumption of industrial activities into account. Normal economic activities, including production at some of the contaminated sites, have begun to resume. This could aggravate the situation, and the BTF emphasises that clean-up and careful handling of contaminated material has to be given a particularly high priority at these sites.

Industrial Sites

■ Immediate Action

The first four paragraphs refer to all of the heavily-contaminated industrial sites; specific recommendations for the major hot spots follow.

- 1 Detailed groundwater studies and monitoring of drinking water should be conducted to determine whether pollution has contaminated sources of drinking water (this recommendation should be implemented for all of the hot spots - Pančevo, Kragujevac, Novi Sad and Bor - and other sites potentially at risk).
- 2 Surface soil contaminated with heavy oil, PCBs, heavy metals and other hazardous substances should be given remedial treatment and, if necessary, removed from all industrial sites (i.e. Pančevo, Kragujevac, Bor, Novi Sad, Barič, Kraljevo, Niš, Novi Beograd, Obrenovac region, Prahovo and Priština), and securely stored (see below).
- 3 A detailed waste disposal plan should be developed and implemented for every site, and for the FRY as a whole. Immediate action should be taken for the secure storage of hazardous waste (including medical waste), even if facilities for its final treatment or disposal are not yet available (see also page 80).
- 4 Monitoring of air, water, soil, agricultural products and human health, as well as communication of the results of such monitoring to the population around all industrial 'hot spots', should be continued, and, if necessary, increased.
- 5 **Pančevo:** urgent remedial action should be taken at the wastewater canal heavily contaminated with EDC and mercury. Immediate clean-up of the mercury spill at the petrochemical factory should also be implemented. Detailed recommendations are to:
 - a) consider the wastewater canal as an environmental hot spot, with special risk to the aquatic environment of the Danube, and implement the following



Damaged VCM tank at the petrochemical plant in Pančevo
Photo: BTF

measures as soon as possible:

- complete isolation of the canal water and sediments from the Danube by construction of a physical barrier (alternative wastewater facilities to be implemented at the same time);
 - removal of oil attached to the banks and vegetation along the canal and around its confluence with the Danube (to be done before next Danube flood period);
 - detailed mapping of EDC, oil and mercury distribution in the canal;
 - use of a suction dredger to remove the bottom sediments contaminated with EDC (based on the results of EDC mapping) ;
 - secure disposal of the contaminated sediments.
- b) remove and securely store the metallic mercury on the floor of the petrochemical plant; recover as much of the main spillage as possible by suction, and use chemical binding to assist with removal of residual quantities.
- c) implement in situ remedial actions to clean up the groundwater which is highly contaminated with chlorinated solvents.
- d) clean collector channels at the oil refinery to prevent further potential contamination of the Danube with oil and oil products.

6 Kragujevac: at the Zastava car plant, action should be taken to improve storage of the significant quantities of hazardous waste generated by operation of the factory, as well as by the air strikes. Immediate steps should be taken to clean up PCB and dioxin contamination. Specific recommendations are to:

- a) inform the managers of the site about the contaminated areas and associated risks, in particular with regard to the security of workers conducting the clean-up operations;
- b) remove the concrete floor of the paint works with extreme care and as thoroughly as possible to a depth of at least 5cm;
- c) place the PCB- and dioxin-bearing deposits and the broken concrete in secure, dry storage. Ideally, the material would be taken to a hazardous waste treatment facility;
- d) empty the water tanks before any major clean up and reconstruction of the paint shop is considered. Carry out a more detailed study to gain additional information about the pollutants present in the different tanks. Do not

release the water from the tanks into the river or wastewater system. Take urgent measures to prevent rainwater from increasing the volume of the tanks or causing them to overflow;

- e) use available techniques to treat the polluted water in the tanks, for example through some type of filtration or through adsorbing materials (like active carbon or a peat bed).

7 Novi Sad: detailed studies should be carried out to determine whether oil and oil product pollution has contaminated the groundwater. Specific recommendations are to:

- a) carry out further investigations within the refinery compound. Soil contaminated with heavier oils should be removed and disposed of under controlled conditions, using recovery technologies wherever possible. Soil and groundwater contaminated by lighter, more volatile oil products should be treated using in situ methods;
- b) drill an observation well to confirm that free-phase gasoline is floating on top of the groundwater. Any floating gasoline should be removed using in situ methods, contaminated groundwater should also be cleaned up using in situ treatment;
- c) continue abstraction from the well which was closed (well test and water quality sampling should also be carried out periodically), so that contaminating substances (oil, etc.) are also withdrawn, thereby reducing the risk of contaminating adjacent wells (hydrological barrier);
- d) carry out appropriate tests to assess the hazard posed to the drinking water supply of Novi Sad through location of wells close to the oil refinery.

8 Bor: immediate action should be taken to prevent further releases of large amounts of sulphur dioxide gas in the atmosphere; damaged transformers and capacitors containing PCB oils should be removed and stored securely. Specific recommendations are to:

- a) resume the production of sulphuric acid, thus binding the sulphur dioxide now released into the atmosphere;
- b) treat the leaking capacitors and transformers, together with contaminated soil, as hazardous waste and deal with it accordingly.



Environmental impacts on the Danube

The result of laboratory analysis of samples taken from the Danube sediment and biota revealed significant chronic pollution, both upstream and downstream of the sites directly affected by the conflict. It is therefore strongly recommended that:

- 9 Follow-up monitoring be carried out with extension of the sampling to the confluence of major tributaries, e.g. Drava, Sava, Tisa and Morava rivers, as well as to the upstream (Hungarian) and downstream (Romanian – Bulgarian) reaches of the Danube.
- 10 An appropriate monitoring programme should be developed and implemented. This should be based on existing programmes but designed to be fully compatible with the ICPDR's TransNational Monitoring Network for the Danube River Basin (also see page 81).
- 11 Significant long-term efforts should be made to reduce both acute, point-source pollution and chronic pollution from industrial and urban effluent through investment in appropriate production and waste management processes.

Depleted Uranium

■ Immediate Action

- 12 It is necessary to obtain information from NATO confirming if, how and where DU was used during the Kosovo conflict. This is a prerequisite for verifying initial risk assessments, making necessary measurements, and taking precautionary actions.
- 13 Further measurements should be organised as soon as possible to identify possible contamination and verify assumptions. Highest priority should be given to finding pieces of depleted uranium, heavily contaminated surfaces and other 'hot spots'. Measures should be taken for the secure storage of any contaminated material recovered.
- 14 A thorough review of the effects on health of medium- and long-term exposure to depleted uranium should be undertaken under the auspices of the World

Health Organisation.

- 15 At places where contamination has been confirmed, measures should be taken to prevent access. The local authorities and people concerned should be informed of the possible risks and appropriate precautionary measures.

■ Monitoring

- 16 Appropriately designed health examination programmes should be established in areas where use of DU is confirmed.

Biodiversity

■ Immediate Action

- 17 Clearance of unexploded ordnance remaining in protected areas (primarily cluster bomblets) should be undertaken and measures implemented to issue warnings and restrict access to certain areas.
- 18 There is an urgent need to rebuild the nature conservation infrastructure and management system in Kosovo; as a first step, efforts should be made to recover all relevant information on biodiversity in the province.



Bomb craters in Fruška Gora National Park Photo: BTF

■ Management and Monitoring

- 19 Management plans should be prepared and implemented for each of the damaged sites. The planning process should take environmental risks of reconstruction activities into account. The threats to national parks posed by tourism, changes in traditional land management practices and other legal and



illegal economic activities should be assessed.

- 20 Priority should be given to establishment of the proposed Prokletije National Park, both because of its exceptionally high biodiversity and its significant potential role as a transboundary 'peace park' (Kosovo-Montenegro-Albania). Preparations and research on the Kosovo and Montenegro sectors were well advanced prior to the conflict.
- 21 Long-term monitoring of the impacts of the conflict on protected areas, including the effects of reconstruction activities, should be conducted.

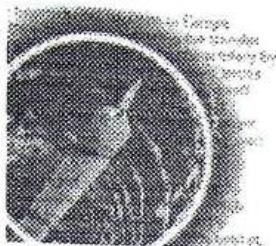
Human Settlements Priorities for Action in Kosovo

- 22 Medium-term housing rehabilitation strategies should be developed in close consultation with local stakeholders. Given the particular conditions of Kosovo, such strategies should enable the recovery of local capacities in the construction industry, building materials production and the operation of financial systems. Establishing traditional programmes of assistance that will prolong Kosovo's dependence on external support.
- 23 An assessment should be made of the resources available within Kosovo, including the income due to remittances and trade, that can be put at the service of rehabilitation activities. Such assessments are absolutely necessary before a credible rehabilitation strategy is in place, both to ensure the maximum use of local capacities and to target such programmes to the most needy sectors of the population.
- 24 As part of BTF/UNCHS (Habitat) on-going support activities to UNMIK, medium-term technical support programmes should be developed in the areas of:
- production of guidelines and procedures for municipal administration;
 - the regularisation of housing and property rights and the establishment of an independent mechanism to deal with these issues;
 - the development of a cadastral information system and the upgrading of

property registries and documentation.

Long-Term Institution Building

- 25 The capacities of the environmental administration in the FRY, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Montenegro and the Province of Kosovo, as well as at the municipal level, should be strengthened by providing sound economic frameworks and targeted training activities.
- 26 The environmental Monitoring System in the FRY should be redesigned and strengthened at both the federal and local levels, focusing on water, air, biodiversity and human health, and, in particular, targeting environmental hot spots. The environmental information network should be strengthened by establishing an internationally (i.e. EEA, UNEP, international environmental conventions) compatible system.
- 27 The potential benefits of FRY participation and full integration, when political circumstances permit, in the work of international organisations and regional environmental processes (Environment for Europe, Danube Convention, etc.) should be recognised (see pages 80-81 for information on Basel and Danube Conventions, of special relevance to BTF findings).
- 28 The private sector (business, industry) should be more involved in environmental planning and take environmental considerations into account during reconstruction and when taking up industrial activities.
- 29 The non-governmental sector should be strengthened; for example, by raising environmental awareness, improving access to environmental information and promoting greater involvement in environmental policy-making locally, nationally and internationally. This will strengthen civil society and contribute to greater stability of the entire region.
- 30 The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) should develop capacity on environmental issues and integrate environmental considerations into other components of its activities.



Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/05/99
18 January 1999

YUGOSLAVIA - Kosovo Province The truth behind the killings of 45 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo must be found

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18 January 1999

FYR - Kosovo Province

The truth behind the killings of 45 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo must be found

Those responsible for killing some 45 ethnic Albanians in Raçak village on 15 January 1999 may never be brought to justice unless independent investigators are immediately allowed to do their work, Amnesty International said today.

The organization also expressed fears for the safety of the villagers still in Raçak, and in at least two surrounding villages to which the recent violence seems to have spread.

The victims' bodies – including three women, a 12-year-old child and several elderly men – were found on 16 January 1999 by members of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Verification Mission, in and around Raçak, less than 30 kilometres south of the capital, Priština.

"This brutal crime is chillingly similar to the first reports of large-scale killings of ethnic Albanian civilians, less than one year ago," Amnesty International said. "The truth about what happened then was never established, and those responsible are therefore still free."

"If history is not to repeat itself it is essential to find out what happened in Raçak on 15 January and bring those responsible to justice."

"Given the present situation in Kosovo, domestic investigations cannot be regarded as impartial. The authorities should therefore do everything in their power to protect the site of the killings, and to preserve the victims' bodies to allow for thorough independent and impartial autopsies to be performed," Amnesty International said.

Many of the victims had reportedly been shot through the head at close range and some showed signs of mutilation.

The victims appeared to be local villagers, possibly with some members of the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) among them. They had been caught up in last week's renewed fighting between the KLA and Serbian security forces in the Štimlje-Uroševac area.

As villagers fled their homes, some men were reportedly arrested by Serbian police and taken to the Štimlje police station. Amnesty International is extremely concerned that those arrested may be tortured and ill-treated in police custody and is urging the authorities to protect them.

"We also strongly urge the Serbian and Federal Yugoslav authorities to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population, both in Raçak and in surrounding villages, and to ensure that their security forces do the same," Amnesty International said.

Attempts by the Priština district investigating magistrate, Danica Marinković, to investigate the scene of the killings on 17 January failed, apparently because the area was still too dangerous. On 18 January, Serbian police forces, stationed on hillsides overlooking the village, reportedly resumed firing at Raçak village.

On 18 January, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, Louise Arbour, was stopped at the border between the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and banned from entering the country. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has denied Tribunal investigators access for the past 10 months, claiming that the Tribunal has no jurisdiction over its territory.

"The authorities should cooperate fully with the independent investigators, and provide them with all information concerning the police and security forces' operations," Amnesty International said.

Background

Over 2,000 people died after armed conflict erupted in Kosovo province in February 1998. Many of them were extra-judicially executed or deliberately and arbitrarily killed. Some 700 people, the majority ethnic Albanians but also including over a hundred Serbs, remain unaccounted for.

At least 1,000 ethnic Albanians were detained by the Serbian authorities in 1998. Amnesty International has evidence that many of them were tortured or ill-treated in custody. As many as five may have died in 1998 as a result of injuries sustained during brutal interrogations. Many of the detainees are currently being tried even though there is no solid evidence to support the charges against them.

The October 1998 cease-fire markedly reduced violence in Kosovo. The international OSCE "Verification Mission" has acknowledged that monitoring respect for human rights is part of its mission. However, only 700 of the envisaged 1,400 mission members have been deployed in the province to date, and those in the field have experienced great difficulties in carrying out their mandate.

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom

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Updated: 21-Mar-2000

Kosovo one year on

Introduction

A year ago, NATO launched its airpower to end the repression in Kosovo – and succeeded. In the blizzard of words that has followed it is easy to overlook that simple fact. Much is still misunderstood about what happened. Now is an appropriate time to look back on what NATO did during the conflict, to review what KFOR has achieved since, and to look ahead. The risks were high – NATO faced many problems – and the price was high. But as the Alliance promised at the time, Serb forces are out, KFOR is in, and the refugees are home. However, there should be no illusions – the task remaining is formidable.

The crisis was a long time in the making and cannot be solved in a year. While an enormous amount has been achieved – often unheralded – no one can be satisfied with the current situation. But for those who have doubts, the simple answer is to look at the alternatives. The OSCE report, *Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told*, makes what happened appallingly clear, painting a shocking picture of a planned campaign of violence against Kosovar Albanian civilians. No-one was safe it says, “There is chilling evidence of the murderous targeting of children, with the aim of terrorizing and punishing adults and communities.” If NATO had not acted, then that spiral of violence would have intensified, and the death toll escalated. There would now be many hundreds of thousands of refugees, with neighbouring countries under pressure and the whole region destabilised. Critics, including those who now criticise NATO for what it has done, would be condemning the Alliance for what it had not done.

The challenge now, and by no means just for NATO, is to complete the job. The air campaign and entry of KFOR have created a platform to build upon, but that requires resources and continuing commitment, or there is a risk that hard-won success could drift away. The people of Kosovo, and their leaders, must also seize the opportunities presented, or risk losing the goodwill and backing of the international community. It is ethnic hatred that has brought disaster in the past, and however hard, however bitter the memories, it must be set aside if the future is to be truly different.

It was Edmund Burke who said that for evil to triumph it is only necessary for good men to do nothing. In March last year, NATO's 19 nations acted. The following is my personal reflection on Kosovo one year on.





Updated: 21-Mar-2000

Kosovo one year on

Background to the crisis

When NATO launched its air campaign, the situation in Kosovo was one of rising ethnic violence, suppression of democracy, a breakdown of law and order, systematic human rights abuses by the ruling authorities, and a refusal by the Belgrade government to seek, or accept, a political solution.

At the same time, there was evidence that the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was planning to escalate its campaign of repression.

The international community could see a humanitarian disaster looming. Reluctantly, NATO decided to use force.

The conditions leading to this crisis were both long and short-term. The Balkans, on the historical fault-line between Ottoman and European cultures and religions, have long been a troubled area. Centuries of tension were followed by decades of authoritarian rule under President Tito, which suppressed, but did not find solutions to, these underlying tensions.

In Kosovo, the seeds of tragedy can be traced to the rise to power of Slobodan Milosovic, his now infamous speech at Kosovo Polje in 1987, and the revocation in 1989 of the autonomous status of the province, bringing it under the direct control of the government in Belgrade. In the years that followed, the majority population of Kosovo were progressively denied the right to govern their own affairs, to earn a living for themselves, to have access to the legal and judicial system, and to be able to educate their children in their own language and culture.

Initially, the Kosovar Albanians struggled to cope with this situation by peaceful means. The Serbs dominated the administrative structures and the Kosovar Albanian leadership eventually formed a kind of parallel "government". It even held elections, and tried to provide the education and medical care the Albanians were denied by the Yugoslav government. Eventually, as peaceful opposition failed to yield results, some Kosovar Albanians took up arms and organised themselves into what became known as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

The KLA was, in effect, a direct product of Serb repression. But the emergence of an armed Kosovar Albanian force was used by the Yugoslav authorities to justify yet more violence, further alienating and radicalising the population. As the situation in Kosovo deteriorated, the international community became increasingly concerned about the human rights situation and its potential to spread instability to neighbouring countries in the region.

International pressure is applied

In December 1997, NATO foreign ministers confirmed that NATO's interest in stability in the Balkans extended beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina to the surrounding region, and expressed concern at the rising ethnic tension in Kosovo.

It is important to recall the enormous effort made by NATO and the international community to avoid military intervention over Kosovo, while making clear to President Milosevic its ultimate preparedness to use force, if necessary. Experience had taught that diplomacy without the threat of force would be wasted on him. In the spring of 1998, NATO ministers called on all parties to seek a peaceful resolution to the crisis, while directing the Alliance's military authorities to prepare options for the use of force, should it prove necessary.



NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Wesley Clark, and the Chairman of the Military Committee, General Klaus Naumann, meet President Milosevic in autumn 1998 – one of many attempts to warn of the consequences of not seeking a political settlement for Kosovo. (Photo: SHAPE - 138 Kb)

NATO's actions, including subsequent demonstration flights by NATO military aircraft, undoubtedly had an inhibiting effect on Yugoslav forces, but the KLA accelerated their own military action, ultimately resulting in a Serb counter-offensive in late summer, that was conducted in a typically indiscriminate manner. The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that well over 200,000 people were displaced as a result. Around 50,000 people were forced to camp out in the open, in

increasingly bleak conditions. So in autumn 1998, a series of diplomatic initiatives were taken, including visits to Belgrade by NATO's Secretary General, Javier Solana, US Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke, the Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, General Klaus Naumann, and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Wesley Clark. In September, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1199, which expressed the international community's concern about the excessive use of force by Serb security forces, highlighted the impending humanitarian catastrophe, and called for a cease-fire by both parties to the conflict.

To strengthen these initiatives the North Atlantic Council on 13 October authorised activation orders for air strikes against Yugoslavia, in a further attempt to convince President Milosevic to withdraw his forces from Kosovo and to co-operate in bringing an end to the violence.

As a result of this pressure, President Milosevic agreed to limits on the number of military and security forces within Kosovo, and their weaponry. He also accepted the deployment of an observer mission to the province led by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) – and a NATO-led aerial observer mission. NATO also deployed a military task force to the region to assist, if necessary, in the emergency evacuation of the KVM.

Violence and repression in Kosovo escalates

Despite these measures, organised acts of violence, repression, provocation, and retribution continued on both sides, particularly on the part of Serb forces and paramilitaries. In its December 1999 report – Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told – the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) estimates that as many as 350,000 Kosovars, overwhelmingly Albanian, but including some Serbs, were displaced from their homes by the end of 1999.

Any balanced analysis of the situation in Kosovo, particularly since 1998, would acknowledge that serious acts of violence and provocation were committed against the Serb population by Kosovar Albanians, and in particular by the KLA. By adding to the cycle of violence, they further reduced diminishing hopes of a peaceful outcome. However, as the OSCE/ODIHR report makes clear, the actions of the KLA paled in comparison to the premeditated, well-orchestrated, and brutally implemented campaign of violence and destruction conducted by the forces of the Yugoslav regime against the Kosovar Albanian population.

The massacre of 40 unarmed Kosovar Albanian civilians in the village of Racak on 15 January 1999, according to the OSCE/ODIHR report, “most graphically illustrates the descent into violence amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity”. It shocked the international community and crystallised its resolve to find a solution to the crisis.

Other key events highlighted by the OSCE in the period leading up to the conflict were the killings of Kosovar Albanians by police at Rogovo and Rakovina later in January; the launch of “winter exercises” involving the shelling of villages and the forced expulsion of villagers in the Vucitrn municipality in February and March; a military and police offensive in Kacanik in February, which employed a tactic of burning and destroying civilian homes to allegedly clear the area of the KLA; and a violent police crack-down in an Albanian quarter of Pristina in early March, after the killing of two police officers. Alongside the killings in Racak, the OSCE/ODIHR report concludes that these events revealed “patterns of grave abuses by the Yugoslav and Serbian forces against the civilian population”.

The Rambouillet talks fail

By the end of January 1999, the Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia (France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) agreed to convene talks between the parties to the conflict. NATO supported this initiative by issuing a warning to both sides of the conflict and agreeing to the use of air strikes, if required. On 6 February, the parties met at Rambouillet, outside Paris, to discuss a peace agreement.

The talks lasted 17 days with a follow-on session in Paris in mid-March. The proposals offered both sides a great deal, but also required major concessions. The Kosovar Albanians were offered considerable autonomy, ensured by the presence of a NATO-led force, but no independence. The Serbs were asked to concede autonomy, but not sovereignty, with Kosovo's ultimate status left open. Unfortunately, despite the enormous efforts of the international community and the decision by the Kosovar Albanian delegation to sign the Rambouillet Accords, the Yugoslav delegation refused to do so. It is clear the Yugoslav government never seriously sought a negotiated peace at Rambouillet.

Even while the discussions continued, the Yugoslav military and police forces were preparing to intensify their operations against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. In breach of the October 1998 agreements, they substantially raised the level of forces and weaponry in the province. During this period, the UNHCR, the OSCE and others reported frequently on the deteriorating human rights situation. After one final attempt by Richard Holbrooke to convince President Milosevic to reverse his policies, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, knowing diplomacy had run its course, gave the order to commence Operation Allied Force.

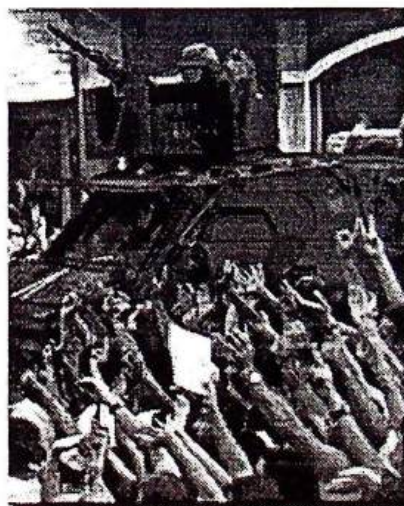
This fateful decision followed months of intense political negotiation and calls on Yugoslavia by the United Nations, the Contact Group, the G8 countries, and others to halt the repression and acts of violence that were provoking an ever-worsening humanitarian crisis. The Yugoslav regime's reckless disregard of these appeals and its campaign of terror against its own population, in direct violation of the most basic, internationally agreed standards of humanitarian conduct, and the failure of all diplomatic efforts to find a political solution, left NATO no option but to use force.



In undertaking the air campaign, NATO made clear the actions expected of President Milosevic and his regime to bring a halt to this action:

1. ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression;
2. ensure the withdrawal from Kosovo of the military, police and paramilitary forces;
3. agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
4. agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations;
5. provide credible assurance of his willingness to work on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords in the establishment of a political framework agreement for Kosovo in conformity with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

When these conditions were met by President Milosevic, the North Atlantic Council, through the Secretary General, agreed to suspend air operations on 10 June 1999. Throughout the conflict, NATO made clear on many occasions that it was not conducting a campaign to defeat Serbia or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and was not making war on the Serb people. This was not a war. It was a careful operation to disrupt the Yugoslav campaign of violence in Kosovo by attacking proportionately and appropriately the military machine that was conducting these attacks. The Alliance engaged in this campaign only to convince President Milosevic to comply with the reasonable demands set out above. The end result was a far worse settlement for the Yugoslav government than had been on offer at Rambouillet.



Local people give a rapturous welcome to German forces. (Prizren, June 1999)
(Photo: Belga - 108Kb)

NATO did not take the decision to use military force easily. It is a tribute to western democracies that they are so reluctant to take up arms. Balancing the concerns and priorities of 19 nations with differing domestic political pressures was an enormous challenge. Compromises

were required which may have complicated the military task. But that was the necessary price of consensus, which lies at the very core of NATO. That is not a cause for regret, but pride. In a situation fraught with political risk, all NATO Allies agreed that action to prevent continuing repression in Kosovo was imperative, and that it was essential that NATO should prevail.





Updated: 21-Mar-2000

Kosovo one year on

The conduct of the air campaign

The concept for Operation Allied Force envisaged a phased air campaign, designed to achieve NATO's political objectives with minimum force. The phases ranged from a show of force in the initial stages, to operations against Serb forces in Kosovo, expanding if necessary to targets throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that supported the regime's ability to attack the civilian population of Kosovo. It had been hoped, but never assumed, that President Milosevic would quickly realise NATO's determination, and accept its demands. Instead, his campaign of ethnic cleansing escalated and, in response, NATO's leadership accelerated and strengthened its air campaign considerably.

Selecting targets



US F-16 fighter bombers line up for take-off at Aviano Airbase in Italy during Operation Allied Force.
(Photo: DoD (US) - 325Kb)

The air campaign set out to weaken Serb military capabilities, both strategically and tactically. Strikes on tactical targets, such as artillery and field headquarters, had a more immediate effect in disrupting the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Strikes against strategic targets, such as government ministries and refineries, had a longer-term and broader impact on the Serb military machine. Just over 38,000 combat sorties, including

10,484 strike sorties, were flown by Allied forces, with no Allied combat fatalities – a remarkable achievement.

Initially, it was vital to defeat the Serb air defence network. This proved a tough challenge, as it was highly developed and had many mobile elements. But without air superiority, NATO would not have been able effectively to achieve its military objectives while protecting its own forces, and the ability of Allied forces to strike military targets precisely and minimise "collateral damage" would have been reduced. While NATO successfully suppressed the threat, it was never eliminated, requiring constant vigilance throughout the campaign.



The bulk of NATO's effort against tactical targets was aimed at military facilities, fielded forces, heavy weapons, and military vehicles and formations in Kosovo and southern Serbia. Many of these targets were



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Kosovo one year on

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A US F-15E Strike Eagle takes off from its Italian base.
(Photo: DoD (US) - 79Kb)

highly mobile and hard to locate, especially during the poor weather of the early phase of the campaign. Strikes were also complicated by the cynical Serb use of civilian homes and

buildings to hide weapons and vehicles, the intermixing of military vehicles with civilian convoys and, sometimes, the use of human shields. In this way, NATO's concern to avoid civilian casualties was exploited by the Serbs. But the constant presence of NATO aircraft inhibited the Serbs by forcing them into hiding and frequently punishing them when they did venture out.

Strategic targets included Serb air defences, command and control facilities, Yugoslav military (VJ) and police (MUP) forces headquarters, and supply routes. NATO was sometimes criticised for such strikes, by those who said NATO's actions also risked both civilians and civilian property. In fact, the Alliance carefully selected targets based on their role in the Serb war effort. Facilities were only attacked when it was assessed that they made an effective contribution to the Yugoslav military effort and that their destruction offered a definite military advantage. Massive effort was made to minimise the impact of the air campaign on the Serb civilian population.

Minimising the risk to civilians

The selection of targets was carefully reviewed at multiple levels of command, as well as by the Allies carrying out the strikes. These reviews ensured they complied with international law, were militarily justified, and minimised the risk to civilian lives and property.

In fact, the concern to avoid unintentional damage was a principal constraining factor throughout. Many targets were not attacked because the risk to non-combatants was considered too high. But such restrictions did not alter the ultimate outcome. Modern technology, the skill of NATO's pilots, and control over target selection made it possible for the Alliance to succeed with remarkably few civilian casualties.

The actual toll in human lives will never be precisely known, but the independent group, Human Rights Watch, has estimated that there were 90 incidents involving civilian deaths, in which between 488 and 527 civilians may have lost their lives – 87 of these at Korisa, where the Serb forces forced civilians to occupy a known military target. These figures are far lower than the 1,200-5,700 civilian deaths claimed by the Yugoslavs.

NATO deeply regrets any civilian casualties it caused, but these losses must be viewed in perspective against what NATO was seeking to prevent, and the actions of the Belgrade regime. Any historical study shows that Alliance aircrew set and achieved remarkably high standards. It is unrealistic to expect all risk to be eliminated. This is something that was well understood and was frequently stated openly by Kosovar Albanians themselves.

Despite cynical Serb attempts to exploit images of accidental civilian casualties from NATO air strikes, the Alliance held firm. President Milosevic calculated that if he held on long enough, it would weaken. He was wrong. The length of the air campaign did put stress on the Allies, but the unity and common purpose that lies at the core of NATO was equal to it. The steady increase in Allied airpower and effectiveness, and the realisation that NATO was holding together played a fundamental part in the Serb climb-down.





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Kosovo one year on

Progress in Kosovo since the conflict

Given the legacy of violence it is hardly surprising that the situation in Kosovo is far from settled and will require long-term engagement by the international community. But, while there are severe problems, there are many positive signs. Much has changed for the better since the deployment of KFOR.



KFOR troops entering Kosovo in June 1999 are greeted with flowers.
(Photo: Crown - 325Kb)

Since the end of the air campaign, over 1,300,000 refugees have returned to their homes and villages: 810,000 from Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 1 and other countries around the world, and 550,000 who were internally displaced within Kosovo. Crime, while still a major problem, has also fallen dramatically. For example, although still far too high, the murder rate has declined from over 50 per week in June 1999 to around five per week today.

In addition to carrying out its mission to establish and maintain a secure environment, KFOR is actively involved in helping the civilian community and the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to overcome the horrors of war, and establish the foundations for a peaceful, tolerant, multi-ethnic society in the future.

KFOR soldiers and the international community have cleared over 16,000 homes, 1,165 schools and almost 2,000 kilometres of roads of unexploded ordinance and mines. They have distributed over one million roofing tiles, 18,000 stoves and 4,000 truckloads of firewood to Kosovar homes and villages. Over 43,000 Kosovars have received medical treatment in KFOR medical facilities. Power stations, roads, bridges, and railroads have been repaired by KFOR engineers.



Serb forces caused immense devastation in Kosovo.
(Photo: ARRC Images -802Kb)

In addition, over 50 per cent of KFOR's manpower is currently dedicated to protecting the minority (mainly Serb) populations of Kosovo. This involves guarding homes and villages, transporting people to schools and shops, patrolling, monitoring checkpoints, protecting patrimonial sites and otherwise assisting local people.

It is important to always keep in mind the sheer scale of the recent tragedy in Kosovo, as well as the historical backdrop. The resulting physical and psychological wounds will take time to heal. There must be realism about what improvements can be expected in such a short time. NATO is determined to pursue its even-handed approach to all peoples of Kosovo and to support the goals set out by the international community in UN Security Council Resolution 1244.





Updated: 21-Mar-2000

Kosovo one year on

The job is not yet done: Assessing remaining challenges

Of course, much remains to be done. In partnership with the international community and the people of Kosovo, we must now build on what has already been achieved. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 12 June 1999 lays down the responsibilities of the international community during its interim administration of Kosovo. This Resolution, as well as the Military Technical Agreement on the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces and NATO's own operational plan (OPLAN 10413, Operation Joint Guardian) form the basis for KFOR's responsibilities. These can be broken down into five main areas:



General Klaus Reinhardt, Commander KFOR, accompanies NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson as he visits KFOR HQ in October 1999.
(Photo: NATO - 718Kb)

- deterring renewed hostility and threats against Kosovo by Yugoslav and Serb forces;
- establishing a secure environment and ensuring public safety and order;
- demilitarising the Kosovo Liberation Army;
- supporting the international humanitarian effort;
- coordinating with and supporting the international civil presence, the United Nation's Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Deterring renewed hostility and threats to Kosovo

Under the terms of the Military Technical Agreement signed by both NATO and Yugoslav commanders on 9 June 1999, Yugoslav Army and Interior Ministry Police forces withdrew from both Kosovo and a five kilometre wide Ground Safety Zone between the province and the rest of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This agreement now governs the relationship between KFOR and Yugoslav forces. In addition, the presence of about 40,000 well-equipped and well-trained troops in the region, mainly from NATO nations, acts as a powerful deterrent to renewed hostilities and ensure that Yugoslav forces pose no immediate threat to Kosovo.

KFOR is ready to meet any such threat should it arise. One unresolved issue is the return of an agreed, limited number of Yugoslav military and police personnel, as allowed, when conditions permit, under UN Security Council Resolution 1244. These limited forces would return for specific tasks related to mark and clear minefields, and provide a Serb presence at patrimonial sites and border crossings. KFOR will implement these provisions for the return of some Serb forces, when the time is right.

Maintaining security in Kosovo

The most daunting current challenge for KFOR is to maintain a safe and secure environment within Kosovo. On a positive note, security in Kosovo has improved markedly over the first nine months of KFOR's presence. The number of serious crimes has decreased sharply as a result of the strong action by KFOR in close co-operation with UNMIK police. KFOR soldiers conduct between 500 and 750 patrols each day, guarding over 500 key sites and manning over 200 vehicle checkpoints.

KFOR's efforts would be even more effective if Kosovo had a stronger international police presence and a properly functioning judicial system. But UNMIK has been severely hampered by a shortage of financial resources and personnel, particularly police. The lack of an effective court system makes it extremely hard to crack down on criminals, giving them a feeling of impunity. This in turn makes it harder to deal with the most serious public order problem in Kosovo, the security of minority populations. These issues need to be addressed urgently.

Improving the security of minorities is one of KFOR's chief priorities and a major cause for concern. In Pristina, for example, there are over 100 KFOR soldiers living with and guarding individual Serb families. KFOR soldiers regularly escort Serb and Roma children to school. In Mitrovica, the area of highest ethnic tension, KFOR is constantly seeking to ensure the security of minorities on both sides of the River Ibar.



French KFOR troops hold back demonstrators in Kosovska-Mitrovica. (February 2000)
(Photo: EPA/Belga - 396Kb)

KFOR is determined to ensure that all refugees and displaced persons are able to return to their homes. Sadly, a high proportion of the minorities, mainly Serbs, remain displaced, most having left during or immediately after the conflict, before KFOR had been deployed to protect the population.

Some have returned since then, and KFOR is totally committed to creating an environment in which Kosovars of all ethnic groups can live in peace. But the scale of the task is considerable. The embers of past injustices, real or imagined, can easily be rekindled within all communities in Kosovo. This means that there is unlikely to be any scaling-down in KFOR's task for some time to come. KFOR itself must therefore remain properly and fully resourced and manned.

NATO recognises that security is not just an internal issue. KFOR has put considerable effort into monitoring the international borders with Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2, and the provincial boundaries with Montenegro and Serbia.

Reintegrating KLA members into civilian life

KFOR's third major challenge was the demilitarisation of the Kosovo Liberation Army. One of the key challenges in any post-conflict situation is the reintegration of former fighters into civilian life. Ensuring the KLA's co-operation in the demilitarisation process would have been impossible to achieve without an accompanying transformation plan. KFOR was acutely aware of the need not just to remove their fighting capability (10,000 weapons were handed in by December last year), but also to help find jobs for former KLA fighters. Working closely with UNMIK and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative, Bernard Kouchner, one of KFOR's main efforts has been to create the Kosovo Protection Corps. The KPC is a civilian organisation designed to assist the people of Kosovo in the event of manmade or natural disasters and has no role in the maintenance of law and order. Once fully established, the KPC will be firmly under the authority of UNMIK, with day-to-day supervision carried out by KFOR.

The aim of KFOR and other international organisations is to see Kosovars become responsible for their community as a whole. But for this to happen, there is a heavy burden on the leaderships of all communities. They must publicly and privately stand against ethnic division and violence. Their commitment to the goal of a fair and multi-ethnic Kosovo must be totally unambiguous or they will risk undermining the commitment of the international community.

Supporting the international humanitarian effort

As well as maintaining security in Kosovo, KFOR is co-ordinating with and supporting the international civil administration under Dr Kouchner. Having learned some hard lessons from the Bosnian experience, KFOR and UNMIK have a close, co-operative relationship. In daily meetings, in joint planning, and in joint strategy sessions at all levels, KFOR and UNMIK are making the relationship work well.

KFOR and UNMIK – especially UNMIK's first "pillar", the UNHCR – have been working well together in building a humanitarian assistance programme. As a result of their efforts, combined with those of other non-governmental organisations, widespread suffering, disease and death over the winter months were prevented. Indeed, before winter, over 95 per cent of the planned winterisation programme was completed – a tremendous achievement in the circumstances, that went virtually unnoticed. More remarkably, given the harshness of the Balkan climate, there have been no reported deaths over the winter caused by lack of food or shelter.

Other notable achievements include re-opening the schools. For the first

time in 10 years, 300,000 children are being taught in their own language. This is just one sign of the slow return to peaceful life that large areas of Kosovo are now able to enjoy.

Assisting UNMIK

But the problem of insufficient resources pervades all that UNMIK tries to do. Successfully turning pledges into useable donations has proved to be a continuing challenge. With inadequate money for the basic building blocks of government – wages for teachers, railway and municipal workers, judges and prosecutors, for example – how can UNMIK establish an effective civil administration, and exert the will of the international community? It is in the international community's interest to provide the necessary resources, both personnel – particularly police – and funds to overcome the existing shortfalls. Governments, including NATO governments, must do more in this respect.





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Kosovo one year on

A just and necessary action

The abuse of human rights by the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the humanitarian disaster which NATO's intervention in Kosovo reversed, threatened to undermine the values on which the new Europe is being built. The Yugoslav regime's barbaric actions raised the spectre of instability spilling over to neighbouring countries, including derailing the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If NATO had failed to respond to the policy of ethnic cleansing, it would have betrayed its values and cast permanent doubt on the credibility of its institutions. By facing up to President Milosevic's challenge, NATO nations confirmed that common values and respect for human rights are central to the Alliance and all the world's democracies.

NATO's success has not blinded the Alliance to the need to learn lessons from the conflict, and that process is continuing. The Kosovo campaign revealed gaps in NATO's military capabilities, especially in Europe, which need to be overcome. NATO is already acting through the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) and through strengthening the European "pillar" of NATO by developing the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). NATO nations are already addressing these shortfalls. The challenge is to reorganise and re-equip our forces to make them more flexible, more mobile and more effective, and the need to do so is urgent. We cannot know when or where the next crisis will occur. The necessary resources must be provided.

Nevertheless, the air campaign achieved its goals in less than three months, with remarkably few civilian casualties, and no NATO combat casualties. The coalition held together and all states neighbouring the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia supported NATO's actions, despite the political and economic risks to their own countries. NATO will not forget this support. Nor will it forget the particular role played by Partnership for Peace nations, who were both steadfast and instrumental in achieving success, during the crisis and in its aftermath. Support for KFOR is widespread and today, there are 19 non-NATO nations actively participating in KFOR peacekeeping, including Russia, which is a key partner in keeping and maintaining a permanent peace.

NATO understands the fundamental importance of long-term success in the Balkans. It will not be easy. No-one should expect dramatic improvements overnight. Much has been done, and much remains to be done. NATO will remain firm in its resolve to pursue the humanitarian and democratic objectives we all share.





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Kosovo one year on

Could it have been done better?

It is a strength of our democracies that even when a military operation is successful and commands overwhelming international support, many will question whether it should have been undertaken – on policy or legal grounds – and, once undertaken, whether it should have been conducted differently. A year on, it is worth reviewing such criticism to try to present the issues fairly. The main questions raised about NATO's actions are as follows:

Did the international community insist on conditions that made a failure of the Rambouillet talks inevitable?

Some suggest that by insisting on a NATO-led international military force to oversee any settlement agreed at Rambouillet, the Contact Group made it impossible for the Yugoslav authorities to agree to the Accords, which would otherwise have been acceptable. It is further claimed that the rights of this force on Yugoslav territory would have been so extensive that the Serbs were bound to reject them.

It is true that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia resisted the idea of a NATO-led force to guarantee any agreement, however, President Milosevic's record speaks for itself. The international community had to take account of the fact that President Milosevic had repeatedly failed to honour previous agreements and that an international security presence was essential to guarantee that the Accords would be honoured. Also, without such a presence, the Kosovar Albanian side would not have given their agreement.

The rights such a force would have needed to operate on Yugoslav territory were based on a standard agreement on the status of forces that has been used on many other occasions. These rights were not raised as an issue at the time, and so cannot be blamed for the breakdown.

Despite the provision for an international security presence, the Rambouillet Accords recognised Yugoslav sovereignty over Kosovo and permitted a VJ and MUP presence and role in the province. The agreement, which provided for an interim status for the province for a period of three years, would have protected the rights of all sides. As a result of the Yugoslav government's refusal to negotiate in good faith, Serb forces were ultimately expelled from Kosovo – a far worse outcome than had been on offer at Rambouillet.

Were NATO's actions legally justified without a mandate from the UN Security Council ?



Amnesty International - Report - EUR 70/13/00
March 2000
Yugoslavia

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kosovo). Setting the Standard? UNMIK and KFOR's Response to the Violence in Mitrovica

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (KOSOVO)

Setting the standard? UNMIK and KFOR's response to the violence in Mitrovica

Introduction

In February 2000, Kosovska Mitrovica (Mitrovica), a divided city in Kosovo (Kosova), erupted in a wave of violence and as a result more than 13 people were killed, 50 injured and 1,500 fled from their homes. The events which occurred in Mitrovica during February 2000 are a testimony to the continuing tension which exists between the ethnic communities in Kosovo. The violence which still plagues this divided city also underscores the failure of the international community to halt human rights abuses and find lasting solutions to the problems in Kosovo.

This document outlines Amnesty International's concern about the response of the international security presence (Kosovo Force - KFOR) and the international civilian presence (the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo - UNMIK) to the heightened violence in Mitrovica. The document focuses on events which occurred on 13 February 2000, when shooting broke out in the streets of Mitrovica. In the midst of this shooting, two French KFOR soldiers, deployed under UN auspices, were shot and injured. Subsequently, Avni Hajredini, a resident of Mitrovica, was shot and killed in circumstances which remain disputed. Later that evening, some 49 people were rounded up and detained by French KFOR soldiers in a gymnasium, some of them for up to five days. [See footnote 1](#)

Amnesty International recognizes the complex nature of the tasks which UNMIK and KFOR face in Mitrovica and in Kosovo as a whole. The mandate of the international presence in Kosovo is overwhelming in its magnitude, given the ongoing conflict in the region, the lack of a political solution regarding the status of the territory and the reluctance of UN member states to provide the human and financial resources to ensure that the mission succeeds. Nevertheless, Amnesty International emphasizes that, however difficult the situation, KFOR and UNMIK have an obligation to the people of Kosovo to observe internationally recognized human rights standards when carrying out their duties.

Amnesty International is concerned that the failure of KFOR and UNMIK to initiate an independent investigation into the killing of Avni Hajredini and the violations of human rights of the 49 people who were detained on 13 February 2000 illustrate that UNMIK and KFOR must increase their efforts to ensure that their personnel respect the human rights of all people in Kosovo at all times. The organization believes that the conduct of UNMIK and KFOR will set the standard in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a whole for the manner in which law enforcement officials and security forces responsible for maintaining public safety and order exercise their duties.

Amnesty International urges KFOR and UNMIK to initiate an independent and impartial investigation into the killing of Avni Hajredini. Independent and impartial investigations should be conducted as a matter of course into all cases where there is an allegation that the actions of a law enforcement official have violated the human rights of an individual. Furthermore, Amnesty International urges KFOR and UNMIK to ensure that all arrests and detentions of people in Kosovo be effected for reasons and in a manner consistent with international human rights norms. KFOR and UNMIK must ensure that every person arrested or detained is afforded all their rights as enshrined in international human rights standards. All persons deprived of their liberty by UNMIK or KFOR must be treated humanely, with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

Background

The internal armed conflict fought in Kosovo between forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Serb police and paramilitaries and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) became internationalized when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) commenced a bombing campaign against the FRY with the declared aim of preventing a human rights catastrophe in March 1999. (See: *FRY: Amnesty International's concerns relating to NATO bombings*, AI Index: EUR 70/69/99, May 1999). As a consequence, human rights violations by FRY forces, Serb police and paramilitary groups increased and ethnic Albanians and members of minority communities fled, mainly into the neighbouring states of Macedonia and Albania. (See: *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: The protection of Kosovo Albanian refugees*, AI Index: EUR 65/03/99, May 1999; *FRY (Kosovo): Smrekovnica Prison - A regime of torture and ill-treatment leaves hundreds unaccounted for*, AI Index: EUR 70/107/99, October 1999). After the conclusion of an agreement with the FRY authorities in June 1999, NATO ceased its bombing campaign and the Serbian police, paramilitaries and the

Yugoslav Army withdrew from Kosovo. With the withdrawal of the FRY forces and authorities, more than a decade of human rights violations perpetrated by the FRY authorities against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo came to an end. (See: *FRY (Kosovo): A decade of unheeded warnings*, Vols. 1 & 2, AI Index: EUR 70/39/99 and EUR 70/40/99, April 1999).

On 10 June 1999, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1244 which authorized "the deployment in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices, of international civil and security presences" (para. 5). Resolution 1244 mandated UNMIK with the task of providing an interim administration for Kosovo. UNMIK's mandate includes the responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights in Kosovo. The Secretary-General appointed his Special Representative (SRSG) to head the mission and vested him with all legislative and executive powers, including the administration of the judiciary and the penal system.

Resolution 1244 also mandated the international security presence (KFOR) with the responsibility for "establishing a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return home in safety..." (Para. 9(b)). KFOR was also tasked with "ensuring public safety and order until the international civil presence can take responsibility for this task". (Para. 9(d)). Thus, KFOR is required to police the territory of Kosovo until such time as the international civilian police have the capacity to assume full responsibility for this function. Since its deployment in June 1999, KFOR has been arresting and detaining people suspected of committing serious crimes, such as war crimes, murder, attempted murder, rape, weapons' offences and for the purposes of securing public safety and order in Kosovo.

UNMIK is principally responsible for the maintenance of civil law and order and has deployed an international civilian police force. The UN member states have, however, failed to provide the necessary resources and personnel to police Kosovo. See footnote 2². As a result, the international civilian presence has not assumed full responsibility for the maintenance of public order and shares these responsibilities with KFOR in many places in Kosovo. On 4 July 1999, the SRSG stated that law enforcement activities are the joint responsibility of UNMIK and KFOR and that such law enforcement activities must be conducted in line with international human rights standards. See footnote 3³.

Since the deployment of UNMIK and KFOR, serious crimes and human rights abuses have continued to be perpetrated at a disturbing rate in Kosovo. UNMIK international civilian police and KFOR have struggled to maintain law and order and prevent human rights abuses, particularly against minority communities. Since June 1999, Serbs and other minorities have been fleeing to other parts of the FRY or have gathered in enclaves in Kosovo due to fear of becoming victims of killings, abductions and other human rights abuses, such as the denial of access to public services and other economic, social and cultural rights. Amnesty International is concerned that delays in establishing a criminal justice system which is consistent with international human rights standards is contributing to the creation of a climate in which some people in Kosovo believe that they may commit crimes and abuse the human rights of others with impunity. (See: *FRY (Kosovo): Amnesty International's Recommendations to UNMIK on the Judicial System*, AI Index: EUR 70/06/00, February 2000).

The responsibility of KFOR and UNMIK to abide by the applicable law and international human rights standards

The mandate which the UN and KFOR were given in Kosovo is both unique and overwhelming in its magnitude. The UN was vested with all legislative and executive powers and was also given the responsibility for "protecting and promoting human rights" (Para. 11(d) Resolution 1244). In establishing the mission, the UN Secretary-General highlighted the centrality of human rights by stating that "UNMIK will be guided by internationally recognized standards of human rights as the basis for the exercise of its authority". Given the immense responsibility that the UN has towards the people of Kosovo, the UN has a special obligation to uphold the standards that it has created.

The UN Secretary-General has stated that human rights are a priority in every mission that the UN embarks upon. Although KFOR is not directly under UN command and control, it was deployed "under UN auspices" (para. 5, Resolution 1244). Amnesty International believes that every force which is given a mandate and draws its authority from the UN must observe UN human rights standards. Indeed, the United Nations Charter, the treaty which established the UN, states that the purposes of the UN are, among others, to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms (Article 1(3) of the UN Charter). The UN Charter clearly articulates that no UN member state should act in a manner which is inconsistent with the aims of the Charter. Furthermore, the Secretary-General has stated that forces deployed under UN auspices, as is KFOR, should uphold UN human rights standards.

The SRSG has stated that all people undertaking public duties or holding public office in Kosovo, which includes all people engaged in law enforcement, must observe the applicable law and internationally recognized human rights standards (Regulation 24/1999). The applicable law in Kosovo includes the regulations promulgated by the SRSG and, among others, the law in force in Kosovo on 22 March 1989. The internationally recognized human rights standards which should be observed include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). The ICCPR is one of the standards which is in force throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and, therefore, in the territory of Kosovo. The responsibility to uphold the ICCPR is reinforced by the independent obligation of troops from KFOR contributing countries which are a party to the treaty to respect the provisions of the ICCPR wherever they operate. Amnesty International believes that KFOR and UNMIK personnel engaging in law enforcement activities have a clear duty to uphold the provisions of the ICCPR.

While the FRY is not a party to the ECHR, UNMIK Regulation 24/1999 specifies that this also is among the standards to be observed by all persons undertaking public duties in Kosovo. This obligation reflects the intentions expressed in Rambouillet that the "applicable rights and freedoms set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its protocols shall directly apply in Kosovo", and that "these shall have priority over all other law". Furthermore, the jurisprudence of the ECHR indicates that all KFOR troops from countries which have ratified the ECHR, such as France, may have an obligation to secure the rights and freedoms set out in the ECHR even when exercising control of an area outside its national territory. See footnote 4⁴.

Amnesty International believes that when KFOR and UNMIK engage in law enforcement activities, such as riot control, crowd dispersal, searches, seizures, arrests, detentions or interrogations, they should also be guided by other UN standards which cover the conduct of law enforcement, the use of force and firearms, and the treatment of prisoners. See footnote 5⁵

The conduct of UNMIK and KFOR will set the standard in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a whole for the manner in which law enforcement officials and security forces responsible for maintaining public safety and order exercise their duties. See footnote 6⁶ Thus, they must uphold, and be seen to be upholding, the highest standards of human rights.

Mitrovica - a city divided

Before the international community intervened in Kosovo, Mitrovica was overwhelmingly populated by ethnic Albanians. A substantial number of Serbs and Roma also lived in the municipality. A small number of Roma still remain in the north part of Mitrovica. However, most of the community of around 6,000 Roma who lived on the south side have fled since June 1999. Before the NATO bombing campaign, 50 per cent of the population on the north side of Mitrovica was ethnic Albanian. However, the majority of this population - around 7,000 persons - is now internally displaced in south Mitrovica as they have been unable to return to their homes in the north.

Since June 1999, Mitrovica has become the flashpoint of ethnic Albanian and Serb tensions and a *de facto* division of the city has occurred. The north and south sides of Mitrovica are divided by the Ibar River. The north is now overwhelmingly populated with Serbs, including around 1,000 Serb internally displaced persons from south Mitrovica and a substantial number of displaced Serbs from other parts of Kosovo. Until February 2000, over 4,000 ethnic Albanians, Turks and Muslim Slavs continued to live in the north, with around 2,000 ethnic Albanians and 1,700 Muslim Slavs living in the city centre, in particular in the area called Bosnjačka Mahala.

The Trepça mineral mine is on the north side of Mitrovica. The mine is considered to be one of the potentially greatest sources of income in Kosovo. The mine has been at the centre of tension between the ethnic Albanians and Serbs since 1988-89, when the ethnic Albanian management and workers were expelled, or put in a position where they had to resign from their jobs in the mine. Other public facilities on the north side of Mitrovica have also been the subject of contention between the ethnic Albanian and Serb communities since the division of the city in June 1999. The hospital is located on the north side of Mitrovica and this has led to ethnic Albanians being denied the right to work in the hospital and access to public health care, as they are not able to use the hospital. KFOR has allowed civilians on the south side of Mitrovica to use one of their military hospitals.

Mitrovica municipality falls into the Multi-National Brigade North sector of Kosovo which is under the command of French KFOR and includes troops from other KFOR contributing nations. Since June 1999, KFOR has controlled the bridges that connect the north and south sides of the city and restricted the movement of the population between the north and south in an apparent attempt to prevent violence between the two communities. KFOR is stationed in Mitrovica to establish a secure environment and has what is called tactical primacy - that is overall responsibility for the security situation. UNMIK international civilian police have what is called police primacy - the responsibility for public safety and order and the authority to investigate criminal conduct and make arrests. Under this system, when KFOR apprehends an individual, that person should be immediately turned over to the UNMIK authorities. However, cooperation between UNMIK and KFOR in law enforcement matters has been extremely poor. UNMIK international civilian police in Mitrovica claim that they have been prevented from conducting investigations by French KFOR.

There is an official detention centre administered by UNMIK in north Mitrovica which can house up to 63 detainees - the majority of detainees currently held in the facility are Serbs. Ethnic Albanians detained in Mitrovica by UNMIK under the order of a judicial authority are usually transferred to detention facilities in other parts of Kosovo.

[Map of Mitrovica as at February 2000]

February 2000 - Mitrovica erupts in violence

Violence erupted on 2 February, at around 4pm, when a KFOR-escorted United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) bus carrying 49 Serbs from Mitrovica to the Serb enclave in Banja, was hit by an anti-tank missile near the village of Cubrelj (Cubril) 15 kilometres west of Mitrovica. Two elderly Serbs were killed instantly in the attack and three others were seriously injured, one of whom later died. The attack on the UNHCR bus not only led to the suspension of all eight UNHCR bus lines which provided a vital link for many of the isolated minority communities in Kosovo, but it appeared to spark an outbreak of violence in north Mitrovica.

On 3 February at around 9.30pm hand grenades were thrown into Serbian cafés in north Mitrovica. In one attack, 10 young Serbs were injured and a 17-year-old ethnic Albanian girl who was reportedly socializing with Serb friends was killed. Serbs then attacked ethnic Albanians and their properties as well as UNMIK international police officers. Nine UN and international agency vehicles were damaged and offices were vandalized. That evening large crowds of Serbs and Albanians gathered on both sides of the Ibar river and the bridges over the river were blocked by KFOR. A total of eight people of Albanian and Turkish ethnicity were killed that night and around 30 wounded. The victims, many of whom were elderly, were either shot in their homes or fatally injured by grenades. As a result of the violence in north Mitrovica approximately 1,500 ethnic Albanians fled from their homes to the south side of the city. A small number of Serbs have also left their homes in north Mitrovica for Serbia and the village of Zvečan. While KFOR and UNMIK have vowed to search for the perpetrators the violent crimes committed that night, to date there have been no arrests in connection with any of the killings or attacks. See footnote 7⁷

On 4 and 5 February, ethnic Albanian protestors clashed with KFOR on the main bridge in Mitrovica and 16 KFOR soldiers were slightly injured. The local ethnic Albanian press reported that ethnic Albanians living in the northern side of the town were beaten and

expelled from their homes by Serbs while French KFOR troops looked on. Hashim Thaci, leader of the Kosovo Democratic Progress Party (PPDK) and a Commander of the former KLA, stated that KFOR and UNMIK had been negligent in finding a solution to the division of Mitrovica. Serbs also accused French KFOR of being slow in their response to violence. On 7 February, around 2,000 Serbs demonstrated against UNMIK, claiming that the administration had failed to provide them with the necessary protection. Oliver Ivanovic, the self-styled mayor of Mitrovica and leader of the executive council of the Serb National Council (SNC), called for the return of Yugoslav forces to protect the Serbs.

The shooting of two French KFOR soldiers and the killing of Avni Hajredini

On 13 February, at around 8am, two grenades were thrown into the area of north Mitrovica, called Bosnjacka Mahala, where a concentration of ethnic Albanians, Muslim Slavs and Turks continue to live. At least seven ethnic Albanians were wounded in the attack, two seriously, one of whom later died. Shooting then broke out in north Mitrovica. One observer stated that "it was impossible to make out who was firing at who but Albanians, Serbs and peacekeepers all seemed to be involved". See footnote 8⁸ At around 11am, two French soldiers were shot and injured near Mitrovica's eastern bridge. One soldier was shot in the stomach and the other in the arm. KFOR reported that Italian troops who were stationed very near to the injured French KFOR soldiers immediately returned fire and that KFOR troops then deployed in search of the shooters. KFOR officials were reported as stating that after the shooting of the two French soldiers, KFOR soldiers were explicitly authorized by their superiors to shoot at "snipers". See footnote 9⁹ During the shooting that ensued, a 37-year-old ethnic Albanian male, Avni Hajredini, was shot. As a result of injuries sustained in the shooting, Avni Hajredini died shortly after being admitted to hospital.

The day after the killing of Avni Hajredini, 14 February, UNMIK stated that "a sniper was killed in northern Mitrovica during the heavy gunfire that ensued between KFOR and shooters during the next four hours". See footnote 10¹⁰ The same day, a French KFOR spokesman stated that Avni Hajredini was shot by French KFOR because he was firing from a balcony at French KFOR troops and that he was probably the individual who wounded one of the French KFOR soldiers. Major Phillip Ando stated that "the killed sniper was fatally wounded around 12.30pm by French soldiers". See footnote 11¹¹ He explained that "KFOR troops exchanged fire with snipers. Two snipers were captured, both were wounded. They were taken to the KFOR Moroccan Field Hospital where one died of his wounds". See footnote 12¹²

The witnesses interviewed by Amnesty International delegates and a video tape which captures the events immediately before and after the shooting of Avni Hajredini contradict the KFOR media reports. The video shows that a few seconds before being shot, Avni Hajredini was standing on the pavement several blocks away from where the shots were allegedly fired at French troops - he was not on a balcony, as KFOR reported. The video also shows that Avni Hajredini was not in fact "captured" by KFOR, but was carried away by a group of ethnic Albanians after being shot. See footnote 13¹³ Although Amnesty International cannot preclude the possibility that Avni Hajredini was involved in the shooting earlier that day, the video provides no evidence that Avni Hajredini was carrying a weapon at the time he was shot.

On 17 February, KFOR retracted its assertion that Avni Hajredini was a "sniper" firing at KFOR troops. KFOR further stated that they now could not even be sure that they could identify the ethnicity of the "snipers" who were operating in Mitrovica that day. KFOR claimed that "it had appeared beyond doubt from first reports that Avni Hajredini was one of several snipers involved in gun battles on Sunday in the north of the city but that subsequent investigations had made the picture less clear". See footnote 14¹⁴ On 18 February, KFOR changed its story yet again stating that Avni Hajredini may not have actually been shot by KFOR at all and that, furthermore, "it remains unclear whether he ... was one of the shooters in the group".

The body of Avni Hajredini was released from the KFOR hospital to his family without an autopsy being carried out. His body was buried the day after his death on 15 February. KFOR has stated that "all forensic evidence concerning the exact circumstances of Mr Hajredini's death has ... been buried ... thus, it remains unclear whether he himself was one of the shooters in the group or not". See footnote 15¹⁵

Amnesty International remains concerned that, to date, no investigation into the shooting and subsequent death of Avni Hajredini has been initiated. The organization continues to urge KFOR and UNMIK to initiate a thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the circumstances of Avni Hajredini's death. See footnote 16¹⁶ The organization is concerned that until such an investigation is conducted, it will remain unclear who fired the shots which killed Avni Hajredini and in which circumstances they were fired.

Amnesty International recommends that an investigation into the death of Avni Hajredini be modelled on the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions. In the event that the investigation reveals that there is reasonable suspicion that Avni Hajredini was killed by a bullet shot from a weapon held by a member of KFOR, the investigation should determine whether or not the use of lethal force complied with the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (Code of Conduct) and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. These principles require that, among other things, persons engaging in law enforcement operations should use force "only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duties" (Article 3 of the Code of Conduct). Furthermore, "whenever the use of force and firearms is unavoidable, law enforcement officials shall exercise restraint in such use... minimize damage and injury and respect and preserve human life..." Thus, the intentional lethal use of firearms by persons engaging in law enforcement operations may only be resorted to when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life and a warning should be given, if appropriate, before resorting to the lethal use of force. See footnote 17¹⁷ If a law enforcement officer acts in violation of these principles, the act may constitute a violation of the right to life.

If, after a thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the shooting of Avni Hajredini, it is determined that any law

enforcement officer may have used lethal force in a manner contrary to international standards, Amnesty International will urge that the person responsible be brought to justice and that the authority responsible make reparations to Avni Hajredini's family. See footnote 18

KFOR detains 49 persons

[French soldier stands guard on the main bridge of the divided city of Kosovska Mitrovica, February 2000. © Reuters]
Between 5pm and 6pm on 13 February, several hours after the shootings, groups of French KFOR soldiers approached and surrounded houses in Bosnjačka Mahala, north Mitrovica, banged on doors and summoned over 50 persons out of their homes and into the street. The KFOR soldiers pushed the people against the walls of the houses, made them put their hands on their heads, spread their legs and proceeded to search them. One person stated that while he was being pushed against the wall, a soldier prepared his weapon and put it in his back. Another person said he tried to tell the soldiers that he could not put his arm up because he had a shrapnel injury from a grenade, which was thrown in the morning, but that the soldier ignored him. Eyewitnesses report that the soldiers were shouting in French. One person stated that there was a person in uniform present who spoke Albanian but other persons stated that they never heard any Albanian nor did they see any interpreter. One person reported that during the operation a soldier who looked like a "general" was walking up and down the road and he yelled in English, "two of my soldiers were shot today, if anyone moves I will kill them." Another person reported that a "leader" spoke in English to the group and said, "I am very angry that two of my soldiers were injured and it would be good to kill you."

After searching them, French KFOR soldiers rounded the majority of the people up, including one woman and two juveniles. The soldiers then directed them to walk down the road for 200 metres with their hands on their heads to military vehicles. The soldiers provided no explanation of where they were being taken or why. Once in the military vehicles, they were taken directly to the French KFOR compound in south Mitrovica where they were detained in a gymnasium, some for up to five days. The detainees were all interrogated by KFOR soldiers and some were also questioned by UNMIK international civilian police during their detention.

The day after these arrests took place, the international press reported that "(e)thnic Albanians complained the French had been rough in searching their homes and had simply rounded up all the men in one street and taken them away". See footnote 19¹⁹

Conditions in detention

At the time of their arrival in the gymnasium on the evening of 13 February 2000, each detainee was examined by a KFOR doctor. There was no interpreter to explain why they were there, what was expected of them or what would happen to them. Detainees could not give details of how many other people were being detained or how many soldiers were guarding them because they were not allowed to look around. The one woman and two juveniles who were detained by KFOR in this operation were also held in the gymnasium with the other detainees. See footnote 20²⁰

The detainees were required to sit in chairs facing the wall and were prohibited from looking around or talking. Detainees stated that if they were not conforming to the expected behaviour, a soldier would kick the chairs with his foot to indicate to the detainees that they must look at the wall and not stand up. One detainee reported that when he stood up and looked around, an angry soldier took him out of the gymnasium to the toilet, threw him into the toilet, took him out again and then put his hands around his neck as if to strangle him. The detainee says that he was then locked in the cold toilet for between one to two hours.

On the first night of detention, after sitting in chairs which faced the wall from around 7pm until 11pm, the detainees were provided with cots and one blanket each and it was indicated to them that they should lie on the cots and sleep. All the detainees interviewed reported that they found it too cold to sleep and that after one day in detention, they began to feel pain in their backs from the cold and from constantly sitting on the chairs. Some detainees stated that they were not allowed to talk to each other at all or walk up and down the room until the third day in detention. When they needed to go to the toilet, soldiers would restrain the detainees in a wrist hold, and push down their heads. The detainees complained that this regime hurt their hands and this made them afraid to ask to go to the toilet. After the first night of detention, the detainees stated that all the soldiers guarding them began to wear masks. The masked soldiers stood behind the detainees and were armed with automatic assault weapons which were held in their hands at all times.

The right to humane conditions of detention

Amnesty International delegates visited the gymnasium on 17 February. By this time, the majority of detainees had been released after being questioned by KFOR. However, 14 persons remained in detention where they had been for four days. Seven hours after the Amnesty International delegates requested to see the detainees, access was granted but UNMIK international civilian police refused to allow the Amnesty International delegates to speak with the detainees. See footnote 21²¹

The temperature in the gymnasium was around zero centigrade in the daytime and the UNMIK representative who accompanied Amnesty International delegates complained how cold he was while standing the room for five minutes. There was no form of heating in the gymnasium and the detainees were huddled in blankets attempting to keep warm. The floor of the gymnasium where the detainees were held day and night was covered in mud. It was reported to the Amnesty International delegates that the detainees were not able to wash until the fifth day of detention. The organization was told by KFOR that the detainees were not allowed to have regular exercise or walk in the fresh air, or in fact do anything else other than look at the wall. One KFOR legal advisor who viewed the conditions of detention stated that "no one should be held in such conditions for longer than 12 hours".

Article 10 of the ICCPR provides that "(a)ll persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person". The essential needs of detainees include food, washing and sanitary facilities, bedding, clothing, medical care, access to natural light, recreation and physical exercise. Rule 10 of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that: "All accommodation provided for the use of prisoners and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet

all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions... minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation". Amnesty International delegates observed that the conditions in the gymnasium did not meet these standards.

When the Amnesty International delegates pointed out that the conditions in which the detainees were being held could be improved, UNMIK and KFOR officials stated that the circumstances in Mitrovica were exceptional and that UNMIK and KFOR had neither the resources nor the capability to provide a more adequate place of detention. They stated that they were "simply not prepared for this". However, the violence and heightened tension between the two communities in Mitrovica, which has continued over the last seven months, should have indicated to KFOR and UNMIK that they may have to detain people. In order to have the capability to detain people in adequate conditions, UNMIK should have allocated the necessary material resources to Mitrovica. In providing an authoritative interpretation of Article 10 of the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee has stated that a lack of material resources or financial difficulties cannot be used as a justification for inhumane treatment.

In response to the Amnesty International delegates' suggestion that KFOR could perhaps improve the heating and cleanliness of the gymnasium, a French KFOR official said, "they [the detainees] are no angels... these people shot my soldiers".

The right not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention

Article 9(1) of the ICCPR states that "(e)veryone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedures as are established by law".

KFOR representatives informed the Amnesty International delegates that the detention of the group of 49 persons in Mitrovica on the 13 February, took place on the basis of their authority found in Resolution 1244, para. 9(d) which gives KFOR the broad responsibility for "ensuring public safety and order until such time as the international civil presence can take responsibility for this task". Although clearly in contradiction to international human rights law, KFOR officials have argued that their powers under para. 9(d) give them the authority to hold persons in detention indefinitely without safeguards until there is an UNMIK judicial authority to review the cases. KFOR legal advisors have also claimed in other cases that even when there is a judicial review of the cases which results in an order of release of the person detained, para. 9(d) grants them the authority to continue the detention of that person, if, in their determination, the person poses a threat to public safety and order or to KFOR soldiers. See footnote 22²² Amnesty International is concerned that such claims are clearly incompatible with KFOR's obligation to uphold international human rights standards.

When KFOR interprets its power under Resolution 1244 as providing it with the authority to detain people without regard for procedures provided for in the applicable laws, See footnote 23²³ as they did in Mitrovica, KFOR subjects persons to arbitrary arrest and detention. Amnesty International believes that persons arrested and detained solely on the basis of Resolution 1244 are victims of arbitrary arrest and detention because the authority under which they are held is unlimited, vague and without regard for procedure provided for in any other law. The organization highlights the fact that Resolution 1244, paragraph 9(d) does not contain or specify any legal procedures or standards which KFOR must adhere to when arresting or detaining persons. Thus, Amnesty International is concerned that any arrests and detentions executed solely on the basis of this power lead to arrests which are inappropriate, unpredictable and could lead to injustice. Any such arrests and detention would be arbitrary within the meaning of Article 9(1) of the ICCPR. See footnote 24²⁴

Article 5(1) of the ECHR also contains, in more detail, the right not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention. This article requires that for an arrest to be lawful it must be based on, among other things, a "reasonable suspicion" that a person has committed a criminal offence (Article 5(1)(c) of the ECHR). Although KFOR claims that the questioning of the 49 detainees was for intelligence gathering purposes, the detainees interviewed by Amnesty International delegates stated that the questioning by KFOR soldiers centred around the events of the 13 February 2000 and who shot the French soldiers - clearly a serious criminal offence. It is far from clear whether the element of "reasonable suspicion", which is necessary for the arrest and detention to be lawful, was met in each of the cases of the 49 persons detained. A representative from the UNMIK international civilian police involved in the cases told Amnesty International delegates "(f)rom a military point of view there may have been a good reason to detain these persons, however, from a police point of view there was no probable cause" (or reasonable suspicion that the persons detained had committed a criminal offence). If KFOR did not have a "reasonable suspicion" that each of the 49 persons arrested and detained in Mitrovica on 13 February 2000 had committed a criminal offence, the arrests and detentions of these persons were unlawful under the ECHR. See footnote 25²⁵

The right to be informed of the reasons for an arrest and the right of a person to be informed of his or her rights

One of the crucial safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention is the requirement set out in Article 9(2) of the ICCPR and Article 5(2) of the ECHR that all persons be informed of the reasons for arrest in a language that they understand. When detaining the 49 persons in Mitrovica on 13 February, however, KFOR did not speak to the detainees through an interpreter. They did not inform anyone of the reasons for which they were being detained in a language that they understood. Indeed, four days later on 17 February when the Amnesty International delegates arrived at the French KFOR compound, neither KFOR nor UNMIK were clear as to the legal basis under which the detainees were being held or whether they were in the custody of UNMIK. See footnote 26²⁶ Also contrary to international standards, the detainees were not informed of their rights by the authorities.

The right to counsel

International human rights standards provide that every person arrested and detained, whether or not on a criminal charge, has the right to assistance of counsel at all stages of the proceedings, including interrogations. (Principle 1 of the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers). Moreover, all detainees have the right to be informed promptly after arrest of their right to counsel. (Principle 17(1) of the

Body of Principles). In addition, Article 37(d) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child specifies that every child deprived of his liberty has the right of prompt access to legal representation. Amnesty International delegates were informed that none of the persons held by KFOR and UNMIK international civilian police in the gymnasium between 13 and 18 February 2000, including the juveniles, were provided with access to a lawyer nor were the majority of the persons detained informed of their right to counsel.

The right to notify or have notified family of the deprivation of liberty and place of detention

Amnesty International was informed by people held in detention in Mitrovica that their families were not officially notified by KFOR or UNMIK international civilian police that a member of their family was being detained. Furthermore, since the detainees were not given the opportunity to contact their families during their time in detention, some of their families did not know where they were. International human rights norms provide all persons deprived of their liberty with the right to inform, or have the authorities notify, their family or other appropriate person of the detainee's choice of the place where they are being detained, and of any transfers from that place. (Principles 15 and 16 of the Body of Principles).

The right to be brought promptly before a judge or judicial authority and the right to challenge the lawfulness of detention

Every detainee has the right to be brought promptly before a judge or judicial authority. Article 9(3) of the ICCPR provides that "(a) nyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release..." Article 5(3) of the ECHR contains a similar provision. While international human rights law does not provide a temporal definition of "promptly", the European Court has ruled that detaining a person for four days and six hours before bringing him before a judge, without the necessary safeguards being in place, was not prompt access and therefore a violation of Article 5(3). See footnote 27²⁷

The FRY Code of Criminal Procedure (the Code) provides that a judge must deliver a decision to a detainee within 24 hours of the individual being deprived of his or her liberty if the person is to be kept in custody. The Code does allow law enforcement officials to detain a person for up to 72 hours before a judicial review and investigation commences in exceptional circumstances. See footnote 28²⁸ None of the persons held in the KFOR gymnasium, including those who were held for a period of five days, were ever brought before a judge or a competent judicial authority. See footnote 29²⁹ Speaking with Amnesty International delegates, UNMIK international civilian police claimed that they had 72 hours from the commencement of their investigation to bring these people before a judge or to release them. However, they stated that their investigation started 91 hours after the people were initially detained. See footnote 30³⁰ According to UNMIK, therefore, these persons could have been held, effectively for interrogation, for seven days without ever seeing a lawyer or being brought before a judge.

At least 14 of the detainees were held by KFOR and UNMIK in Mitrovica for around 120 hours, which exceeds both the 24-hour and the 72-hour exceptional limit of the applicable national law by 96 and 38 hours respectively, and were never brought before a judge. See footnote 31³¹ The FRY Code of Criminal Procedure, however, clearly states that all persons detained must be brought before a judge at most within 72 hours from the time that the person is initially detained. See footnote 32³² By not complying with this provision of the applicable national law, both KFOR and UNMIK clearly failed to treat the detainees in accordance with the procedures proscribed by law, in violation of Article 9(1) of the ICCPR and Article 5(1) of the ECHR. Furthermore, KFOR and UNMIK violated Article 9(3) of the ICCPR and Article 5(5) of the ECHR by failing to bring each detainee promptly before a judge.

Article 9(4) of the ICCPR and Article 5(5) of the ECHR provide every detainee with the right to challenge the lawfulness of his arrest or detention and to be released if the detention is unlawful. Amnesty International underscores the fact that at present there is no specific legal procedure under the applicable law in Kosovo by which persons kept in detention can challenge the legality of their arrest and detention by law enforcement officers in Mitrovica. None of the detainees were provided the opportunity to challenge the lawfulness of their detention, including the 14 detainees who were kept in detention for five days. The organization urges UNMIK to establish such a procedure in line with international human rights standards forthwith.

Human rights mechanisms in Kosovo - the enforceable right to compensation

Article 2(3) of the ICCPR and Article 13 of the ECHR require that authorities ensure that any person whose rights under the respective treaty have been violated have redress to a competent authority for an effective and enforceable remedy. Article 9(5) of the ICCPR and Article 5(5) of the ECHR provide for an enforceable right to compensation for any person who has been a victim of an unlawful arrest or detention.

In Mitrovica, on 13 February, the 49 persons arrested by French KFOR were not informed immediately of the reason for their arrest, were not notified of their rights, including their right to counsel, were not given access to counsel even before or at the time that they were interrogated and were not detained in humane conditions. In addition, 14 people were not brought promptly before a judge or judicial officer in accordance with the applicable national law. None of the detainees were able to challenge the lawfulness of their detention. Furthermore, it is highly questionable whether the initial arrests and subsequent detention of the 49 persons were in fact lawful. At present in Kosovo, however, there are no mechanisms in place to assess a claim of unlawful arrest and detention by KFOR or UNMIK international civilian police in order to provide redress for the victims.

The UN Secretary-General stated that an Ombudsperson institution will be created to investigate allegations of human rights abuses by authorities in Kosovo. Amnesty International is concerned that the Ombudsperson institution which is currently being developed by the OSCE has not, as yet, been established. Therefore, there is no independent mechanism in place to investigate alleged human rights abuses by KFOR and UNMIK and recommend compensation. The organization urges UNMIK to create this institution as a matter of urgency.

The UN Secretary-General has stated that the Ombudsperson will have the "jurisdiction over allegations of human rights [abuses] by any person or entity in Kosovo". Amnesty International understands that the Ombudsperson is intended to have power to, *inter alia*, review allegations of human rights abuses not only committed by UNMIK, but also by KFOR. Amnesty International urges KFOR to recognize the jurisdiction of the Ombudsperson and allow his office to investigate alleged human rights abuses committed by KFOR.

The organization further notes that NATO, which is comprised of the majority of countries contributing troops to KFOR, has no uniform policy whereby people proven to be the victims of human rights abuses can be provided with compensation. Thus, at present there is no enforceable right to a remedy for people who are found to have been victims of any human rights violations committed by KFOR. Amnesty International continues to urge KFOR to establish an independent and impartial complaints mechanism in order to ensure that allegations of human rights abuses are effectively investigated, until such time as the Ombudsperson has started its work and KFOR has accepted its jurisdiction. The organization further urges KFOR to establish a system for making reparation, including compensation, to victims of human rights abuses or to victims' families.

Recommendations

Amnesty International recognizes the complex nature of the tasks which UNMIK and KFOR face in Kosovo. The mandate of the international presence in Kosovo is overwhelming in its magnitude, given the lack of a political solution regarding the status of the territory and the ongoing conflict in the region. The organization highlights the particularly difficult nature of the task faced by UNMIK and KFOR in Mitrovica where organized groups of ethnic Albanians and Serbs continue to perpetrate human rights abuses against members of minority communities on a daily basis. Nevertheless, Amnesty International stresses the fact that, however difficult the situation, KFOR and UNMIK must set the standard in Kosovo by upholding the highest standards of human rights at all times. The organization therefore makes the following recommendations:

To UNMIK and KFOR

That UNMIK and KFOR:

- * initiate without further delay an independent and impartial investigation into the death of Avni Hajredini, to be conducted in accordance with international standards, and that its methods and findings are published in full.
That UNMIK and KFOR take immediate steps to ensure that all arrested and detained persons are treated in accordance with the highest standards of human rights. They should ensure in particular that:
- * all persons arrested or detained for any reason are informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for their arrest and the location where the person is being detained; notification is also to be provided in the event of any transfers from the original place of detention;
- * such persons are promptly informed of any charges against them and of their right to prompt access to legal counsel of their choice;
- * anyone deprived of their liberty shall be granted access to legal counsel without delay, including during questioning and that adequate facilities are provided to ensure the confidentiality of communications between counsel and the detainee;
- * the rights of juveniles are fully protected including during any detention and questioning and that juveniles are detained only as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate time. If detained they should only be questioned in the presence of an appropriate adult and their legal counsel;
- * anyone deprived of their liberty is brought promptly and not later than 72 hours from the time they are detained before a judge or judicial authority;
- * all persons deprived of their liberty are permitted to contact their relatives promptly after arrest to inform them about their arrest, or that the detaining authorities are instructed to do so on their behalf;
- * all persons detained are held in places of detention that are officially recognized and that the International Committee of the Red Cross and human rights monitors have full and unhindered access to these places and detainees;
- * detained persons are held in humane conditions which, at least, meet minimum UN standards.

To KFOR

That KFOR:

- * review the regulations, code of conduct and procedures for KFOR personnel and undertake all necessary practical measures - including establishing training programmes to ensure that the actions of KFOR personnel fully meet international human rights standards as well as applicable laws - notably when resorting to force and when engaging in law enforcement operations;
- * create a uniform, easily accessible and transparent complaints mechanism which ensures that investigations of complaints, including allegations of human rights violations, are conducted by a body independent from that against which the complaint is brought, to be operable at least until such a time as the institution of the Ombudsperson is in operation and KFOR agrees to grant it jurisdiction;
- * take steps to ensure that any persons shown to have been victims of human rights violations committed by KFOR personnel - including from NATO contributing countries - have a right to redress and receive adequate reparations, including compensation;
- * permit the Ombudsperson institution once established to investigate human rights violations that are alleged to have been committed by KFOR personnel.

To UNMIK

That UNMIK:

- * establishes a clear procedure by which all arrested people can challenge the lawfulness of their detention before a court which may

decide without delay on the lawfulness of detention and order release if it is not lawful;

- * ensure that all detainees, including those from Mitrovica, are held in conditions which meet international human rights standards;
- * initiate a prompt review of all applicable laws, including UNMIK regulations, to ensure that these fully conform with international human rights standards;
- * continue to make efforts to establish without delay a functioning judicial system whose personnel is adequately trained in human rights standards;
- * create the institution of an Ombudsperson without further delay;
- * ensure that all UNMIK law enforcement officials are provided with training in human rights standards.

To the international community

That the international community:

- * provide UNMIK without further delay with the necessary personnel and resources to effectively police Kosovo in full conformity with international human rights standards;
- * provide UNMIK forthwith with the necessary resources and personnel to establish a functioning independent and impartial judiciary which is adequately trained in the applicable law and human rights standards;
- * provide UNMIK with the required resources to establish and maintain detention facilities which fully conform with international human rights standards; * provide UNMIK with the necessary funds to establish a functioning, independent and impartial judiciary.

Footnote: ¹ *The information contained in this report is based upon interviews carried out by Amnesty International delegates with people who witnessed the violence on 13 February 2000, representatives of UNMIK, KFOR and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), legal professionals appointed in the UNMIK judicial system and five people who were detained by KFOR and UNMIK that day.*

Footnote: ² *By 21 February 2000 only 2,163 international police officers were present in Kosovo, despite the fact that the Secretary-General has stated that over 6,000 international civilian police officers are required.*

Footnote: ³ *"The statement on the right of KFOR to apprehend and detain persons who are suspected of having committed offences against public safety and order". (the UNMIK Statement).*

Footnote: ⁴ *See for example, Loizidou v. Turkey, European Court of Human Rights (40/1993/435/514) judgement (Merits) Strasbourg, 18 December 1996, para.52.*

Footnote: ⁵ *Including: the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Body of Principles for the Protection of all Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Basic Principles for the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions.*

Footnote: ⁶ *Amnesty International recommends that the provisions of the ICCPR, the European Convention and the UN standards which cover the conduct of law enforcement should be firmly reflected in the rules of engagement and the Status of the Forces Agreement and troops who are involved in policing operations should be trained in the practical implementation of these standards.*

Footnote: ⁷ *The prosecutor of the Mitrovica court sent a letter to UNMIK international civilian police on the 7 February stating that he had received no information regarding investigations into these crimes. In the letter the prosecutor urged UNMIK to commence prompt and thorough investigations.*

Footnote: ⁸ *"Gunfire Shatters Kosovo's Sunday Morning Calm", Reuters, 13 February 2000.*

Footnote: ⁹ *"Violence Escalates in Kosovo," Washington Post, 14 February 2000. A French KFOR soldier told AFP that he was explicitly ordered to shoot anyone with a weapon. Amnesty International interview with AFP, Pristina, February 2000.*

Footnote: ¹⁰ *UNMIK News, no. 28, 14 February 2000*

Footnote: ¹¹ *"Firefight in Kosovo Town Leaves Sniper killed, Peacekeepers Wounded," AFP, 12 February 2000.*

Footnote: ¹² *KFOR spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Henning Philipp, UNMIK Press briefing, Pristina, 14 February 2000. It should be noted that the location of the other supposed "sniper" that KFOR claimed their soldiers had wounded is still a matter of controversy.*

Footnote: ¹³ *Video filmed by APTN, Mitrovica 13 February 2000 and viewed by Amnesty International delegates.*

Footnote: ¹⁴ "NATO Backtracks on Kosovo Sniper Claim," Reuters, 17 February 2000.

Footnote: ¹⁵ KFOR Press Update, Pristina, 17 February 2000.

Footnote: ¹⁶ Principle 9 of the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal Arbitrary and Summary Executions states that "there shall be a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation of all suspected cases of extra-legal, arbitrary and summary executions".

Footnote: ¹⁷ Principles 5 and 9 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Articles 2 and 5 of the ECHR as interpreted by the European Court of Human Rights, impose similarly strict requirements.

Footnote: ¹⁸ Meleqe Hajredini, the wife of Avni Hajredini has requested that UNMIK and KFOR conduct an investigation into the death of her husband. Avni Hajredini left a wife and five children.

Footnote: ¹⁹ "NATO Shocked by Violence, Arrests 40", Reuters, 14 February 2000.

Footnote: ²⁰ International human rights standards provide that women and children held in detention should be segregated from the adult male population. Rules 8(a) and 53 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners state that women in custody should be held separately from men and supervised by female members of staff. In addition, Article 10(2) of the ICCPR provides that juvenile persons should be separated from adults. See also Article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Footnote: ²¹ A representative from the OSCE, who had been denied access to the detention facility the day before, was permitted to visit the facility and speak to the detainees.

Footnote: ²² There are currently at least seven people being held in continued detention by KFOR in the sector under the command of the United States on the authorization of the Commander of KFOR, despite the fact that their release has been ordered by a judge appointed by UNMIK. These people are no longer under any form of investigation and they have not been able to challenge the legality of their continued detention in a court, nor has their continued detention been reviewed by a court or judicial authority. Although KFOR has claimed that these persons can be held indefinitely in detention without affording them any guarantees of due process, Amnesty International is concerned that they are currently subject to arbitrary detention in violation of international human rights law.

Footnote: ²³ Regulation 2/1999 allows the relevant law enforcement authorities to temporarily detain a person if they pose a threat to public peace and order for up to a maximum of 12 hours. However, Regulation 2/1999 does not provide a procedure by which a detainee can be informed of their rights, be provided with access to counsel, be informed of the reasons for their arrest in a language they understand, be treated in humane conditions or with a procedure by which they can challenge the legality of their detention. Moreover, there is no requirement on the face of the law that there be a "reasonable suspicion" that the person detained under Regulation 2/1999 committed a criminal offence. Therefore, Regulation 2/1999 appears to be incompatible with international human rights standards, in particular Article 5 of the ECHR. Amnesty International continues to urge UNMIK as a matter of urgency to ensure that all regulations issued under its authority conform to international human rights standards created by the UN.

Footnote: ²⁴ The Human Rights Committee has explained that the term "arbitrary" in Article 9(1) of the ICCPR is not only to be equated with detention which is "against the law," but is to be interpreted more broadly to include elements of inappropriateness, injustice, and lack of predictability. See *Albert Womah Mukong v. Cameroon*, (458/1991), 21 July 1994, UN doc. CCPR/C/51/D/458/1991, p. 12.

Footnote: ²⁵ In a judicial proceeding to challenge the lawfulness of the arrest and detention, KFOR would have the burden to prove that there was "reasonable suspicion" for arrest under Article 5(1)(c) in the case of every one of the 49 persons who were arrested and detained.

Footnote: ²⁶ While a KFOR legal advisor informed the Amnesty International delegates on the morning of 17 February that the 14 remaining detainees were under the jurisdiction of the international judge, the judge told the Amnesty International delegates, the same morning, that the detainees were in KFOR's custody. The international judge, who was appointed to the Mitrovica District Court on 14 February, stated that he could not exercise jurisdiction over the detainees. He stated that this was because when he arrived in Mitrovica he had no international prosecutor to work with him and that the local prosecutor had declined a request to work with him due to fears for his safety.

Footnote: ²⁷ *Brogan et al. v. United Kingdom*, 1998, European Court of Human Rights, Series A, No. 145-B.

Footnote: ²⁸ It should be noted, however, that detaining a person for 72 hours before seeing a judicial authority is an exceptional measure specified for cases where it is necessary to confirm the individual's identity, check an alibi, ensure that evidence is not destroyed or gather other "essential details" necessary for the criminal process. See Code of Criminal Procedure, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Articles 192 (1), (3) and 196 (1), (2), (3).

Footnote: ²⁹ The UNMIK Statement which underlines the obligation of KFOR to observe internationally recognised human rights standards, lays out a procedure which should be followed by KFOR when detaining an individual. However, this procedure was not followed by KFOR in the process detaining the 49 persons on the 13 February 2000.

Footnote: ³⁰ Although the French KFOR legal advisor stated that he was under the impression that an UNMIK international civilian police investigation had commenced on 15 February, the UNMIK civilian police investigator who met Amnesty International's delegates claimed that his investigation had begun on 17 February. In fact, he claimed that his investigation had started around 30 minutes before meeting the Amnesty International delegates at exactly 1.51pm that day.

Footnote: ³¹ Although the FRY Code of Criminal Procedure requires the detaining power immediately inform a prosecutor or investigating judge of any detentions or arrests, the UNMIK-appointed President and one of the prosecutors of the Mitrovica court informed Amnesty International's delegates that they had never been officially notified of the detention of any of the group of 49 persons.

Footnote: ³² It should be highlighted that Amnesty International has expressed its concern regarding the abuse of these provisions of the Code by the Serbian police and FRY authorities when arresting and detaining ethnic Albanians in Kosovo before June 1999. See: Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Unfair trials and abuses of due process; Document Series A #4. AI Index: EUR 70/35/98.

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2: Violence in Drenica, February - April 1998

Drenica, February-April 1998

Unlawful killings, extrajudicial executions and armed opposition abuses

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Introduction

From the end of February 1998 a marked and extreme increase in police and, increasingly, military actions in the areas where the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA, or in Albanian *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*, UÇK) is reported to have a strong presence has resulted in hundreds of killings, many of which Amnesty International believes to have been extrajudicial executions and the consequence of excessive use of force. This report features detailed information on three such police or military actions in the Drenica area of Kosovo province: at Likosane and Cirez villages (28 February-1 March); at Donji Prekaz (5-6 March); and at Glodjane (24 March).

This report also features cases of human rights abuses allegedly perpetrated by the KLA in and around Glodjane in the weeks after the police action there in March. Towards the end of May 1998 the Yugoslav authorities stated that at least 25 civilians [See footnote 1](#) had been killed by armed ethnic Albanians since the beginning of the year. Amnesty International is not able to verify this figure or the circumstances of each case, but opposes the deliberate and arbitrary killing of civilians, prisoners or others who have been rendered defenceless. The deliberate killing of people taking no active part in hostilities contravenes minimum standards of human behaviour and is prohibited under the laws of armed conflict.

Violence has escalated still further since the events described here occurred.

Unlawful killings and extra-judicial executions during police/military operations

Likosane and Cirez villages, 28 February and 1 March 1998

On 28 February and 1 March 1998 Serbian police killed 26 ethnic Albanians in the villages of Likosane and Cirez (Likoshani and Cirez in Albanian). Four police officers were also killed.

Comparing the official accounts of the events and the evidence collected from independent sources, two very different accounts emerged. According to the police, one of their routine patrols was attacked near Likosane at 12.30pm on 28 February and two police officers were killed. Reinforcements were brought in at around 2pm, who then fought with armed ethnic Albanians through until the next day, during which time two more police officers and 16 of the Albanians were killed. However, reports from ethnic Albanian witnesses contradict this version, saying instead that the confrontation began on the evening of 27 February when armed men, believed to belong to the KLA, fired from a vehicle at a school housing Serbian refugees (from Croatia or Bosnia) in the nearby town of Srbica (Skënderaj in Albanian). [See footnote 2](#)

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Police reportedly gave chase to their vehicle which stopped at a bend near Likosane and the occupants fired back at the police. Police reportedly brought in reinforcements during the night, while the armed men of the KLA may well have reinforced themselves to fight an expected police action.

In summary, in the fighting which occurred during the night of 28 February and the early hours of 1 March, the police used helicopters and armoured vehicles in the operation, and were armed with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. It appears that although there was resistance from the KLA, those fighting for it were outnumbered and they withdrew from the area allowing the police to move in. Amnesty International believes that most of the ethnic Albanians who died were killed after the KLA's withdrawal.

Rukije Nebiu, a mother of two who was pregnant with her third child, was one of the 26 Albanian victims. She was killed in her house in Cirez village; pictures of her body indicated that she had been shot in the head with a high velocity weapon (see cover photograph). Rukije's husband **Xhemsir Nebiu** and her brother-in-law **Ilir Nebiu** were also shot in or close to the house. Other victims in Cirez included 63-year-old **Ajet Rexhepi** and four brothers from the **Sejdiu** family including 24-year-old twins **Nazmi** and **Bedri** who were also reportedly found dead in their house.

Among others, 10 male members of the **Ahmeti** family, aged between 16 and 50 years, were killed, apparently in extrajudicial executions, in Likosane. **Mirsije Ahmeti**, whose father and three brothers were killed, was reported in the Belgrade weekly *Vreme* as describing how the police came to their house at about 4pm on 28 February, ordered the occupants onto the floor at gunpoint, locked the women and children in one room and took the men out. See footnote 3

The men were at first believed to be missing and were apparently not counted in the 16 dead first reported by the police (the police in any case did not issue the names of the dead). On 2 March their bodies were seen in the morgue in Pristina (Prishtinë in Albanian), the capital of Kosovo Province, by somebody who was able to identify them and they were returned to the village for burial on 3 March.

Visitors to the scene including representatives of the Belgrade-based Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC) See footnote 4 observed and photographed blood, teeth and what they believed to be brain tissue on 1 March in the yard of the Ahmeti house. They also observed the words: "This is what will happen next time, too" written in Serbian on the wall. It is unclear whether all of the blood and body parts came from the Ahmetis; one local journalist who visited the scene believed that some traces may have come from an injured KLA fighter who may have come to the yard at some point and that his trail of blood may have led police there.

According to the HLC See footnote 5, 70-year-old **Muhamet Djeli** and his son **Naser** were killed in the house opposite that of the Ahmetis. Muhamet was killed in an outbuilding and Naser was killed in the next room in the presence of his wife and two children. He had been hit by a bullet which came through a window that had been covered with a mattress. A trail of blood indicated that he had been dragged outside, but his body was taken to the Pristina morgue by police.

The HLC also reported that although many of the bodies were taken to the morgue, there were no signs that autopsies had been performed on them, nor on the bodies which were left in the village. To Amnesty International's knowledge, to date no investigations have been carried out into the killings.

Killings in Donji Prekaz, 5 and 6 March 1998

On 5 and 6 March special police forces carried out another operation around the village of Donji Prekaz, some 10 kilometres from Likosane. At least 56 ethnic Albanians were killed in this operation. The main target of this operation was the home of **Adem Jashari**. He had been convicted *in absentia* of "terrorism" in an unfair trial in a court in Pristina in July 1997 and was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment (the trial is described in the accompanying document *Unfair trials and abuses of due process*, #4 in this series, AI Index: EUR 70/35/98). In public statements by the police since the trial he had been referred to as being a KLA commander. At the trial itself he was alleged to have received military training in Albania, to have recruited men to fight with the KLA and to have ordered and taken part in armed attacks against the police.

Adem Jashari had allowed himself to be photographed with weapons by journalists who visited his family home in previous months. It appears that the police had been aware of his whereabouts for some time: in January the police launched an operation against his home village of Donji Prekaz but withdrew after a firefight. From at least this time the police maintained a presence in a disused munitions factory in the vicinity of the village.

Although the full information about what happened in Donji Prekaz on 5 and 6 March is still not available, Amnesty International is seriously concerned that at least some

of those killed were extrajudicially executed and that others may have been unlawfully killed as a result of the excessive force which was used without regard to the fact that women, children and men who were not armed were among those in the houses at the point they were attacked by the police. There appears not to have been any intention to effect the arrest of armed suspects in the village with proper precautions and while minimizing the use of force in order to protect life, as both national and international law requires. Rather, the operation appears to have been carried out as a military operation by forces under apparent orders to eliminate the suspects and their families.

The police operation was carried out or at least led by officers of the Special Police Units (*Posebne Jedinice Policije* - PJP). These are elite units which are trained for special operations, such as dealing with hijacking. It is impossible to ascertain how many police officers were involved, but it seems likely that there were several hundred men. They were dressed in combat uniform, operated in military formations, and were supported by armoured personnel carriers (APCs) armed with heavy machine guns and cannons of at least 20 millimetre calibre. Besides vehicle-mounted weapons it appears that the police also carried heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, assault rifles and sniper rifles. Some reports indicate that 81 millimetre mortar rounds were also fired in the attack. Witnesses claimed that much of the police's firing at the village emanated from the disused hunting ammunition factory in the vicinity of the village where they had previously established a presence. This factory appears to have been used as the base for the operation.

In a report by the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs made public on 10 March the Ministry claimed that Adem Jashari had been involved in the attack on the police patrol near Likosane on 28 February. See footnote 6. The report also stated that there was another attack on a police patrol near Donji Prekaz on Thursday 5 March at dawn (at around 5.30 that day), and that following the deployment of a "strong police presence, the terrorist group retreated to the stronghold on [sic] the Jashari compound".

However, witnesses interviewed by Amnesty International and others give accounts which give strong reason to question this version of events. In particular witnesses from other parts of the village than the Jasharis' report the police moving in on and shooting at their homes from as early as 5.30am. Witnesses from the Jasharis' part of the village described how their part was fired upon from about 6.30am.

It is more difficult to estimate the degree of resistance offered by the armed ethnic Albanians in the Jashari compound and other parts of the village, particularly as some witnesses may have been reluctant to reveal knowledge of this. On the basis of what can be ascertained or deduced, it appears that each family or group of families gathered women, children and men who were not carrying arms into the safest room in each house. Meanwhile, some or all of the male members of each family repelled the police attack with arms. It also appears that they were expecting the police to attack, as they had done in the police action against the Jashari house in January, and in the incidents around Likosane a few days before. Nevertheless, it is evident that they were outnumbered, and had fewer and inferior weapons than the police used. They may well have had dozens of men armed with assault rifles and some other weapons such as anti-tank weapons. The degree of resistance offered from each house or group of houses also seems to have varied, but it is clear that the strongest resistance came from the Jashari compounds.

The only reported survivor from the compound where Adem Jashari's closest family members lived was an 11-year-old girl, B.J., who spoke to foreign and local journalists. See footnote 7. She told reporters how her family sheltered together during hours of firing in which her house was repeatedly hit and then, when the firing ceased, how she found the dead bodies of her three sisters Blerina (age seven years), Fatima (eight) and Lirie (10) and then of her mother and four brothers. Because of the lack of other witnesses and the concealment or destruction of evidence which will be described later, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct what happened in the compound except for what the girl told journalists after her escape.

Around 35 children, women and some men gathered in a house across the track from Shaban Jashari's compound during the attack. Amnesty International interviewed most of the family groups which had been sheltering in the house. In their testimony, which was taken at separate locations, they largely corroborated each other, confirming details of the attack as a whole and describing in various degrees of detail the extrajudicial execution of three of the six men who had been with them and the wounding of a fourth.

The witnesses stated that after hearing the start of the attack at around 6.30am or 7am they gathered in the house of Beqir Jashari which had the strongest walls and was in the middle of the row of houses. They remained in the house listening to the sounds of the attack on the other houses until about 1.30 that afternoon. At this point they stated that the second and then first floors of Beqir Jashari's house came under fire and that the roof and upper part of the house started to collapse. Police then came close to the house and witnesses describe how a tear-gas grenade (this could possibly have been a smoke grenade) was thrown and the gas or smoke

came into the room through the broken windows. Police then ordered the people to come out of the house one by one, calling in a mixture of Albanian and Serbian. In the confusion (the children did not understand the orders) the people in the house came out in groups with the men among them, some dressed in women's clothes. The men were picked out after they came out.

The first victim appears to have been **Qazim Jashari**, a 47-year-old teacher, who was stopped by police and shot just as he emerged from the house. The next victim was 26-year-old **Nazmi Jashari** whose killing several witnesses described. Nazmi Jashari was walking with his 70-year-old mother. Her account of his killing, parts of which follow, was corroborated by several other witnesses who were interviewed independently by Amnesty International:

"When we arrived at the door of the yard he said to 'me let me help you'. ...When we went out of the yard my son held me. He told me 'okay mother let's go', the only thing which I know from him. In front of the house when we were stopped they [the police] took my son from me. ... I told him go and leave me here because nothing will happen to me. He didn't say anything to me and they took my son from me until I turned my eyes to him they ordered my son to lay down then they searched him and ordered him to get up again and he did that. Again to lay down, they did not find anything, no weapons. I saw with my eyes how they prepared their automatic weapons, two of them, one on one side and another on the other, they shot him between the shoulders I saw that with my eyes and screamed at that moment 'Please God, I rely on you!' ... I didn't know what else I could say. I held those two walking sticks. I felt that my feet were completely cold. I could not feel them, I didn't know that they were mine. I saw how he was still he didn't move he seemed to be sleeping. I thought to go and to see him one of the police ordered me: 'Don't move!' He did not let me and I was just staying and looking. Then I wanted again to go and to cover him. I wanted to take this [her scarf] off and one of them turned a gun to me, but he didn't let me."

Examination of pictures of the body of Nazmi Jashari by a forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International indicated injuries which are broadly consistent with the accounts of him having been extrajudicially executed, albeit there are discrepancies between the witness accounts and the pathologist's analysis of the precise manner in which Nazmi Jashari was shot. The photographs showed entry wounds from bullets to his chest. At least one of the entry wounds showed marks which may have been the result of gasses as the muzzle of the gun pressed against his chest as it was fired. Nazmi's face was also caved in - the pathologist concluded this was either the result of blows from an object such as a rifle butt or his face having been stamped upon.

Beqir Jashari (43) managed to get out with the rest of the people who had sheltered in his house in the confusion as the police killed Qazim and Nazmi. He was reportedly shot as they fled up a hill close to the cordon of police on the outside of the village. **Riad Jashari** (16) was reportedly shot and injured before he reached the hill but survived to flee with the assistance of the others.

Whether or not all or some of the men who had been in the Beqir Jashari house, whose killings the witnesses described, were bearing arms during the police attack it is important to stress that in the witnesses' accounts they had ceased to offer resistance and had effectively surrendered themselves to the police.

As the witnesses fled they described meeting or seeing several cordons of police after leaving their houses. They were directed to flee in the direction of a neighbouring village and most complained that police appeared to fire at the ground in their direction as they fled. There appeared to be no attempt by the police to organize a place of safety for them or to provide any medical or other assistance.

Witnesses from other places in the Jasharis' part of the village described variously how they were ordered out of their homes or how their homes were fired upon. Some hid in their own or neighbours' houses for two or three days. The houses in the Jasharis' part of the village were rendered uninhabitable; houses appeared to have been deliberately set on fire and parts were bulldozed with tracked vehicles during the operation. Elsewhere in the village the inhabitants managed to flee or hid in their own or other houses. Some of those who hid did not get out until the following day, 6 March, or in some cases even 7 March.

In the aftermath of the incident, around 56 people were buried, amid some confusion. For example, at least two of the bodies handed over by the police came from Lausa village and had been killed in another incident. Some of the bodies were not identified because they had been badly burnt. Of around 41 bodies which were identified 12 were women and 11 were children up to 16 years of age. Most of the victims identified came from the compound of Adem Jashari and the houses close to it.

Some of the survivors believe that bodies still remain in the ruined houses. In the absence of more detailed evidence, the conclusion must be, at the very least, that the victims who were clearly not using arms - that is the women and children at least

- and about whom there is not witness testimony, died as a result of the excessive use of force by the police in contravention of international standards on law enforcement. Little regard appears to have been taken of the fact that unarmed people were present in the houses. The women and child victims appeared to have died as a result of different combinations of shrapnel injuries, bullet wounds and falling debris inside the houses. International standards such as the UN Body of Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials specify that intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life. In particular no warning was given of the intention to use force before at least two houses were attacked with heavy machine guns, cannons and probably mortar rounds. In witnesses accounts they were only called by the police to come out after several hours of bombardment by the police.

Despite the reports from the Ministry of the Interior which implied that the police operation had been staged as an immediate response to an attack on a police patrol, the operation had the appearance of one which had been planned sometime in advance. This would have been all the more likely since the police had attacked the Adem Jashari compound in January and were fought off. Despite the evident opportunity to plan this operation there appears to be no pretence that the operation was aimed at simply arresting those suspected of alleged terrorist acts.

The destruction and hiding of evidence by the authorities, and undignified treatment of the victims' bodies and their relatives

The Federal Code of Criminal Procedure (CCP) specifies in Article 252 that autopsies shall be carried out when it is suspected that a death was caused by a criminal act or in connection with the carrying out of a criminal act. When an investigating magistrate is unable to attend the scene immediately, the police are allowed to initiate forensic investigations, but not to order autopsies (Article 154). However, in the aftermath of the operation the CCP appears to have been blatantly ignored. One witness who remained hidden in the village until 8 March stated that he saw the police removing the bodies from the house he was hidden in without any particular care. At the same time they destroyed everything they laid their hands on.

According to the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF - the main ethnic Albanian human rights organization in Kosovo), on 9 March the police in Srbica telephoned the CDHRF's sub-council in Srbica and told them that the bodies of those killed in Donji Prekaz were available for the CDHRF or others to come and arrange identification and burial. On 10 March representatives of the CDHRF, some relatives of the dead and other members of the ethnic Albanian community who were in the area of Srbica were able to view the bodies. These had been laid out in an undignified manner by the authorities in an open-sided building (a building materials depot) close to a road on the outskirts of Srbica. The bodies were apparently unprotected from interference by animals or other possible damage.

Many relatives complained that they were unable to pass police checkpoints to get to the bodies or the mass funeral which was held the next day. A delegation of ethnic Albanian doctors from Pristina which was told by police that they would be able to view the bodies on 10 March was reportedly turned back twice by police despite assurances given by telephone that they would be able to pass police checkpoints. They did not reach the bodies. A convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) with delegates and medical supplies was also refused passage to the depot and the Drenica area. A truckload of coffins with the convoy was taken by the police and used for the burial.

Those representatives of the ethnic Albanian community who were able to reach the site where the bodies were laid out tried to organize an informal identification by those relatives who were able to reach the site. The police had apparently carried out their own identification of some of the bodies: they had numbered them and marked some as "unidentified". Photographs taken at the depot show no signs that autopsies had been carried out on the bodies.

The following day, 11 March, relatives and others organizing the funerals found that police had buried the bodies, carrying out threats which they had previously made that they would do so if the ethnic Albanians did not bury them quickly. The ethnic Albanian representatives then disinterred the coffins, tried to identify as many bodies as possible and reburied the bodies with the heads pointing towards Mecca in accordance with Muslim custom.

Amnesty International is seriously concerned at the failure of the authorities to carry out proper investigations into the causes of the deaths, in breach of national law as well as international standards relating to the investigation of killings in the course of police operations. The most glaring evidence of this is the lack of autopsies. The authorities claim that investigating magistrates were summoned to the scene; if this was the case then the failure to ensure autopsies were carried out appears to have been a gross dereliction of duty. The relatives of the dead suffered, and indeed continue to suffer, from the lack of proper information about how the victims died and the lack of any proper effort to ascertain responsibility. Moreover, only 40 or so

of the 56 bodies were identified, leaving the grieving relatives of those missing who were not identified among victims in an even worse state. That the authorities appear to have actively blocked or prevented efforts to identify the bodies confirms the suspicion that many of the killings may have been extrajudicial executions.

Furthermore, the authorities prevented independent investigation of the deaths. In response to worldwide concern at the incident and appeals from the CDHRF and the victims' families, the US-based human rights organization Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) organized a nine-member team of forensic experts from four countries who were ready to travel to Kosovo after having submitted visa applications on 13 March.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia also asked that its staff be allowed to accompany the PHR team. At the end of March the Federal Government informed the US State Department, and not PHR directly, that three US citizens would be allowed to travel to the region as long as they worked with experts designated by the Yugoslav authorities. They would not be able to operate as the coordinated team which PHR proposed. PHR stated in response that "isolated forensic investigators from various countries operating independently from one another is neither a scientifically nor logistically feasible option".

The Serbian authorities did, however, invite the ICRC to open an *ad hoc* investigation into the events. In a statement on 20 March the ICRC pointed out that "acting as a fact-finding commission" was not within its mandate and that "taking on such a quasi-judicial task could jeopardize its primary humanitarian duty to assist and protect the victims of armed conflict or internal strife" See footnote 8.

The statement further recommended that the authorities contact an international expert in the field of humanitarian law to set up such a commission. The authorities are not known to have taken up this recommendation.

Killing of three men in Glodjane, 24 March 1998

On 24 March police clashed with armed men in the village of Glodjane. Although accounts vary as to exactly how the incident started, it is clear that there was a relatively small-scale incident in which police and armed men exchanged fire in the hamlet of Dubrava, near Glodjane, at around 10.30am. This was followed by the deployment of police reinforcements in the area. When it became clear that something serious was happening, many people tried to flee the village and shelter in the neighbouring ones as police started checking houses, one by one, throughout the village. According to testimony taken by the HLC See footnote 9, four unarmed young men, Xh.Z., Gazmend Mehmetaj, Agron Mehmetaj and Him Haradinaj had tried to evacuate the children from the village school, but found them gone. Returning again towards the school, during a lull in the shooting at about 2.30pm, they saw a police vehicle about 100 metres from the school and turned back. They started to run when police opened fire on them without warning, first from positions near the vehicle and then from a helicopter. Gazmend and Agron Mehmetaj and Him Haradinaj were killed. The police reported that two men involved in the fighting had been killed (Him Haradinaj's body was not found until 28 March), and the KLA claimed in an announcement in May that the men were its members. However, the testimony collected by the HLC indicates that the men were unarmed and were extrajudicially executed. To Amnesty International's knowledge, no investigations were carried out into the killings.

Possible "disappearance"

In the chaos surrounding the police operations in Drenica and the west of the province, which has now created tens of thousands of displaced persons and refugees, there are frequent reports of many missing ethnic Albanians and some Serbs or Montenegrins. It is as yet unclear as to how many of these have gone missing, are in hiding, have been killed or have been made to "disappear" in the custody of the police or armed forces. However, there are some cases where there are reports of their arrest. For example, the CDHRF reported that Dr Hafir Shala, a physician at the Medical Centre of Glogovac, was arrested by police on 10 April 1998. The car in which he was travelling was stopped by police at about 8am in the village of Slatina near Pristina and he and his two companions were arrested. According to statements by these companions, they were driven to the police headquarters in Pristina by uniformed police, whereas Hafir Shala was driven there in a separate vehicle said to be occupied by three men in civilian clothes, which was seen to enter the station. Although Hafir Shala's companions were released later that day after questioning, he himself was not. No information concerning his whereabouts has been released by the authorities, despite efforts by his family and lawyer to obtain such information. Most recently, the authorities have reportedly denied that Hafir Shala is being held in custody at all. Amnesty International has so far not received any replies from the authorities to its appeals for information about his whereabouts and for his release if no charges are to be brought against him

Human rights abuses by opposition groups

At the time of writing, in early June 1998, Amnesty International was seeking to verify a significant number of recent reports of human rights abuses committed by the KLA. Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 places obligations on all parties to an armed internal conflict not to carry out "violence to life and person ... mutilation, cruel treatment and torture", the taking of hostages and "outrages upon personal dignity".

In the period prior to June the most detailed accounts of abuses by the armed opposition came from Glodjane village, in information compiled by the HLC. Following the police operation in Glodjane and killing of three men described above, the KLA set up checkpoints at the entrances to the village. Three Serbian men, **Dragoslav and Mijat Stojanovic and Veselin Stijovic**, from the Dubrava hamlet, returned to their house on 18 April to collect some of their possessions. The Serbs were detained by uniformed men at their house where they were knocked to the ground and beaten. They were then taken to what they called the KLA headquarters in Glodjane, where they were further beaten with rifle butts and clubs during an interrogation. They were released the next day. One of them was reportedly treated in hospital for serious injuries to the spleen, stomach and duodenum. The victims stated that they recognized most of the perpetrators as local people whom they knew.

On 12 April two Serb men, **Novak Stijovic and Stanisa Radosevic**, and the mother of the latter, **Rosa Radosevic**, went to the village of Pozar near Glodjane to collect the elderly father of Novak Stijovic. They were detained, beaten and questioned by armed ethnic Albanian men, who took them to the so-called KLA headquarters in Glodjane. They were made to retrieve and hand over a hunting rifle from the house of one of them, before being released and allowed to leave in the direction of Decane. Meanwhile, Stanisa's father, **Slobodan Radosevic**, had stayed behind to look after their farm in Dasinovac village and his family has not had any news from him since. However, on 27 April the Kosovo Albanian language daily *Koha Ditore* reported that the KLA had executed five abducted Serbs, but did not give their names.

According to the pro-government Media Centre in Pristina the bodies of Slobodan Radosevic and that of another missing Serb, Milos Radunovic, had been seen at the side of the road in Dasinovac. Neither of these reports has been independently confirmed.

Amnesty International's Recommendations

To the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities:

- The authorities should issue clear instructions to all members of the security forces carrying out law enforcement functions in Kosovo province that deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, arbitrary arrests and expulsions and other human rights violations will not be tolerated under any circumstances and that those responsible will be held criminally responsible for their actions.
- The authorities should ensure that all members of the security forces carrying out law enforcement functions in Kosovo province are acquainted with and trained in the application of the following international standards:
 - The UN Body of Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials
 - The UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions
 - The UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials
 - The UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment
- The authorities should ensure that in situations of armed conflict the relevant prohibitions of international humanitarian law contained in Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and in Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions relating to the protection of victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, shall be applied and all members of the security forces deployed in Kosovo should be made familiar with them.
- The authorities should allow independent investigation of recent human rights abuses, particularly the killings which occurred between 28 February

and 6 March in the villages of Likosane, Cirez and Donji Prekaz, and should initiate, as a matter of urgency, their own thorough, independent and impartial investigations into all allegations of human rights violations by the police according to guidelines set out in international standards such as the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions.

- The authorities should ensure that criminal investigations and procedures are initiated to hold to account any officers suspected of ordering or perpetrating human rights violations.
- The authorities should allow the opening of the field office of the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) which the High Commissioner has requested in Pristina.
- The authorities should grant permission for an extended temporary human rights monitoring mission of the OHCHR as recommended in the letter of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia, Jiri Dienstbier, to the UN Commission on Human Rights dated 14 April 1998.
- The authorities should grant permission for the redeployment of the Mission of Long-Duration of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.
- The authorities should cooperate in full with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, allowing in particular, access to its investigators to grave sites in Kosovo.

To the members of the Contact Group

- The Contact Group should consider all the recommendations made here to the Yugoslav authorities and demand their implementation.
- It should develop a human rights strategy to shape the demands it makes of all the relevant parties. This should focus on ensuring that:
 - the international community has the capability of deploying an effective human rights monitoring operation in the region.
 - the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is fully supported in investigations into possible violations of international humanitarian law and crimes against humanity.

To all UN contributor governments

- The contributing governments should ensure that the OHCHR field offices in Yugoslavia are properly resourced to meet the demands placed upon them.
- Contributing governments should ensure that all requests for funding made by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in connection with its investigations and any subsequent prosecutions are met in full.

To ethnic Albanian armed opposition groups in Kosovo province

- The KLA should ensure that all forces under its control abide by basic humanitarian law principles as set out in Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 which prohibit the killing of those taking no part in hostilities as well as hostage-taking.
- The KLA should ensure that it cooperates with the ICRC, in particular to resolve the fate of prisoners reportedly detained by its members.

KEYWORDS: EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS1 / INDISCRIMINATE KILLINGS1 / ETHNIC GROUPS1 / NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES / WOMEN / CHILDREN / USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE / COMMUNAL VIOLENCE / USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE / POST MORTEMES / IMPUNITY / POSSIBLE DISAPPEARANCE / DOCTORS

Footnote: 1 Report from Beta news agency, 28 May 1998.

Footnote: 2 Krvavi vikend u Drenici (Bloody weekend in Drenica), Vreme, Belgrade, 7 March 1998.

Footnote: 3 Krvavi vikend u Drenici (Bloody weekend in Drenica), Vreme, Belgrade, 7 March 1998.

Footnote: 4 Investigations in Drenica, 8 March 1998 and Police Operations in the Drenica area, 28 March 1998.

Footnote: 5 Investigations in Drenica, 8 March 1998 and Police Operations in the Drenica Area, 28 March 1998

Footnote: 6 Reported by Tanjug (Yugoslav news agency), relayed by BBC Monitoring Service, 11 March 1998.

Footnote: 7 Kosovo's silent houses of the dead, Sunday Times (London) by Marie Colvin, 15 March 1998.

Footnote: 8 ICRC Press release 98/10, "Kosovo: ICRC position on invitation to head investigation", 20 March 1998.

Footnote: 9 HLC Spotlight Report 27, May 1998.

Footnote: 10 Amnesty International notes that Article 7 of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted by General Assembly Resolution 47/133 of 18 December 1992, states that: "No circumstances whatsoever, whether a threat of war, a state of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked to justify enforced disappearances". Article 13 of the Declaration requires that prompt investigations be initiated whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an enforced disappearance has occurred.

Document Series A.#2. AI Index: EUR 70/33/98

Amnesty International June 1998

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van holst en steijnen

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Sent: maandag 5 juni 2000 15:18
Subject: Carla del Ponte's lies in front of the UN's Security Council (<http://www.serbi>)

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KOSOVO & METOHIA**"Politika - Tanjug": Carla del Ponte's lies in front of the UN's Security Council**

June 04, 2000

New York, June 3rd - The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal in the Hague stood up for NATO's criminals, declaring the decision that "there are no grounds for opening the investigation" into crimes which West Alliance committed against FR of Yugoslavia and Yugoslav people. That "decision" Del Ponte announced in a brief report to the members of UN's Security Council last night, saying she had finished considering "some" requests for investigating NATO.

"Accusations don't deserve further investigation", said lady in which hands were for months separated - very precisely and reasonably formulated - demands for opening an investigation because of the committed war crimes, which submitted so west famous lawyers engaged from Yugoslav government, so Russian Parliament's commission, groups of international legal experts and independent humanitarian organizations.

United Nations



Lazi | pred savetom bezbednosti

Accusing herself with the yesterday's statement, chief of shameful quasi court in the Hague evaluated that Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright, William Cohen and their partners in crime from NATO didn't commit genocide on Serbian population with the intentional killings of 2,000 innocent civilians and destroying first of all civil targets and that under war crimes couldn't be assign so monstrous moves as they are, among other things, bombing of traveler's vehicle or convoy of refugees, destroying of television center, bombing of Chinese embassy or using cluster bombs and depleted uranium as a weapon with long life destroying consequences.

The Hague Tribunal confirmed itself yesterday as a NATO's collaborator in aggression against Yugoslavia, evaluated chief of Yugoslav mission in UN ambassador Vladislav Jovanovic, and Carla del Ponte's shameful statement shows that this Tribunal is ready for further cooperation in aggressive attacks on Yugoslavia, in the frame of strategy of the United States of America and NATO.

In fact, the Tribunal has already been classified in lines of aggressor accusing leading Yugoslav persons for war crimes, stated ambassador Jovanovic, so it is not surprise why chief of this quasi court is not ready to do its professional and human obligation - to accuse NATO for genocidal aggression against country and people who didn't give any reason for that attack, but they only bravely fought against incomparable and superior opponent.

Yesterday, Carla del Ponte hurried to announce that arrived accusations against NATO discussed "informally", giving them - according to their significance - "low level", simply excusing herself because her duty is to "look" all complaints and accusations, because she has - obviously - already felt on her penitential bended shoulder blades angry thunder of insulted American Congress and Pentagon because of the pure fact that somebody is dares to take a superficial look on accusations for war crimes of American leaders. Finally, it is well known that the United States of America confronted to the founding of permanent international criminal court - for which 120 countries supported with their signatures in 1998 - because they

were afraid of that some foreign court could judge and sentence American citizens, especially members of armed forces.

Confronted with the Carla del Ponte's unbelievable conclusion that "there are no grounds for opening investigation about any of those claims or other incidents connected to the NATO's bombing", Russian UN's mission deputy chief Gennady Gatilov warned Security Council that this Tribunal's decision on completion of any investigation is too early. Ambassador Gatilov called the Hague Tribunal "politizing" body which is appearing with prejudices against Serbian people.

Of course, del Ponte was "astonished" and "completely refused those accusations", gladly agreeing with the NATO Secretary-General lord Robertson's evaluation that "closing file about NATO enables Tribunal to concentrate on arresting and trials of real war criminals in Balkan".

"Although NATO committed some mistakes, I am very pleased that there were no intentional targeting of civil or illegal military targets during the NATO's bombing campaign", stated impudently lady Del Ponte and mister Robertson stated that he is not surprised with her decision, because she collaborated hard with the leadership of NATO and its members in the recent months, so he expected with the reason that she will come to this conclusion. Tribunal's report long about 50 pages will be published in about ten days, but it has already been well known that in it "argumentatively" rejected all accusations raised on the account of NATO. "Mistakes" were committed, as bombing of traveler's train or Chinese embassy, but NATO "truthfully confessed them", it was written down in that report.

If the Hague Tribunal somebody considered so-so International court, from yesterday he must behave as it doesn't exist any more. It will unfortunately exist to the detriment of justice, contrary to all norms of International law and Charter of United Nations, but only as an extended hand of NATO and its dark plans against Yugoslavia.

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The road to Kosovo CASE studies

NAME: NAZMI JASHARI



"In front of the house when we were stopped they [the police] took my son from me. ... I told him "go and leave me here because nothing will happen to me". He didn't say anything to me and they took my son from me until I turned my eyes to him they ordered my son to lay down then they searched him and ordered him to get up again and he did that. Again to lay down, they did not find anything, no weapons. I saw with my eyes how they prepared their automatic weapons, two of them, one on one side and another on the other, they shot him between the shoulders I saw that with my eyes and screamed at that moment 'Please God, I rely on you!' ... I didn't know what else I could say.

Nazmi Jashari's mother in a statement to Amnesty International representatives in March 1998

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
Article 3

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Article 5

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Examination of pictures of the body of Nazmi Jashari (26) by a forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International indicated injuries which are broadly consistent with the accounts of him having been extrajudicially executed. The photographs showed that at least one of the entry wounds from bullets to his chest showed marks which may have been the result of gasses as the muzzle of the gun pressed against his chest as it was fired.

1. Killings in Donji Prekaz

On 5 and 6 March special police forces carried out an operation around the village of Donji Prekaz, Kosovo province, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see also A.1 [EUR 70\32\98](#)). At least 54 ethnic Albanians were killed in this operation. Nazmi Jashari was walking with his 70-year-old mother. Her account of his killing, parts of which you read above, was corroborated by several other witnesses who were interviewed independently by Amnesty International.

The main target of this operation was the home of Adem Jashari. He had been convicted in absentia of "terrorism" in an unfair trial in a court in Pristina in July 1997 and was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment (see also document series a4, AI Index: [EUR 70/35/98](#))...

Amnesty International is seriously concerned that at least some of those killed were extrajudicially executed by the police. There appears not to have been any intention to effect the arrest of armed suspects in the village with proper precautions and while minimizing the use of force in order to protect life, as both national and international law requires. Rather, the operation appears to have been carried out as a military-style operation by forces under apparent orders to eliminate the suspects and their families.

Despite the reports from the Ministry of the Interior which implied that the police operation had been staged as an immediate response to an attack on a police patrol, the operation had the appearance of one which had been planned sometime in advance. This would have been all the more likely since the police had attacked the Adem Jashari compound in January 1997 and were fought off.

ACT NOW!

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[EUR 70/33/98](#)
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Recommendations to:
[International Community](#)
[Armed Opposition Groups](#) and
[calls to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.](#)

[Case Study 2](#)
[Case Study 3](#)

Write to:

President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
Slobodan Milosevic
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia
Fax: +381 11 636 775
slobodan.milosevic@gov.yu

Call for an independent investigation into the killings which occurred on 5 and 6 March 1998 in the village of Donji Prekaz, and call for the authorities to ensure that any (police) officers suspected of ordering or perpetrating human rights violations will be brought to justice.

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The road to Kosovo CASE studies

NAME: VLORA MALIQI



"Six policemen beat me yesterday, they hit me everywhere. They kicked me all over my body... they pushed me to the ground, pulled my hair. They turned me over to hit me on the back and then in the stomach".

Viora Maliqi in a statement to Amnesty International representatives in March 1998

Nineteen-year-old student Viora Maliqi was among the victims as police moved against a small number of ethnic Albanians close to the philosophy faculty of the (state) university. Friends who were with her managed to escape the police line, but despite the attempts of one friend to help her, Viora was struck down and badly beaten.

UDHR

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
Article 3

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Article 5

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Viora Maliqi showed Amnesty International delegates bruises to her face, back, legs and arms.

Ill-treatment in the context of demonstrations

At around 11 am on 19 March ethnic Albanians demonstrated in Pristina, Kosovo province, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. (See also series A.1 [EUR 70/32/98](#)).

At the same time Serbs from all over Serbia started to arrive for a demonstration which was held that afternoon in opposition to the ethnic Albanians' demands.

The atmosphere in the town was very tense that day. Police did not break up the morning demonstration but instead beat or otherwise ill-treated some of the ethnic Albanian demonstrators when they were dispersing.

(See also: [EUR 70/34/98](#))

Write to: **President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**
Slobodan Milosevic
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia
Fax: +381 11 636 775
slobodan.milosevic@gov.yu

Call for strict orders to be given to the police officers not to torture or ill-treat people such as Viora Maliqi, an ethnic Albanian who was beaten in Pristina on 19 March 1998, and to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights standards.

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Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/09/98
26 February 1998

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Five years on : still no justice for victims of Strpci abductions

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News Service 34/98
AI INDEX: EUR 70/09/98
26 February 1998

PUBLIC STATEMENT

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Five years on : still no justice for victims of Strpci abductions

Five years since the abduction and killing of 19 men -- all but one of them Muslim citizens of Montenegro and Serbia -- and still the perpetrators have not been brought to justice nor have the relatives received compensation from the authorities involved, according to Amnesty International today.

The men had been abducted by Bosnian Serb and Serbian paramilitaries on 27 February 1993 from a train travelling from Belgrade to Bar (Montenegro) as it crossed briefly into Serbian-held Bosnian territory, at trpci station. They had "disappeared" for more than three years until finally, in June 1996, it became publicly known that on the day the men were abducted, they were taken to a village near Vi egrad where they were shot and their bodies thrown in the Drina river.

Amnesty International is calling upon the newly inaugurated Presidents of Montenegro and Serbia, and also on the newly appointed Bosnian Serb authorities, to finally end the impunity with which this gross human rights violation was committed by bringing those responsible to justice.

The human rights organization wants to remind in particular the Federal Yugoslav President Slobodan Milo eviæ to live up to his obligations towards his citizens. At the time of the abduction Slobodan Milo eviæ was President of the Republic of Serbia and in this capacity he repeatedly assured the relatives of the abducted men that he would do everything in his power to ensure that justice was done. In March 1993, he personally assured relatives of the abducted : "We are not going to allow those people who are committing serious crimes to walk freely in these regions".

In fact, this is exactly what has happened since. The authorities attempts to clarify the fate of their citizens have been grossly inadequate, inconsistent and at times deliberately counter-productive. A small Montenegrin Parliamentary Commission which had been entrusted with collecting information on the case in early 1993, complained on several occasions that federal Yugoslav, Serbian and Montenegrin officials had not answered its requests for information about this matter and had not given the Commission, which had no executive powers, the assistance it needed. In particular the Commission raised the failure of the authorities to question crucial witnesses.

Furthermore in November 1995, the Montenegrin Parliament rejected a request by the Commission to expand its powers so that it would have the authority to force state officials to hand over all available documentation on this case.

A testimony given by a key witness -- himself a former member of the paramilitary unit involved in the abduction, who had seen members of his unit shoot people and throw their bodies into the Drina river -- led to the arrest of a Serbian man in October 1996. This man was also a member of the same paramilitary unit and is subsequently reported to have confessed to taking part in the abduction and shooting. To date, this man has not been brought to trial. Instead, a lengthy argument about whether it should be a Serbian or a Montenegrin court which has the jurisdiction to try him has taken place.

The reported leader of the paramilitary unit -- a Bosnian Serb who operated on Serb-held territory in Bosnia-Herzegovina but crossed frequently into Serbian and Montenegrin territory-- was heavily implicated in the abduction and the killings by witness testimonies. Although he was arrested on several occasions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on suspicion of having committed this crime and others, he was always released and eventually extradited to the Republika Srpska (the Bosnian Serb entity) in June 1994. To Amnesty International's knowledge, no steps have been taken to hold him to account for his role in the abduction and killings by the prosecuting authorities in the Republika Srpska.

**Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ,
London, United Kingdom**

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Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/013/98
10 March 1998

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

Mr. Milosevic, if you have nothing to hide, let the world come and see for itself right now!

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

Mr. Milosevic, if you have nothing to hide, let the world come and see for itself right now!

International scrutiny of events in Kosovo, as recommended by the international Contact Group, should start with immediate access to affected areas of Kosovo province, Amnesty International urged today.

The Contact Group, originally established for Bosnia-Herzegovina, is comprised of Foreign Ministers from France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

"If President Milosevic and the Yugoslav leadership have nothing to hide, and the actions of its forces are legitimate under international human rights law, then there can be no reason to keep the eyes of the world away from Kosovo province, the human rights organization declared.

Amnesty International is however gravely concerned that the denial of access and other threats to journalists, independent human rights monitors and humanitarian agencies means unrestrained police actions involving human rights violations which may include arbitrary killings, torture and arbitrary detention.

Such human rights violations have been reported by ethnic Albanians in the Drenica region of Kosovo province where police operations to hunt out "terrorists" have taken place in the past 10 days. From 28 February to 2 March, at least 24 ethnic Albanians were killed during police operations in Likosane and Cirez villages -- allegations have been made that some of the victims were deliberately killed after they were disarmed.

On 5 March Serbian security forces launched similar police operations in Donje Prekaze and Lausa villages. They claimed these latter operations were in response to an early morning ambush in which two policemen were wounded.

In Donje Prekaze village, the targets of the Serbian forces (who reportedly deployed artillery) were the homes of the extended family of Adem Shaban Jashari. He is an ethnic Albanian who had been tried in absentia in 1997 on terrorism charges related to attacks on Serbs, some fatal, and his alleged membership of the Kosovo Liberation Army (Albanian - Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves -- UCK).

Among those whom ethnic Albanian sources report were killed in Donje Prekaze include 13-year-old Valdet Zene Jashari, and 16-year-olds Murtez Zymer Jashari and Abdul Jashari. At least two women were also reportedly killed, including Adile Jashari (Adem Shaban Jashari's wife) and the wife of Zene Jashari. Serbian sources claimed that Adem Shaban Jashari had himself been killed, but ethnic Albanians report that he escaped and is in hiding.

Although on 7 March Serbian police Colonel Ljubinko Cvetic reported that 26 "terrorists" had been killed during the police actions in Donje Prekaze, yesterday ethnic Albanian sources in Srbica reported that more than twice that number of bodies were returned to them by Serbian forces for burial. Serbian authorities also continue to insist that the police operations were directed against the UCK. Albanian sources, however, reported that among the remains handed over in Srbica were those of women and children, some of which had been burned beyond recognition.

Amnesty International fears that some people who were killed may not have been involved in the fighting or may have already been disarmed when they were killed.

"We are concerned that the use of force by Serbian security forces appears to have far exceeded that permitted by international standards for law enforcement, which is how the Serbs continue to

classify their actions," Amnesty International said.

Access to the region for journalists, independent monitors, and others has been limited to trips chaperoned by the Serbian authorities. Serbian police have also reportedly prevented ethnic Albanian human rights activists in Srbica from speaking with international organizations.

In another development apparently aimed at thwarting independent scrutiny, on 6 March the Belgrade district attorney took unspecified "measures" against editors of five independent Serbian newspapers and other television stations which had been reporting on events from Kosovo province, stating that they "encouraged the actions of terrorist groups". Amnesty International believes that these measures were clearly intended to threaten independent reporting from Kosovo province, as the editors of the newspapers said that they had only reported factual information and statements credited to other individuals.

The Contact Group yesterday called on the Serbian authorities to invite independent forensic experts to investigate the very serious allegations of extrajudicial killings, and to prosecute anyone found responsible.

"This recommendation needs an immediate positive response from the Serbian side, and should get one if they truly have nothing to hide." Amnesty International said. "It also needs the international community to back it up by identifying qualified forensic experts, and by providing resources so that they can begin work right away."

The organization additionally supported the call for a mission to Kosovo by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, noting that although the post is currently vacant, the Commissioner already has a Special Rapporteur whose mandate includes Kosovo province.

The Contact Group also recommended that the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Tribunal) begin gathering information relating to the violence in Kosovo which may fall within its jurisdiction. The mandate of the Tribunal includes prosecution for crimes against humanity and genocide, which are crimes which can be committed in peacetime as well as armed conflict.

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom

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van holst en steijnen

From: Herman de Tollenaere <hermantl@stad.dsl.nl>
To: Antoinette Martens <amarten@sk.sympatico.ca>
Sent: woensdag 30 augustus 2000 11:38
Subject: Re: Karin Wegental

At 07:49 29-8-2000 -0600, "Antoinette Martens" <amarten@sk.sympatico.ca> wrote:

>Hallo Herman,

>

>Een vriendin stuurde mij het werk van de Zweedse Minister van verdediging.

Karin Wegental is [sociaaldemocratisch] parlementslid, geen minister

>Ik ben betrokken geweest in de verzetting tegen de bombardementen in
 >Joegoslavia. De organisatie waar ik werk heeft leden, twee advocaten die
 >alle zogenaamde leiders naar het zogenaamde Internationale gerecht in Den
 >Haag heeft genomen. Je bent er waarschijnlijk wel van op de hoogte.

Ik stuur je stukken op over het proces tegen Nederlandse ministers in Amsterdam.

>Ik heb geen contacten in Nederland, behalve mijn vader, waar ik deze oorlog
 >normaal mee kan bespreken. Vrienden, nu in hoge kringen(NRC Handelsblad),
 >familie leden waarvan ik dacht dat ik veel overeen had, zijn allemaal voor
 >de propaganda gevallen dat Serbians monsters zijn. Ik heb een paar
 >vriendschappen verloren door het verschil van mening, als je het dat kan
 >noemen.

>

>Ik kan je verschillende artikelen opsturen, als je wilt.

Die zijn welkom. Krijg ik ze per e-mail? Als je geen bezwaar hebt, zet ik je op mijn lijst van adressen waar ik nieuws over Joegoslavië/NAVO heen stuur.

>Ik ben een Canadees voor 18 jaar tot op heden. Al mijn familie zit in
 >Amsterdam, Zandvoort, Maastricht, Rotterdam enzovoort.

>

>Misschien kun je mij op de hoogte brengen wie de echte kritieken durven te
 >zijn in dit conflict(?).

In de tweede kamer stemden SP, enkele GroenLinks leden, en 1 PvdA'er tegen. Buiten het parlement waren miljoenen tegen, duizenden demonstrerenden, maar de media zwegen dit grotendeels dood. Zelf ben ik lid van het nog steeds actieve Anti Oorlogscomité Leiden.

>Hartelijke groeten en tot gauw!

Met vriendelijke groet/Best wishes,

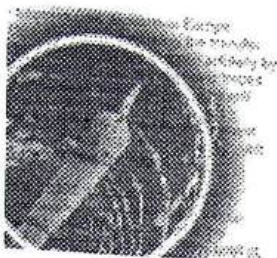
 Herman de Tollenaere

 My Internet site on Asian history and "new" religions:

<http://homes.dsl.nl/~hermantl/>

See also SIMPOS, information on occult tendencies' impact on society:

<http://www.stelling.nl/simpos/simpoeng.htm>



Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/57/99
12 May 1999

YUGOSLAVIA A decade of unheeded warnings -- a recipe for disaster

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News Service: 088/99

AI INDEX: EUR 70/57/99

Kosovo

A decade of unheeded warnings -- a recipe for disaster

THE HAGUE -- The international community allowed the present human rights disaster in Kosovo to unfold by failing to act despite repeated warnings over the last decade, Amnesty International said today.

The statement came as the organization launched a two-volume collection of its documentation about human rights violations in Kosovo alongside today's discussions at the Hague Appeal for Peace conference. The collection provides a detailed picture of 10 years' of torture and ill-treatment, "disappearances" and killings in Kosovo, leading up to the military intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in March 1999.

For more than a decade, Amnesty International has warned of an unfolding human rights crisis in Kosovo, said Pierre Sané, Amnesty International's Secretary General. "But the international community simply did not want to know and did not want to act. The people of Kosovo are now paying the price for their indifference."

In reaction to the recent G-8 Summit statement of principles for peace in Kosovo, Mr Sané protested the lack of any mention of bringing human rights perpetrators to justice nor giving any role to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, headquartered at The Hague.

"In agreeing and implementing any form of peace settlement, will the kind of human rights guarantees that could prevent a repetition of this tragic history be insisted upon?" asked Sané. "Will the regional and local human rights and democracy NGOs -- and other civil society actors whose voice and vision has too often been ignored in the past -- be guaranteed a seat at the negotiating table?"

In Volume One, which begins in 1989, Amnesty International provides a detailed picture of demonstrators in Kosovo being jailed without charge and put in isolation without contact with their lawyers or families. By 1991, the human rights organization criticized the police of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) for shooting and killing unarmed ethnic Albanians, as well as torturing and ill-treating them, and protested against unfair trials of political opponents and labour leaders.

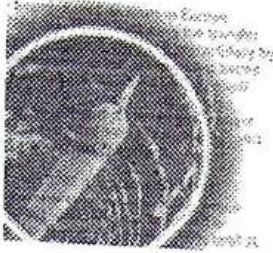
Amnesty International offered further graphic evidence in 1993 and 1994 of police torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and unfair trials. It appealed to the international community to work together to monitor and protect human rights in the FRY, and especially Kosovo.

Volume Two contains 14 different documents issued in 1998 and 1999, documenting Kosovo's emerging human rights crisis and expressing concern about Serbian army attacks which deliberately or indiscriminately killed hundreds of civilians. It charts a pattern of systematic human rights violations repeated over many years, and points to the lack of effective redress for victims, which again fueled the anger and frustration that culminated in the present conflict. Amnesty International also criticizes the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) for committing hundreds of politically motivated killings of civilians, prisoners and other defenceless people and for breaching the Geneva Conventions.

"Only by bringing to justice those who violate human rights and those who breach international humanitarian law, can we hope to avert future conflicts and ensure that a genuine culture of respect for human rights takes root in the region," Pierre Sané said.

Amnesty International research staff are currently stationed in Macedonia and Albania, where they are documenting ongoing human rights violations.

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom



Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/74/98
30 September 1998

**Yugoslavia(Kosovo province)
Latest allegations of massacres again underline desperate need for
international human rights monitors**

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News Service 190/98
AI INDEX: EUR 70/74/98
30 SEPTEMBER 1998

**Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
(Kosovo province)**

Latest allegations of massacres again underline desperate need for international human rights monitors

New allegations of the massacre of ethnic Albanian civilians in Kosovo yet again underline the need for a full investigation into the alleged massacre and for the presence of international human rights monitors, Amnesty International said today.

At least 16 people, 10 of whom were women and children, were reportedly killed last Saturday in the village of Gornje Obrinje. Among them was a pregnant woman. The majority of the victims were reportedly shot at close range and some showed signs of mutilation. They appeared to have been taking refuge from fighting in a wood close to their homes. Local people told reporters that Serbian police or Yugoslav Army personnel were responsible.

Although the Serbian authorities have denied involvement in the massacre and announced an "urgent investigation" into this incident they have consistently refused to hold independent and impartial investigations into such allegations or to bring perpetrators to justice.

"The pattern of human rights abuses and impunity for perpetrators in Kosovo is indisputable," Amnesty International said. "Abuses like those alleged at Obrinje spotlight the need to protect the displaced and refugees from Kosovo and put their human rights on the agenda as much as their humanitarian needs."

"Calls for them to return to their homes will be premature while gross human rights abuses are committed with impunity and are not promptly and impartially investigated and redressed," the organization added.

However, the international community is failing to give full effect to measures to monitor human rights and impunity. Last week's United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution (1199/98) emphasized the monitoring by European Union Monitors and international diplomatic monitors without addressing the need for access by specialized human rights monitors such as those of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights who has been denied an office in Pristina and an expanded mission.

On 8 September the President of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Tribunal) wrote to the Presidency of the UN Security Council highlighting how Yugoslavia's continued failure, in defiance of international law and the Security Council itself, to hand over suspects indicted as part of its Croatia investigations threatened to make the Tribunal's Kosovo investigations meaningless. The Security Council has so far failed to respond directly to the demands of the Tribunal, which the Security Council itself founded.

Last week's Security Council resolution called on the Yugoslav authorities to cooperate with the Tribunal and to bring perpetrators to justice itself, but failed to address the Tribunal's principal concerns over the non-arrest of suspects.

Next week the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees holds its annual Executive Committee meeting in which, among other issues, UN member states will set out UNHCR policy affecting Kosovo refugees. In the face of borders which are closing to Kosovo's refugees and displaced, Amnesty International will be addressing state delegations with a report calling on them to share the burden of Kosovo's displaced and refugees and prevent their premature involuntary return while this cannot be effected in safety and dignity.

Amnesty International will be emphasizing that efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance are not enough, the rights of refugees and displaced persons to protection under international law, particularly protection under the UN Refugee Convention, must be upheld.

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom

Amnesty International
EUR 70/63/98

25 August 1998

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

Today in Kosovo province, exceptional suffering is typical suffering

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25 AUGUST 1998

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Amnesty

Today in Kosovo province, exceptional suffering is typical suffering

As news breaks daily of more civilian communities in western Kosovo coming under fire, we already know the horrors that those people can expect to experience, so established are the patterns of violence and abuse, Amnesty International said today as it issued new reports on Kosovo.

"Exceptional suffering has become unexceptional," Amnesty International said. "Each day extreme misery and pain produced by human cruelty is now an everyday experience for more and more helpless people."

The three new reports launched by the organization on Kosovo's human rights crisis include two reports highlighting specific aspects of the tragedy: the plight of women victims, and people "disappeared" or gone "missing".

"In areas of civil turmoil and conflict, women are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses. Kosovo has proved this again," Amnesty International said.

Xhemile Tahiraj, for example, had left her home village in April to find safety for herself and her five-year-old daughter with relatives in the town of Djakovica. Within days, hearing that her husband - who allegedly had links to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) - was dead, she made her way home, but the village came under allegedly indiscriminate Serbian police shell and sniper fire. She was shot in the leg, and her daughter was also injured.

The report highlights the particular vulnerability of women and children who are refugees or internally displaced. It also features cases of human rights abuse of women away from the fighting, including police ill-treatment of the kind seen for years in Kosovo, and unfair trials.

"The "disappeared" and "missing" are the hidden victims of Kosovo," Amnesty International said. "Our new report on this aspect of the conflict shows how all ethnic groups are affected: ethnic Albanians have "disappeared" in Serbian police hands; Serbs, Albanians and Roma are "missing" after abduction by the KLA."

The "disappeared" include Jakup Qerimi, a 27-year-old ethnic Albanian who is mentally retarded. Police detained him in the town of Urosevac on 20 June. When his mother sought information about him, police told her he was a KLA member. They told her she would never see her son again; so far they have been right.

Among the recently "missing" is Djordje Djoric, a 28-year-old Serb. On 17 July he was stopped near Orahovac by the KLA while driving a pregnant neighbour to hospital. Reportedly the KLA men held him in detention at the hospital and beat him because his brothers are police officers. There has been no further news of him.

The third report released by the organization focuses on events at Orahovac, a town fought over by the KLA and Serbian forces in July and the scene of numerous reported human rights abuses.

"Orahovac is chillingly remarkable not least because in that one place -- and in the space of just five days -- almost all the dimensions of Kosovo's human rights tragedy were played out," Amnesty International said. "Events at Orahovac and at nearby Malisevo also point to what other communities have been going through right up to today. The latest reports from western Kosovo speak of the same kind of deliberate and arbitrary violence against civilians, the same terror and mass displacement of people."

At Orahovac between 17 and 21 July, as the Serbian police and Yugoslav military battled the KLA for control of the town, Albanian civilians were reportedly deliberately and arbitrarily killed, including in the street as they tried to escape from the fighting. Houses were shelled indiscriminately - some were allegedly deliberately torched - and their terrified inhabitants compelled to flee. The KLA abducted Serb civilians who are now "missing" and are feared killed. In the immediate aftermath scores of Albanians were detained by police and are feared to have been tortured or ill-treated.

For those civilians who fled from Orahovac -- estimated at some 15,000 people, three quarters of the town's population -- their plight became all too typical of what the internally displaced of Kosovo

experience. Many headed towards the nearby town of Malisevo, but police advances only days later forced them to flee again in panic into the woods and hills. For days they were beyond the reach of humanitarian agencies.

To their number have now been added tens of thousands fleeing a new Serbian offensive which intensified during August in the region around Pec.

Amnesty International is highlighting the many unanswered questions from Orahovac, including the need to investigate possible extrajudicial executions and other deliberate and arbitrary acts by police and military forces, the uncertain death toll, the fate of the "missing", and the treatment of the more than 300 people taken into detention in the aftermath by police - among them more than 50 believed still detained and now facing criminal charges.

Orahovac was the first - to date the only - attempt by the KLA to seize control of a major population centre. Their expulsion from the town appears to have marked a crucial change in their military fortunes: within days the KLA had also fled its "headquarters" nearby at Malisevo.

"As the security operation has moved westwards, closer to Pec and Djakovica, the available evidence is of repeating patterns of violence against civilian communities," Amnesty International noted.

Amnesty International has published in the past couple of months a series of reports providing detailed scrutiny of the long-standing patterns of abuses in Kosovo province. For copies of these reports or to speak to our country expert on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, please phone Amnesty International's press office on 0171 413 5562

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom

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Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/38/98

30 June 1998

Yugoslavia

How cheap is life in Kosovo province?

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[documents](#)[picture stories](#)[resources](#)[latest](#)[Amnesty](#)**Federal Republic of Yugoslavia****How cheap is life in Kosovo province?**

With every day that passes, greater numbers of Albanian and Serb civilians are falling victim to displacement, torture, and death in Kosovo province. How much more agony are the parties to the conflict prepared to inflict on the civilian communities? When will the Yugoslav authorities and the Kosovo Liberation Army take action on human rights protection? Amnesty International asked today, as it reported on its latest research mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

"The people we interviewed -- both Albanians and Serbs -- had been trying to hang on to their normal lives and their homes as long as they could," said Paul Miller, Researcher on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, who has just returned from the field. "They describe how many people are detained, tortured, missing or killed."

Today's victims are both Albanians and Serbs. Survivors are fleeing a combination of deliberate or indiscriminate attacks resulting in many dead and wounded, arbitrary arrests or abductions, the deliberate destruction of homes and other gross human rights abuses. Albanian civilians in particular have come under artillery, mortar and other weapons fire from the Yugoslav forces, but the KLA has also deliberately or indiscriminately attacked civilians -- Albanian as well as Serb. Excessive use of force seems to be the norm for both sides in the conflict.

People described to Amnesty International how their homes became the targets of shooting or grenade attacks in individual incidents even before full armed conflict erupted in their localities. Mr Miller added: "Some told us that they tried to make direct or indirect contacts with the Serbian police or KLA to make it clear that they could not -- or would not -- resist attacks, and to avoid the indiscriminate force that they already feared would come. This did not protect them."

In some locations, attacks on Serbian police by the KLA were followed a few hours later by police actions in the nearby villages in which police failed to discriminate between those who might be armed and involved in the attack, and the civilian inhabitants.

The most extensive police and army action began in late May around Decani in western Kosovo province and produced most of the tens of thousands of refugees and displaced persons now in the region. The Yugoslav authorities' intention was evidently to clear the wider zone between the border and the central Drenica area of the ethnic Albanian population, without discriminating as to where military targets were. Villages came under bombardment, while sniping made movement unsafe for civilians as well as KLA members. The police or army then moved into villages one by one to join battle with the KLA.

After their villages were attacked, many people who fled waited for hours or days in sight of their homes, before the spectacle of looting and houses burning forced them to give up hope of a speedy return.

Even after fleeing the conflict zone civilians feel far from safe. "Men we interviewed in northern Montenegro, displaced from Kosovo, said they feared the presence of the Yugoslav army in Montenegro, and Serbian police possibly also there. A group of about half a dozen men told us that they were badly beaten by soldiers when they crossed into Montenegro," Mr Miller said.

Ethnic Albanians make up the majority of victims, but it is still too early to quantify how many have been killed or are missing. This is particularly true of the Decani area, where restricted access and the huge population displacement mean that much more time will be needed to document and verify the full extent of human right violations. Within the displaced and refugee populations people are struggling to make contact with family members from whom they are separated, and who may be among the missing or dead.

Among dozens of other ethnic Albanians unaccounted for from other parts of Kosovo are people who were seen being detained by the police. At the same time there are reports of abductions of Serbs by armed ethnic Albanians. There are unsubstantiated rumours of secret detention centres controlled by both sides.

Mr Miller stressed that the current human rights crisis in the province cannot be isolated from more than a decade of unaddressed human rights violations in the region.

"Amnesty International has been documenting and denouncing a systematic pattern of torture and ill-treatment by police, deaths in police custody and unfair trials of political prisoners in Kosovo province for years," Mr Miller said. "The lack of effective redress for these and other human rights violations in the province is among the many sources of frustration and anger now culminating in hundreds of civilian deaths."

"The Serbian and Yugoslav authorities should issue clear instructions to all members of the security forces carrying out law enforcement functions in Kosovo province that deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, arbitrary arrests and other human rights violations will not be tolerated under any circumstances," stressed Mr Miller. "Those responsible should receive a clear message that they will be held criminally responsible for their actions."

"The KLA for its part should ensure that all forces under its control abide by basic humanitarian law principles as set out in the Geneva Conventions, which prohibit the killing of those taking no part in hostilities as well as hostage-taking," Mr Miller added.

Amnesty International also urged the international community to ensure that those fleeing human rights abuses in Kosovo province are not forcibly returned to the region, and are afforded effective and durable protection against return.

Together with announcing its latest findings, Amnesty International also launched today a series of reports intended to provide a detailed scrutiny of the long-standing patterns of abuses in Kosovo province. The first four reports, launched today as "Series A", include the findings of an Amnesty International mission to the region earlier in 1998, and cover developments to June. They also include detailed recommendations to the international community about establishing effective human rights monitoring in Kosovo province.

"Series B" of the reports, to be launched in the coming weeks, will provide in-depth analysis of the research findings revealed by the organization today, as well as any new research gathered in forthcoming missions.

Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom

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Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/11/98
3 March 1998
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
Violence sweeps through Kosovo province

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Amnesty

PUBLIC STATEMENT

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Violence sweeps through Kosovo province: international effort needed now to prevent further killings and beatings

The shooting of at least 16 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province at the weekend and the beating of hundreds of ethnic Albanians who demonstrated at this news raises the spectre of the repeat of the gross human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia which horrified the world in recent years.

Amnesty International is calling for the international community, particularly the European Union and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to make concerted efforts to see that allegations are investigated and the developing situation is monitored.

The police and security forces must respect international law enforcement standards which prohibit the intentional lethal use of firearms except when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life.

Yesterday, police broke up peaceful demonstrations in Pristina and other towns, using tear-gas, water cannons and truncheons. Hundreds of demonstrators, who appeared to have been largely peaceful, were beaten. Demonstrators were reportedly chased from the streets into offices and houses.

The demonstrations arose in response to the killing of at least 16 ethnic Albanians during the weekend. Although 16 victims have been acknowledged by the Serbian authorities, ethnic Albanians report the return of 22 bodies for burial. Although some of the dead may well have been men engaged in armed attacks on the police, Amnesty International believes allegations from ethnic Albanian sources that some of the victims were civilians not involved in the fighting are credible and that it is absolutely essential that they are thoroughly and properly investigated. Four police officers were also reportedly killed during the conflict.

Given the tense situation it is important to ensure impartiality of such investigations and involve representatives of the international community. Moreover, it is clear that further events in Kosovo province must be subject to intense international scrutiny.

On 28 February police reportedly clashed with members of the Uck (Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves - Kosovo Liberation Army) in the village of Likosane, near Glogovac town. Two police officers and five Albanians were killed. Serbian sources allege that the police were initially ambushed by armed ethnic Albanians. Ethnic Albanians claim that at least seven ethnic Albanians, and possibly many more, were shot in Cirez village near the town of Srbica the same day. The police allegedly shot some of the victims from helicopters before moving in with armoured vehicles. The victims allegedly included a pregnant woman, and four brothers from another family in the village. Both Cirez and Likosane are in the Drenica region, where UCK activity is strongest, and where police have restricted their movements in recent months because of earlier clashes with armed ethnic Albanians.

Serbian press and government sources have been alleging that there have been further attacks on Serbs, including civilians, in some cases resulting in people being injured.

Amnesty International recognizes that the authorities may have to use force when responding to violent attacks upon them, but such force must be only that which is strictly necessary and no more than to the extent required in the performance of these duties. It is alarmed that the police have used brutal tactics to break up peaceful demonstrations. The organization is urgently calling on the

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Violence sweeps through Kosovo province

Page 2 of 2

Serbian authorities to initiate a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation into the beatings and shootings, and to ensure that any police officers found to be responsible for beating demonstrators or unlawfully killing or wounding people be held to account for their actions.

An unknown number of people have been arrested in the course of the fighting and the demonstrations. Amnesty International also fears that arrested ethnic Albanians, both those alleged to have been involved in terrorist acts, and those involved in the demonstrations, will be subject to torture and ill-treatment in detention as has happened so frequently in the province. It is urging the Serbian authorities to ensure that the defendants are protected, particularly by ensuring that they be given full access to defence lawyers, family and, where necessary, medical treatment. The organization also fears that any eventual trials of the detainees will also be grossly unfair.

Background Information

In July 1990 the Serbian parliament suspended the Kosovo parliament and government after ethnic Albanian deputies of the Kosovo parliament declared Kosovo independent of the Republic of Serbia. Since then, the majority of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province (where they constitute around 90 per cent of the population) refuse to recognize Serbia's authority in the province and a number of "parallel" institutions have been established by ethnic Albanians.

The leaders of the main ethnic Albanian parties in Kosovo province have advocated the province's secession by peaceful means only. However since 1996 violent attacks on Serbian police and Serbs or Albanians associated with the authorities have occurred with increasing frequency. Responsibility for many of these incidents has been claimed by the clandestine organization, the UCK. Since certain clashes with the UCK in late November 1997 police have reportedly restricted their movements in certain parts of the province, which have been dubbed the "liberated territory" by ethnic Albanians. The new clashes may herald police operations to reestablish their control in these areas.

Source: *Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom*

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Despotovic, Ruza

Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: dinsdag 18 januari 2000 0:13
Aan: Ruza Despotovic
Onderwerp: German weekly on negative results of NATO aggression on Yugoslavia (<http://www>

www.serbia-info.com/news

www.serbia-info.com/news/index.html

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/index.html>>

CIVIL ISSUES <<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/civil/index.html>>

POLITICS <<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/politics/index.html>>

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CULTURE AND RELIGION <<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/culture/index.html>>

SPORT <<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/sport/index.html>>

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/blue-bottom.gif>>

Guide through Kosovo and Metohia <<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/kosovo/documents/index.html>>

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/1t.gif>> <<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/1t.gif>>

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/header.gif>>

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/news/kosovo/index.html>>

<<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/1t.gif>>

German weekly on negative results of NATO aggression on Yugoslavia

January 17, 2000

NATO's <<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/v0104-015.jpg>>

NATO's "help"

Bonn, January 17th - "The life of the majority of the people living in the Balkans has dramatically deteriorated compared to the situation before the NATO attack, and there is the threat of new conflicts ... NATO has destroyed far less firepower of the Yugoslav Army than it initially claimed, while the unexploded cluster bombs will continue to threaten the lives of the civilians for a long time ... The war was launched allegedly to prevent expulsions and murders, but today expulsion and murders, this time of Serb civilians, are rampant in Kosovo and Metohija. The province is now headed by irresponsible fanatics whose greater Albanian dreams threaten to destabilize the entire region", reported the Hamburg weekly "Der Spiegel".

The weekly also cited the Spanish forensics expert Emilio Peres Pujol, who was sent to Kosovo-Metohija by the Hague Tribunal, saying that the Serbian police and Yugoslav Army operations in Serbia's southern province killed 2,500 ethnic Albanians at the most, despite the NATO stating of much bigger figures in an attempt to justify the aggression.

"The exaggerations were reaching such proportions that the British Foreign Minister, Robin Cook, compared Kosovo to the holocaust over Jews in the World War II", reported Spiegel.

The Hamburg weekly specially criticizes the excluding of the UN from the decision-making mechanism, standing in gross violation of international law, thus showing, according to it, "the

selectivity of the West" in regard to human rights. "The moral principles can not be directed towards only one region", reported the Spiegel, criticizing NATO for its hypocrisy concerning the "moral values" and human rights.

The Spiegel further stated that the US has practically led the war on its own, and that the Europeans played an inferior role. It was pointed to the US heedless choice of bombing targets, and stated that the radio and television stations could not have been "legitimate targets" and that the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was intentionally bombed.

The Spiegel also pointed to the NATO information war, for the Alliance propaganda in Brussels continually misinformed the journalists. The infamous Jamey Shea played a special part in this by referring to the western journalists as "NATO soldiers".

"This was the first media war. My mission was to supply the journalists with ammunition in order to justify our war actions and goals to the public", the Spiegel stated quoting Jamey Shea.

In Germany, the particularly vicious role in spreading of NATO propaganda was played by the Defense Minister, Rudolf Sapping, said the Spiegel, giving several actual examples of Sapping presenting data, later proven false.

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YUGOSLAV DAILY SURVEY

BELGRADE, 20 January 2000

No. 2845

SPECIAL ISSUE

OVERVIEW

of terrorist and other acts of violence and of certain violations of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) in the Province of Kosovo and Metohija since the arrival of KFOR and UNMIK in the period
from 12 June 1999 to 16 January 2000

1) Number of terrorist attacks: 3,688

Out of which 3,491 were committed against Serbs and Montenegrins, 87 against Albanians and 110 against Roma, Muslims, Goranci, Turks and members of other nationalities.

2) Number of abducted and missing persons: 688

Out of whom 630 were Serbs and Montenegrins, 36 Albanians and 22 members of other nationalities.

The fate of 581 persons is still unknown; 69 abducted persons were killed, 6 persons escaped while 32 were released.

3) Number of killed persons: 793

Out of whom 705 were Serbs and Montenegrins (22 massacred, 84 mutilated and 5 burned to death), 63 were Albanians and 25 members of other nationalities in Kosovo and Metohija.

4) The latest brutal crimes:

- Killing of the Skenderis, a four member Muslim family, in Prizren on 11 January 2000;

- Rape and killing of a 11 year old Albanian girl by a KFOR member near Vitina on 13 January 2000;

- Killing of three men of Serbian nationality who tried to return to their ancestors homes in the village of Pasjane on 16 January 2000.

5) Number of arbitrarily arrested persons by KFOR and UNMIK: 57

Arrested Serbs are detained in prisons in Priština, Prizren, Sojevo near Uroševac, Kosovska Mitrovica, Gnjilane, Lipljan and Kolokot Banja.

They have been arrested without any explanation or charges, only on the ground of information provided by the Albanians, most frequently by the members of the terrorist so-called "KLA".

6) Number of wounded persons: 611

7) Reported cases of physical assault, harassment and inflicted grave bodily harm: 416

8) Registered cases of serious threats: 356

9) Registered number of private dwellings broken into and forcibly taken occupancy of: 776 in Priština, over 200 in Kosovska Mitrovica, 190 in Gnjilane, 124 in Orahovac, a large number in Kosovo Polje and Lipjan.

10) Ethnic cleansing:

-In the campaign of ethnic cleansing following the deployment of KFOR and UNMIK over 350 000 Serbs, Montenegrins, Roma, Muslims, Goranci, Turks and other non-Albanians were expelled from Kosovo and Metohija, of whom 250 000 are Serbs.

- The following towns and villages are ethnically cleansed of Serbs, Roma, Muslims, Goranci and other non-Albanians:

Prizren, Djakovica, Pec, Srbica, Podujevo, Vucitrn, Glogovac, as well as the villages of the municipality of Istok; Dzakovo, Osojane, Tucepom, Kos, Zac, Belica, Krnjine, Maricane, Kacanik, Stimlje, Kmetovacka Vrbica, surroundings of Urosevac, Slivovo, Nedakovac, Nevoljane, Vrpica, Ljestar, Zegra (municipality of Gnjilane), Zitnje, Pozaranje, Grmovo, Drobos, Kabas and Binac (municipality of Vitina).

- The ethnic cleansing has been in its final stages in Priština (all the Serbian population has been driven out of the largest residential quarters: Ulpijana, Suncani Breg, Dardanija, Univerzitetsko Naselje), Gnjilane, Uroševac, Kosovska Mitrovica, Lipjan, Kosovo Polje where 80 per cent of the Serbian population has been expelled (houses burned down, looted, property seized from the owners of shops, Albanian terrorists maltreat and physically abuse Serbs, who refused to sell their houses and move out of Kosovo and Metohija, before the very eyes of the members of KFOR), Kosovska Kamenica, area of Vitina and Kosovsko Pomoravlje, as well as in the villages of Toplicane, Rujice, Magure, Slovinja, Staro Gracko.

Members of the terrorist "KLA" make special pressure on the region of Gora populated by indigenous ethnic group - Goranci who are not allowed to use their mother tongue, i.e. the Serbian language, in schools and in everyday life, in an attempt to misrepresent this ethnic group as members of Albanian nationality.

11) Destruction of churches, monasteries and cultural monuments:

About 80 churches, monasteries and other cultural monuments were burned down, demolished or seriously damaged including the following: the Church of Assumption of Our Lady in Dolac, monastery of St. Marco in Koriša from 1467, monastery of Prophets Kosmo and Damien in Zaocište from 14th century, the church in Kijev from the 14th century, the Holy Trinity monastery from the 14th century near Mušutište, monastery Devic built in 1440, church of St. Paraskeva in Drenik from the 16th century, church of St. Dimitri near Pec, the Orthodox church in Grmovo near Vitina, church of St. Ilija in cegra near Gnjilane, church of Holy Mother in Mušutište from 1315, church of St. Prophet Ilija in Bistricin, church of Apostles Peter and Paul in Suva Reka, monastery of St. Uroš in Nerodimlje, monastery of St. Archangel Gabriel from the 14th century in Binac, church of the Holy Virgin from the 16th century in Belo Polje, church of St. John the Baptist in Pecka Banja, churches in the villages of Naklo, Vucitrn, Petrovac, Uroševac, Podgorce, Djurakovac, Kruševo, Osojane, Samodreca, Dresna near Klina, Rekovac, Petric, monastery Dinac near Vitina, Holy Trinity Cathedral in Djakovica.

Clergy, monks were terrorized and prosecuted. More than 150 parish residences were destroyed or damaged. Over 10 000 icons and other sacred objects most of which are cultural monuments under the special protection of the State, were stolen or destroyed.

The following cultural monuments were damaged and demolished:

- monuments in memory of giants of Serbian and Montenegrin literature Vuk Karadacic and Petar Petrovic Njegoš in the very centre of Priština;
- monuments in memory of King Uroš in Uroševac and King Dušan in Prizren;
- memorial to Prince Lazar in Gnjilane and the memorial to Serbian rulers from the Nemanjic dynasty in the village of Gornje Nerodimlje.

12) Forced and illegal taking over of public institutions:

- Forcible and illegal take-overs of premises and buildings of post offices, banks, medical institutions, water and power supply systems, university, elementary and secondary schools, municipal and other authorities of local administration, local communes, buildings of the Ministry of the Interior and the Army of Yugoslavia, factories, enterprises, cooperatives, etc. in Priština (premises of the Clinical centre "Priština" and the health station, the Federal Customs Administration, the Public Housing Company, Institute for Urban Planning, the public enterprise "Vodovod", thermal power plant "Kosovo B", depots and petrol stations of "Jugopetrol", the share-holding companies "Kosmet-Priština", "Kosovo-Trans", the public enterprise "Energoinvest", the public enterprise "Autopriština", "Car shock absorbers plant", "Jugotrans", etc.) as well as in Prizren, Dragaš, Podujevo, Lipljan, Štrpci, Kosovska Mitrovica, Kosovo Polje (with the assistance of the members of KFOR), Djakovica (with the assistance of the members of KFOR).

- By forced and illegal taking over of public enterprises and institutions over 20 000 employed Serbs, Montenegrins, Roma, Muslims, Goranci, Turks and other non-Albanians were sacked and left with no means for living.

13) Registered armed attacks on villages: Slovinj, Maticane, Orahovac, Konjuh, Berivojce, Gornja Brnjica, the villages around Kosovska Kamenica: Grncar, Magila, Ajvalija, all the villages of the Istok-Klina region, Goracdevac near Pëc, Svinjare, Klokot, Novo Brdo, Zjum, Donja and Gornja Gušterica, Sušica, Badavac, Bresje, Vrbovac, Vitina, Cernice, (municipality of Gnjilane), Dobruša, Veliko Ropotovo (municipality of Kosovska Kamenica), Parteš (municipality of Gnjilane), Pasjane (municipality of Gnjilane), Lještar, Budriga, Dobrotin (municipality of Lipljan), Grncar, Binac, Ranilug, Silovo, Odovce, Rajanovce, Bosce, caglavica, Paravolo, Lebane, Gojbulja, in the following villages in the area of the municipality of Gora: Brodosvce, Belobrod, Kukavce - frequent attacks against the houses of Goranci, Muslims and Albanians who are loyal to the FR of Yugoslavia.

All this runs counter to the assertions about the disarming of the terrorist "KLA".

14) Sieges of towns and villages: Gadnje, Orahovac and Velika Hoca, Koretin, villages around Gnjilane, Prilucje, Gornja Srbica, Goracdevac. About 3 500 Serbs, residents of Orahovac, have been living for more than seven months since the deployment of KFOR and UNMIK in the only concentration camp in Europe after the Second World War - under the siege of the terrorist "KLA".

15) Armed threats against villages and terror committed on a daily basis against non-Albanian population: Ugljari, Srpski Babuš, Štimlje, Novo Selo, Bresje, the area around Kosovo Polje, Miloševo (against which the armed attack was carried out), village of Zebnice (dramatic humanitarian situation), majority of the mainly Croatian Catholic population who lived in the villages of Letinice, Vrnez, Vrnavo Kolo and Šašare have moved out, Drenovac (50 Serbs massacred), village of Cernice (series of incidents in which members of the US contingent of KFOR maltreated Serbs), Pocaranje, Gotovuša, Gatnje, Zubin Potok, Veliki Alaš, Vrelo and Radevo.

16) The looted Serb villages from which the residents were forced out: Mucicani, Slivovo, Orlovic, Dragaš, the area around Kosovo Polje, Sofalija, Livadice, Mirovac, Sirinicka cupa, Medregovac, Grace, Zocište, Sofalije, Dragoljevac, Tomance, Koretin, Leštar, Donja Šipašnica.

17) Serb neighbourhoods set on fire: Istok, Klina, Donja Lapaštica, Obrandca, Velika Reka, Perane, Lauše, the villages around Podujevo, Grace, Donja Dubica, Zocište, Orahovac, Naklo, Vitimirice, Belo Polje, Kojlovice, Aloš-Toplicane, Krajište, Rudnik, Donji Strmac, Goleš (municipality of Lipljan), Orlovic (municipality of Priština), Krpimej and Lauša (municipality of Podujevo), Mucicane (all Serbian houses burned down), Zaimovo, Denovac, Lesjane, Gornje and Donje Nerodimlje (all Serbian houses looted and then burned down), Sinaje (municipality of Istok), Belovac, Mali Talinovac, Ljubica, Klobuka (municipality of Kosovska Kamenica).

18) Registered number of homes burnt down: about 50 000 houses of Serbs, Roma, Muslims, Goranci and other non-Albanians were burned down in Kosovo and Metohija.

19) Registered number of illegal entries of foreign citizens into the territory of the FR of Yugoslavia (Kosovo and Metohija) without the necessary papers (visas and registration of stay with the competent authorities): 677

Over 200 000 foreigners have illegally entered into the Province with the consent of UNMIK and KFOR. The Government of the FR of Yugoslavia has officially requested on several occasions their expulsion. These requests have not been met although those persons are international terrorists, criminals, drug dealers, mafia members, women and children traders, organizers of bordellos and other forms of international crime.

20) Registered number of stolen vehicles: over 12 000 vehicles. As a result of open borders with Macedonia and Albania 250 000 vehicles were brought into Kosovo and Metohija without payment of customs duties and most of these vehicles were stolen.

21) Registered number of criminal acts of illicit trafficking and possession of goods without appropriate documents: 137

22) Registered number of cases of violation of the land security zone by KFOR: 236

**REVIEW
OF TERRORIST AND OTHER ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND OF CERTAIN VIOLATIONS OF
SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1244 (1999) IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVO AND
METOHIJA SINCE THE DEPLOYMENT OF KFOR AND UNMIK IN THE PERIOD FROM 12 JUNE
1999 TO 16 JANUARY 2000**

Terrorism of Albanian separatists

Total number of terrorist attacks	3,688
- Serbs and Montenegrins	3,491
- Albanians	87
- members of other nationalities	110
A. Killed	793
- Serbs and Montenegrins	705
- Albanians	63
- members of other nationalities	25
B. Wounded	611
- Serbs and Montenegrins	572
- Albanians	18
- members of other nationalities	21
C. Kidnapped and missing	688
- Serbs and Montenegrins	630
- Albanians	36
- members of other nationalities	22
Fate of kidnapped and missing	
1. Killed	69
2. Escaped	6
3. Unaccounted-for	581
4. Released	32

TARGETS

Jan 2000

januari 2000

special

KOSOVO



Nederlandse leger beschuldigd van schending mensenrechten in Orahovac

Nederlandse KFOR-soldaat op centrale plein van Orahovac
Foto: Hollandse Hoogte

In Orahovac, het door de Nederlandse troepen gecontroleerde deel van Kosovo, voltrekt zich een humanitair drama van ongehoorde omvang. Zo'n 3500 Serviërs en Roma zitten nog altijd opgesloten in een getto van de stad, zonder bescherming, voldoende voedsel, medicijnen en drinkwater. Vrouwen stellen alles in het werk om familieleden - en dan vooral de kinderen - uit de hel te bevrijden. Vergeefs, want de Nederlandse KFOR-militairen weigeren bewegingsvrijheid toe te staan en bescherming te bieden tegen lynchpartijen tijdens een vlucht. Terwijl Nederlandse politici en militairen hun uiterste best doen om het optreden van de Nederlandse troepen op te hemelen en de vaderlandse pers, met een enkele uitzondering daargelaten, zwijgt over wat daar werkelijk gebeurt, leeft de niet-Albanese bevolking in een situatie die door hen omschreven wordt als erger dan de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Natasja, Mirjana en Simka van het Humanitair Vrouwencomité voor Orahovac getuigen.

DOOR JARED ISRAEL

Ze herinnert het zich nog precies. De onmacht, de woede. De huilende kinderen die de vrouwen niet mochten meenemen naar Belgrado. "Het was afschuwelijk", vertelt Natasja, één van de Vrouwen van Orahovac. "Huilende kinderen. Wij, vrouwen, die probeerden de officieren van KFOR te overtuigen. De Nederlandse commandant die schreeuwde. 'Genoeg!' Alleen de vrouwen die gekomen waren mochten in de truck. De kinderen niet. Er werd gehuild. En die commandant schreeuwde maar: 'Genoeg!' Wij vertrokken dus. Maar de kinderen moesten terug naar het getto."

Natasja (27) komt uit Orahovac. In augustus ontsnapte ze uit het getto dat door de bezettingsmacht van de NAVO is gecreëerd. Ze schat dat zo'n duizend niet-Albanesen zijn gevlucht. Misschien meer. Dat betekent dat zo'n 3500 Serviërs en Roma onder erbarmelijke omstandigheden zijn achtergebleven.

Waarom bleef je aanvankelijk?

Natasja: "Door de bombardementen van de NAVO waren de telefoonlijnen en de Servische radio en televisie vanaf april afgesloten. We hadden

weinig informatie over wat er gaande was in het land. We hoorden dat na de ondertekening van het vredesakkoord in juni een enorme exodus van Serviërs uit Prizren en andere plaatsen op gang gekomen was. Maar wij konden dat niet controleren en vroegen ons af of het waar was. Ondertussen hielden de westerse media, zoals de Voice of America, ons constant voor dat onze veiligheid gegarandeerd zou zijn. Ze gebruikten slogans over een multi-etnische samenleving en hun democratie. Ze beloofden eerst het UÇK te ontwapenen en dan pas hun wetgeving in te voeren."

"De ochtend voordat KFOR arriveerde, was er een gesprek met de burgemeester en andere Serviërs. KFOR zei dat binnen ongeveer twee dagen het leven zou zijn genormaliseerd. De volgende dag brandden onze huizen."

Doodsbang

Met KFOR kwam het UÇK. "Dezelfde dag", vertelt Natasja. "Sommige burens verschenen in uniformen. We waren doodsbang. Opeens voelden wij ons niet meer veilig en dus vertrokken we naar het Servische gedeelte. Toen brandden al Servische huizen. KFOR deed niets. We protesteerden. Maar

ze zeiden dat ze niet genoeg mensen hadden. Versterkingen zouden snel komen, maar de situatie bleef zo een maand lang. Meer dan honderd huizen werden in brand gestoken. Ook van zigeuners. En ze roofden alles wat los en vast zat. De 25 mensen die in het gemengde deel waren gebleven, werden gekidnapt en ook hun huizen werden in brand gestoken."

Hoe is het leven in het getto?

Natasja: "Langzaam realiseerden wij ons dat we een grote fout hadden gemaakt door niet te vertrekken. Elke dag kwam KFOR met nieuwe verontschuldigheden waarom hun militairen ons niet konden beschermen."

"De controlepost van KFOR ligt vlakbij het getto. KFOR bewaakt de in- en uitgang van het Servische gebied. Ook zijn er barricades die door de Albanese zijn opgericht. Eerst stuit je op KFOR en dan op de Albanese barricades. KFOR heeft tenten ter beschikking gesteld voor de Albanese die de barricades bemannen. En ook legden zij bedrading aan zodat er stroom in de tenten is."

"Mijn ouders mogen op straat komen maar dat is

gevaarlijk. Twee mensen raakten gewond; alleen maar omdat zij hun huis hadden verlaten. Van de mensen die geprobeerd hebben te ontsnappen, is vaak niets meer gehoord."

"Er bestaat geen telefonische verbinding met Belgrado. Voedsel is van humanitaire hulpverlening afkomstig. In het begin stuurden we een Albanese kind om dingen voor ons te kopen. Maar het werd in elkaar geslagen en kreeg te horen: 'Niet meer doen!' "Het getto is vierhonderd bij vierhonderd meter groot. Water is er sporadisch aanwezig: eens per drie dagen, twee tot drie uur lang."

Het is de Serviërs en zigeuners niet toegestaan naar de markt of de kruidenier, vijftig meter verderop, te gaan. Natasja: "Het enige dat KFOR deed, was het organiseren van een lading brood voor het Servische deel. Daar waren ze heel trots op. We zien KFOR alleen op straat. Bijeenkomsten zijn er niet. De Albanese maken de dienst uit en hebben alles in bezit genomen."

Na de machtsovername waren er toch verslaggevers genoeg. Hadden zij geen belangstelling?

Natasja: "Ik heb twee keer met een journalist van

januari 2000

Reuter gesproken. De tweede keer vertelde hij dat het eerste interview gecensureerd was en geschrapt. Later waren er veel minder journalisten."

Koffers pakken

Voor de vlucht naar het getto hadden Natasja en de andere Serviërs en zigeuners in de stad geen tijd om hun koffers te pakken. "Zelfs niet onze persoonlijke documenten. Een lagere Duitse officier die vriendelijk en beleefd was, gaf ons een gewapende escorte om belangrijke eigendommen op te halen. Hij hielp zelfs met onze bagage. Snel daarna verdween hij. Wij hebben hem niet meer gezien."

Bij KFOR dienden dus ook eerlijke militairen.

"Ja, in een ander geval zag een Nederlandse soldaat een Albanees uit een brandend huis rennen. De soldaat wilde op de brandstichter schieten, maar zijn officier hield hem tegen. Ze maakten ruzie. Ook die soldaat hebben we niet meer gezien. Hun algemene aanpak was om de samenstelling van de patrouilles door Servisch gebied constant te wisselen. Blijkbaar met de bedoeling om te voorkomen dat de contacten met ons te hartelijk werden."

Natasja schetst een ontwikkeling waarin de KFOR-militairen snel cynisch werden. Als voorbeeld vertelt ze het verhaal van de Servische vrouw in het getto die in het ziekenhuis moest bevallen. KFOR begeleidde de zwangere vrouw naar Prizren waar de bevalling moeizaam verliep. Het personeel zei dat de vrouw tenminste 24 uur kon blijven, waarna de KFOR-militairen vertrokken. Meteen daarna werd de vrouw de gang op geschopt en bracht zij de nacht met haar baby door op een bankje. Toen KFOR de vrouw en haar baby kwam halen, beklagde zij zich. De Nederlandse officier antwoordde: 'Ze leeft toch, of niet? Waarom klagen?'

Kinderen

In augustus vluchtte Natasja naar Belgrado. Daar zette ze - samen met andere vrouwen met familie

Orahovac werkelijk als een concentratiekamp voelde. De Rus zei niet veel te weten over de Serviërs in Orahovac. Hij was pas anderhalve maand op zijn post. Wij vertelden hem dat er feitelijk sprake is van een humanitaire ramp. Hij sprak verontschuldigend."

De Russische assistent schreef alles op en stelde voor samen met de vrouwen terug te reizen naar Orahovac om het getto te bekijken. Mirjana: "Die dinsdagmiddag zou hij nog met Kouchner praten en daarna contact met ons opnemen. Wij gaven hem ons mobiele telefoonnummer en onze verblijfplaats. Hij hield woord, maar verontschuldigde zich omdat hij pas op vrijdag met ons naar Orahovac kon gaan. We gingen akkoord. De Joegoslavische vertegenwoordiger in Pristina zou onderhandelen over een gewapende escorte en medische verzorging."

De Vrouwen van Orahovac logeerden in het Servische 'Centrum voor Vrede en Tolerantie'. "De omstandigheden waren afschuwelijk", zegt Mirjana. "We hadden geen plek om te slapen. Geen water, stroom of voedsel. Het was echt moeilijk. Maar we dachten steeds aan onze families in Orahovac. Dus wachtten wij op vrijdag."

"Recht tegenover onze verblijfplaats waren winkeltjes met levensmiddelen. Maar we konden de straat niet oversteken en iets kopen omdat wij Serviërs zijn. Dus gaven wij soldaten geld om eten voor ons te kopen."

"Die vrijdag wachtten we - volgens afspraak - om half tien in de tuin op onze KFOR-escorte. Maar die kwam niet. Het werd tien uur, elf uur, half twaalf. We verloren alle hoop dat we nog om twaalf uur bij de Turkse controlepost konden te zijn. Volgens de Joegoslavische vertegenwoordiger leek het erop dat de Duitse KFOR-troepen in Orahovac een getekend document van het Internationale Rode Kruis wilden hebben voordat we zouden mogen vertrekken."

Cyrrillische letters

Het ging duidelijk mis. Dus schoten de vrouwen

vrachtwagen kon doorrijden naar het Servische gedeelte. De vrouwen mochten niet mee. De vrachtwagens zouden worden uitgeladen om te zien wat erin zat en dan zou de tweede vrachtwagen mogen komen."

"Ik was bang dat ik mijn familie helemaal niet te zien zou krijgen. Ik begon te huilen en smeekte één van de soldaten. Hij wuifde alleen maar met zijn hand. Terug naar de groep, terug naar de anderen."

"Plotseling zag ik een man, dichtbij, een burger, de Servische buurman van mijn ouders. Ik was verast. Zijn gezicht lijkt op dat van een Albanees. Kon hij hier zomaar rondlopen? Hij antwoordde dat de KFOR-militairen dachten dat hij een Albanees was.

we hier weg?'

Vragen, tranen en zorgen. Mijn moeder stond vijftien meter verderop maar kon niet bij mij komen omdat de menigte te groot was. Ze keken naar ons alsof we van een andere planeet kwamen. Wanhopig raakten ze ons aan en vroegen van alles. Deze mensen krijgen geen kranten, hebben geen televisie, de telefoons doen het niet."

"Ik smeekte de majoor om in elk geval mijn zus en kinderen eruit te laten. En hij zei: 'Nee! Alleen wie gekomen is, kan gaan'."

Koekjes

De controle van KFOR ervoer Simka als vernederend. "Onze identiteitspapieren werden gefotogra-



Amerikaanse B52 bommenwerper

Als een Albanees langs de controlepost wil, wordt hij niet aangehouden. Hij hoeft alleen maar te zwaaien en KFOR zwaait alleen maar terug. Alleen Serviërs worden tegengehouden. De Albanezen klappen en schreeuwen 'Nato! Nato!' De Nederlanders zijn erg aardig tegen de Albanezen."

"Ik vroeg de buurman niet aan mijn moeder te vertellen dat ik gekomen was. Ze heeft namelijk een hartkwaal. Stel dat het niet zou lukken om haar op te zoeken..."

"Mijn buurman luisterde niet. Hij vertelde het grote nieuws aan mijn familie. Plotseling zag ik mijn broer en zus op me afkomen. De Nederlandse soldaten formeerden zich onmiddellijk op een rij en plaatsten een prikkeldraadversperring. Dus het

feerd. Een vrouw fouilleerde me. Ik moest mijn armen optillen en mijn benen spreiden en ze betastte me overal alsof ze naar wapens zocht. Net als in de film. Vooraf voelde ik me rot, daarna afschuwelijk. Ik had koekjes en chocolaatjes voor de kinderen van mijn zus - de jongste is twee - meegenomen. Zij plette die en keerde alles binnenste buiten."

Simka mocht Orahovac niet langer twee en een half uur bezoeken. "Toen we klaarstonden voor vertrek kwamen van alle kanten jongens en meisjes met bagage bij ons staan. Maar de militairen zorgden ervoor dat we gescheiden werden. Wij, twee vrouwen uit Belgrado, dan een rij soldaten, dan het prikkeldraad, een andere rij soldaten aan de andere kant. Dan vormde de Duitse politie, met haar





UÇK bijeenkomst

in het getto van Orahovac - de Joegoslavische regering onder druk om in te grijpen. De regering sprak met KFOR af dat twee beveiligde konvoien met vrouwen naar Orahovac mochten komen.

Natasja hoorde bij de tweede groep. Na een kort bezoek moesten de vrouwen zich verzamelen bij de Servisch-orthodoxe kerk. KFOR zou ze daarna naar de controlepost begeleiden. "Na een hele nacht reizen en pesterijen ben ik drie uur bij mijn ouders op visite geweest. Ik moest langer bij de controlepost wachten dan ik bij mijn ouders kon zijn. Na het bezoek verzamelde zich een menigte bij de kerk. Vaders en moeders wilden hun kinderen aan ons meegeven. KFOR wilde geen scène en stond daarom toe dat de kinderen in de vrachtwagens stapten. Het was behoorlijk vol. Maar bij de controlepost werden wij vrouwen, van de kinderen gescheiden. Ze hadden een lijst gemaakt van de vrouwen die met het konvoi waren gekomen. Alleen die konden vertrekken. De kinderen moesten terug."

"De kinderen begonnen te huilen; ze wilden met ons mee. We probeerden KFOR er van te overtuigen om de kinderen te laten gaan. De militairen waren onverbiddelijk. Als er ook maar één persoon vertrok die niet met het konvoi gekomen was, dan zouden zij niet voor een escorte zorgen."

"Intussen verzamelde zich al een groep Albanezen om ons heen, kennelijk om te kijken wat er aan de hand was. Het werd donker. De truc was dat KFOR ons alleen maar naar de bus zou brengen en vanaf daar zou het volledig onveilig zijn. Het was afschuwelijk. Gehuil van kinderen en vrouwen. Een schreeuwende commandant. De kinderen moesten terug naar het getto."

Humanitaire ramp

De vrouwen gingen daarop naar Pristina. Net als Natasja zat Mirjana in de bus. Ook zij is lid van het Humanitair Vrouwencomité voor Orahovac. Een delegatie van zes vrouwen sprak in de hoofdstad van Kosovo met een Russische assistent van Bernard Kouchner, de chef van de VN-missie in de Servische provincie.

Mirjana: "We vertelden hem dat het getto van

een Britse KFOR-kapitein aan. De vrouwen riepen: 'Geef ons een escorte! Laten we nu gaan!'

Mirjana: "Die kapitein zullen we nu nog uit miljoenen NAVO-militairen herkennen. Hij ging naar het hoofdkwartier van KFOR en kwam terug. We konden de volgende dag met een escorte en een tolk vertrekken. Een arts mocht niet mee. Bovendien moesten we alle orders van de Duitse commandant in Orahovac strikt opvolgen."

"We gingen akkoord mits de voorwaarden in een document zouden worden vastgelegd. Maar de Britse kapitein weigerde. We eisten een geschreven stuk en legden uit dat er dan in elk geval iets op papier stond, mocht er onderweg iets met ons gebeuren. Je moet begrijpen dat we in een Servische bus reisden, met grote cyrillische letters erop. We waren bang dat KFOR ons zo aan ons lot kon overlaten en zich zou kunnen verschuilen onder het mom dat we op eigen houtje waren gaan rijden."

De vrouwen bleven nog een nacht in Pristina. Mirjana: "Toen duidelijk was dat onze onderhandelingen niets opleverden, zeiden we: oké, geef ons dan maar een escorte naar de provinciegrens. De kapitein was meteen akkoord. Binnen drie kwartier was de escorte geregeld om veilig naar Belgrado terug te keren."

"We zagen de verhalen over onze verdwijning al voor ons. De persverklaring over het verlangen van de Albanezen om wraak te nemen. Hoe buitengewoon betreurenswaardig het incident was geweest. Zo doorzichtig dat een kind het kon doorzien. We hadden gehoopt op onze reis een paar goede KFOR-militairen tegen te komen. Maar we hebben gemerkt dat die er niet zijn."

Hartkwaal

Simka, die al vele jaren in Belgrado woont, beleefde de reis met Natasja en Mirjana niet mee. Ze maakte deel uit van het eerste Joegoslavische konvoi naar het getto.

"Op deze reis - met drie vrachtwagens vol humanitaire hulpgoederen - waren we met maar twee vrouwen. Toen we bij de Nederlandse controlepost in Orahovac aankwamen, zei een officier dat één

de barricade. Mijn broer en zus huilden."

Ze huilt zelf ook nu ze het vertelt.

"Ik knielde en smeekte in het Engels. Dit zijn mijn broer en zus. Alstublieft, helpt u mij. En hij wuifde alleen met zijn hand en zei: 'Nein! Nein!'

Nein is toch geen Nederlands, of Engels?

Simka: "Ik dacht dat als ik hem in het Engels zou aanspreken, hij dan in het Engels zou antwoorden. Maar nee, hij zei: 'Nein! Nein!'"

Een Nederlander die Duits sprak?

"Ik snap het verschil."

Andere planeet

Even later kwam een Nederlandse majoor pools-hoogte nemen. Simka: "Hij had wat mededogen en zei dat mijn broer en zus erdoor mochten. Ik kon ze dus omarmen. Mijn broer laat nooit emoties zien. Ik heb hem op mijn vaders begrafenis niet

half zes vertrekken, maar het duurde tot half elf. Drie kinderen waren door de afzettingen geglijpt en in een jeep van een journalist geklommen. Die verslaggever, die met ons mee zou rijden, maakte ruzie met KFOR en eiste dat de meisjes mee mochten."

"Meer en meer mensen kwamen vanuit de Servische sector naar de controlepost. De journalist zei dat hij niet toe zou staan dat ook maar een van de meisjes uit de jeep zou worden gehaald. KFOR zou hem moeten neerschieten. Dus de majoor, die al die mensen zag, waarschijnlijk bang voor problemen, liet de jeep vertrekken. Met de drie meisjes."

"De majoor was erg boos op ons. We konden gaan, maar hij peperde ons in dat we de regels voor het bezoek niet hadden gerespecteerd!"

Waarom willen de Nederlandse militairen de kinderen in het getto houden?

Simka: "Later heb ik ook met die Russische



300.000 vluchtelingen door Albanees geweld. Servische vluchtlinge uit Kosovo

zien huilen. Maar toen hij mij omhelsde, huilde ook hij. Het was vreselijk."

"De anderen hoorden dat er iemand uit Belgrado was gekomen. Plotseling liepen ze allemaal naar de controlepost en dat was bepaald niet veilig. De majoor besloot daarom dat het beter was om ons in het getto te laten."

"Het is moeilijk in woorden te vatten wat toen gebeurde. Mensen stonden om ons heen. Ze vroegen: 'Wat gebeurt er? Zijn wij vergeten? Hoe komen

assistent van Kouchner gesproken. Hij vertelde me dat de Serviërs in Orahovac gegijzeld worden omdat de Albanezen een lijst met oorlogsmisdadigers hebben gegeven. Die zouden zich in het getto schuil houden. Maar, vroeg ik hem, hoe zit het dan met de kinderen? Waarom weigeren jullie al die maanden al om de kinderen te laten vertrekken?"

"Hij antwoordde dat hij dezelfde vraag ook aan Kouchner had voorgelegd. Hij keek er zo beteuterd bij dat ik bijna met hem te doen kreeg."

Uit Kosovo verdreven

Een samenvatting van het interview met Cedomir (Cedda) Princevic, hoofdarchivaris van Kosovo en leider van de Joodse Gemeenschap in Pristina, hoofdstad van de provincie Kosovo. Momenteel vluchteling in Belgrado. Jared Isael is de interviewer.

Jared: Waarom zijn jullie vertrokken?

Cedda: "Omdat een politieke overeenkomst een militaire oplossing werd. De bevolking stond onder druk. Er werd niet gevraagd van welke nationaliteit je bent, je werd onder druk gezet om de appartementen en de stad te verlaten. Zelfs al had ik een document waarin stond beschreven dat ik de leider van de Joodse gemeenschap van Pristina ben, in het Engels en ondertekend door Mr. Singer uit Belgrado, weigerden de officieren van KFOR het document te erkennen en werd ik een week in mijn eigen huis gevangen gehouden. Ik gaf het later aan een andere officier van KFOR en die zei "Ik heb andere dingen te doen". Met de hulp van Eliz Viza uit Israël en het hoofd van de Joodse gemeenschap in Skopje werd ik gered, per taxi met mijn vrouw naar Macedonië vervoerd en van daar naar Belgrado. De hele reddingsoperatie van mijn familie werd aan de Israëlische televisie gegeven. Alles bij elkaar waren er 40 mensen van Joodse origine in Kosovo. Zij zijn van gemengde huwelijken, Joods-Arabisch, Joods-Turks, en Joods-Servisch. Allen zijn bereid om naar Israël te gaan. Het is voor ons te laat om nog naar Kosovo terug te gaan. Ook al hebben wij de garantie van Thaci gekregen, die leider van het UÇK is, dat onze huizen met rust zouden worden gelaten, hebben wij informatie gekregen dat al onze appartementen en huizen volledig zijn leeggeroofd en vernield. Dat betekent dat het UÇK en Thaci de zaak niet onder controle hebben."

opzet door KFOR toegelaten?

Cedda: Niemand houdt ze tegen. En feitelijk verleend KFOR hen assistentie. KFOR is daar, zag alles, en liet ze hun gang gaan.

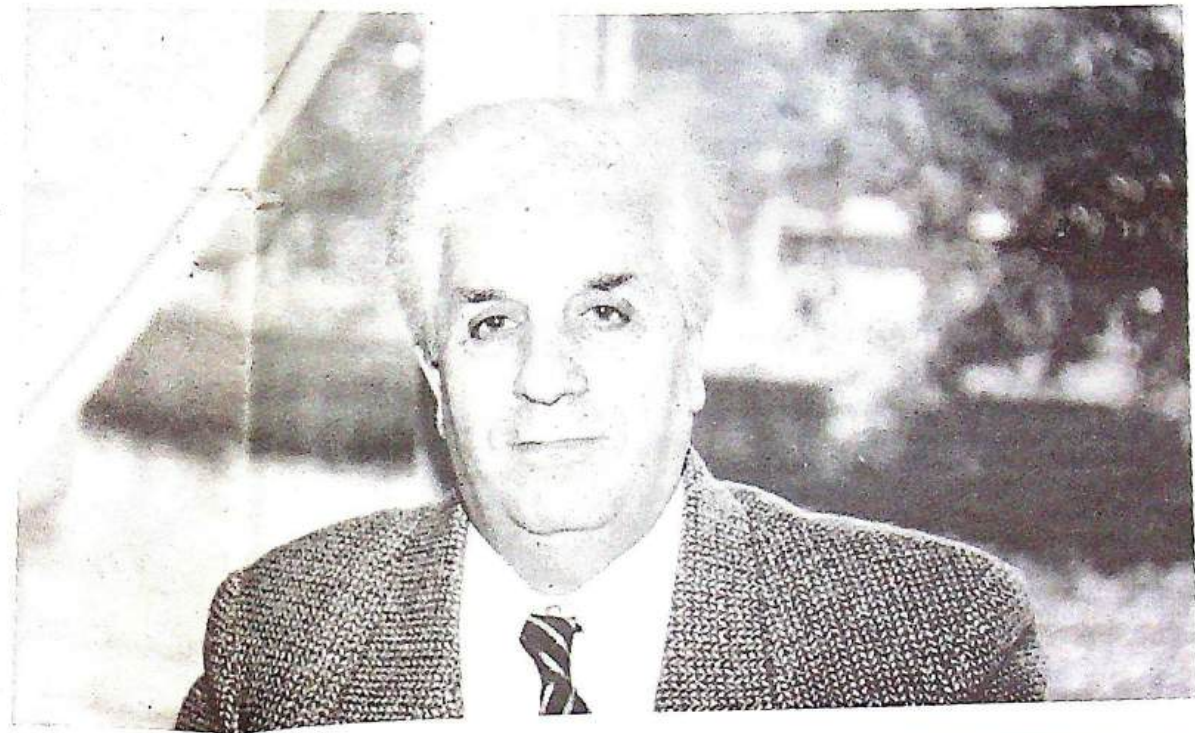
Jared: Heeft u geprobeerd om naar KFOR te gaan?

Cedda: KFOR was in mijn huis op het moment dat de meute kwam. Toen de Albanezen begonnen met het vernielen van de appartementen, belde iemand KFOR en een officier van KFOR kwam in het huis samen met zijn ploeg. Een hele groep ging de trappen op en af, 24 uur lang mensen die de trappen op en af lopen, lawaai maken, vernielen? Ze breken deuren open en gooien met traan-gas en op sommige plaatsen roofden ze.

Jared: Wacht even, u zegt dat de mannen van KFOR daarbij aanwezig waren? Heb je dat feitelijk met eigen ogen gezien?

Cedda: Ja. Ze reageerden helemaal niet. Ze beschermden niemand. Ze zeiden dat het een taak van de civiele autoriteiten was om iets aan deze situatie te doen. Het ging hen alleen om moorden. Maar die bestonden toen nog niet. Die waren er gewoonweg niet. In plaats van 'Europese democratie' is er nu een vorm van macht en - macht is niet het juiste woord. Joden hebben een woord dat pogrom wordt genoemd.

De bevolking verwachtte echte bescherming van KFOR en dat is de



Cedomir Princevic, leider van de Joodse gemeenschap in Kosovo, op bezoek bij centrum LINX Internationaal, oktober 1999

gekomen.

Jared: Sommigen zouden kunnen beweren dat, vanwege het feit dat het hier om luxe appartementen gaat, er slechts sprake was van een grootschalige roofpartij.

Cedda: Je kunt het geen roof noemen, omdat ze ons pakten en onze appartementen bezetten. Het is geen roof

de buurt rondhangen.

Jared: Verdwenen de Albanezen toen u KFOR er bijhaalde?

Cedda: Nee, ze bleven. Ze gingen niet weg. KFOR kwam en zij zeiden, de Albanezen zeiden, "we hebben geen dak boven ons hoofd vannacht" en KFOR zegt "OK, blijf maar bij de beheerder slapen."

ven, maar dan is tenminste wel de waarheid gesproken. Begrijpt u dat niet? En als er vreselijke dingen gebeurd zijn, zeg het - spreek alleen de waarheid.

Cedda: Goed dan. Er zijn vreselijke dingen gebeurd. Maar de Serviërs als mensen en als natie waren niet degenen die aan het begin van dit verhaal hebben vermoord. Maar er waren individuen die bepaalde dingen hebben gedaan die niet door de heugel kunnen. Maar dat

Cedda: Ik was ambtenaar, directeur van de archieven van Kosovo en Metohija. Daar is documentatie aanwezig die het verhaal van de Serviërs en Turken en Albanezen en Joden vertelt, van iedereen die in Kosovo heeft geleefd en welk systeem er bestond.

Jared: Bent u ooit geconfronteerd met antisemitisme van de zijde van de Serviërs?

Cedda: Nooit. En ook niet van de Albanezen. Ik was manager, voor zowel de Albanezen en Serviërs. Wij zijn niet uit Kosovo verdreven door Albanezen uit Pristina maar door Albanezen uit Albanië. Ze spreken een andere taal, een ander dialect. In heel Kosovo treedt hetzelfde verschijnsel op. Ik kan niet voor 100% beweren dat het alleen om Albanezen uit Albanië gaat. Maar ik heb geen enkele Albanese buurman wraak zien nemen.

De machten uit Albanië kwamen ons land binnen. Hun hoofddoel was om alle niet-Albanese bewoners te verwijderen. Dezelfde mensen die een paar jaar geleden in Albanië demonstreerden en dat hele land hebben geruïneerd - zijn nu in Kosovo. Ze kwamen naar ons huis en dreigden ons te vermoorden. Ze zouden ons afslachten. Ze hadden machinegeweren. Ze ontruimden het complete gebouw en het hele gebied met 30.000 inwoners. Zij ontruimden het volledig. Allemaal. Ze gingen van huis tot huis. Van gebouw tot gebouw. 35 leden van mijn familie zijn nu hier bij mij. Mijn moeder is ook hier. En een vrouw die 8 maanden zwanger is. 20 van ons hebben geen werk. Alles in Kosovo achter gelaten. 7 appartementen en 3 huizen die ons eigendom waren. Wat grond. En mijn hele leven. Ik kreeg geen tijd, ik was niet voorbereid op vertrek. Zelfs geen koffer om spullen in te pakken. Alleen de Talmud heb ik meegenomen.

Dit is een pogrom tegen de niet-Albanese bevolking in heel Kosovo: Djakovica, Pec, Kosovska, Mitrovica, heel Metohija. Metohija alsook Kosovo. Zij maken absoluut een etnisch gezuiverd Kosovo.

Jared: Zijn de Albanezen uit Albanië met

dat is wat ons het meest heeft verbaasd in plaats van de bevolking te beschermen staan ze toe te kijken wat er gebeurt alsof het irrelevant is. In juni en juli verlieten 300.000 mensen Kosovo: Serviërs, Turken, Gorani [Slavische moslims], zigeuners, dat zijn de Roma en ook mensen van Montenegro.

Ook Albanezen uit Kosovo werden lastig gevallen. Zij vielen diegenen aan die geen voorstander van hun separatistische beweging was. Elke Servische burger werd gestraft. Ongeacht tot welke partij hij behoorde, oppositie of regering, het maakt niet uit. Verschillende partijen hebben verschillende ideeën en andere religies. Zij hebben het plan van een Groter Albanië in Kosovo gerealiseerd. Van de Tweede Wereldoorlog, van het fascisme.

Jared: Werd aan iemand toegestaan om in het gebouw te blijven waar u leefde?

Cedda: Zover mijn kennis gaat, is niemand overgebleven. Elk verzet zou onherroepelijk de dood hebben betekend. Er hebben diverse moorden plaatsgevonden. Ik weet het niet zeker omdat de meeste zijn weggegaan. Zij die zich verzetten, zijn vermoord. Ook werden twee complete dorpen ontruimd. De inwoners vluchtten naar Servië.

Jared: Hoeveel aanvallers waren er?

Cedda: Het was een groot aantal. Zij liepen de hele dag heen en weer. Het is moeilijk te zeggen hoeveel het er waren. Het gebouw zelf heeft 20 ingangen en bestaat uit 11 verdiepingen. Het is een groot gebouw. Het hele gebied dat van 1990 tot 1995 is bebouwd, werd onder handen genomen. Hele luxe appartementen naar onze maatstaven. Nieuwe gebouwen met portalen, allerlei aanvullende faciliteiten. De hele nacht bonkten ze op alle deuren. Ze traptten de deuren in en gingen van appartement naar appartement. Zelfs Albanezen die in dezelfde gebouwen leefden, sloegen op de vlucht. Er woonden niet alleen Serviërs, het was een gemengd gezelschap. Dat is iets ongekennds in de hele geschiedenis van Kosovo. Omdat Kosovo multi-etnisch en multireligieus is en de mensen al 500 jaar samenleven, is dit niveau van haat niet eerder voor-

niet thuis is. Klopt dat? Dat is roof. Maar als je de deur van mijn woning intrapt, is dat roof? Nee, dat is complete anarchie. Iemand verschaft zich met geweld toegang, gooit je eruit en gaat er vervolgens zelf wonen? Niet voor een paar uur om koffie en whisky te drinken. En de eigendommen genieten generlei bescherming? Dat is bezetting van het land, inpikken van woonruimte, met geweld.

Jared: Er was een week dat u gevangene was in het appartement en niet weg kon. Was dat de week dat de bende rondloopte?

Cedda: Ja, de eerste week toen KFOR kwam, was ik in het appartement en durfde niet naar buiten vanwege het grote aantal Albanezen dat binnen kwam.

Jared: Op welk moment kwamen de bendes? Was het direct of pas na een aantal weken?

Cedda: Samen met hen. Met andere woorden, toen KFOR arriveerde, arriveerden ook de bendes. Ze vielen meteen aan. Toen de Russen in Pristina aankwamen, voor de Britten, bij het vliegveld, de mensen gingen ervan uit dat zij door hen beschermd zouden worden, maar dat was dus niet zo. Op precies de dag dat de Britten mijn deel van de stad binnen kwamen, begonnen de bendes diverse gebouwen aan te vallen. Het is een wijk in Pristina, het gedeelte dat 'Milana' wordt genoemd.

Jared: Beweert u dat de bendes fysiek op dezelfde plaats en ophetzelfde tijdstip arriveerden als de Engelse soldaten? De bendes reisden samen met Britse soldaten?

Cedda: Ja. Het antwoord is ja. Ja zij kwamen tegelijk. Ja, over de grens, de route, samen door de straten. Ja! Ze kwamen in verschillende groepen - niet tezamen hand in hand - Ze komen en gaan, ze zijn hier en daar - vaak zie je ze samen, maar ieder van hen van zijn eigen organisatie. Bijvoorbeeld: een bende gaat een gebouw binnen en de beheerder roept KFOR? KFOR arriveert en loopt om het gebouw heen en vertrekt vervolgens en de lieden blijven in

Jared: Dezelfde appartementen als van de mensen die zij eruit probeerden te gooien?

Cedda: Ja, ja. Dat is wat ze voorstelden. Dus de Albanezen en de Serviërs, wie er ook was, moesten in hetzelfde gebouw leven, en de bendes zeiden, als je het gebouw niet binnen twee à drie uur verlaat dan zullen we je vermoorden, afslachten.

Jared: Toen deze mensen uw woning betraden en u bedreigden, heeft u toen KFOR ingeschakeld?

Cedda: Ze waren reeds in het gebouw. Toen de Albanezen mijn woning betraden, was KFOR er al. Een van de burens, een arts, rende en riep KFOR soldaten om hulp en bescherming. Die vent, de soldaat stelde zich voor als majoor van het Britse leger. En toen ik mijn papieren liet zien, zei hij vergeet het maar, volgende keer. De papieren gaven aan dat ik de Voorzitter van de Joodse gemeenschap in Pristina ben. De soldaat wierp een snelle blik op de papieren en zei: "Volgende keer," alsof hij geen tijd had om zich met ons te bemoeien. "Stoor me nu niet."

Jared: Hebben zij iets gedaan?

Cedda: Als zij mij hadden geholpen, was ik dan nu hier geweest? Niet alleen ik ben slachtoffer, maar nog duizenden anderen. Mensen die 80 jaar oud zijn en van huis en haard zijn verdreven. Nog steeds gebeurt dit dagelijks. Het gaat nog steeds door.

Jared: De pers schreef dat Serviërs tijdens de bombardementen Albanezen aanvielen. Kunt u ons vertellen wat heeft u waargenomen?

Cedda: Waarom? Zelfs als ik zeg dat zoiets niet is gebeurd, niemand zal de Serviërs geloven. Zelfs als ik nee zeg, zelfs als een Jood uit Pristina zou zeggen dat de beschuldigingen niet kloppen, dan is dat erg moeilijk te geloven omdat hij redenen kan hebben om deze beweringen te doen, hij kan beschuldigd worden van -

Jared: Nou en? Dan geloven ze u toch niet! Laat ze geloven wat ze willen gelo-

wordt door anderen aangegepen, overdreven. Men probeert ons als de zwarte schapen neer te zetten en - kijk, de Servische bevolking had geen problemen met de etnische Albanezen en net als dat zij Albanezen hebben gered, zo hebben Albanezen Serviërs gered, vooral tegen het eind van de oorlog. Maar toen KFOR arriveerde en de grenzen met Macedonië en Albanië werden geopend, kwamen er een heleboel buitenlandse Albanezen en dat eindigde in een bende, moorden. Dus wat ik zeg is dat er ten tijde van de bombardementen door de lokale bevolking niet is vermoord. De Serviërs hebben de Albanezen beschermd tegen de paramilitaire troepen.

Jared: Niet tegen het Joegoslavische leger? Hoefden zij niet te worden verdeeld tegen het Joegoslavische leger?

Cedda: Nooit tegen het leger, en ook niet de politie en ook niet tegen gewone Serviërs. Nee. Maar met de terugtrekking van het leger kwamen er paramilitaire groepen van beide zijden - en toen werd het een puinhoop.

Jared: Maar tijdens de bombardementen?

Cedda: Toen was er helemaal geen sprake van moordpartijen. Bijvoorbeeld, in Pristina zaten wij gezamenlijk met Albanezen in de schuilkelder.

Jared: Vanwege de bommen?

Cedda: Van de NAVO. Wij allen, zigeuners, dat wil zeggen de Roma, Serviërs, Turken, Albanezen, Joden, bewoners van hetzelfde gebouw. Samen. Wij waren samen.

Jared: U zei dat ook veel Albanezen op de vlucht sloegen voor het UÇK, de bendes. Weet u hoeveel?

Cedda: Tienduizenden. 15.000 zijn naar de Vojvodina gegaan, 30.000 naar Belgrado, en nog vele anderen.

(Bron: <http://www.emperors-clothes.com>)

januari 2000

ADVERTENTIE

Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië

Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië zet zich in om culturele, politieke en vriendschappelijke banden tussen Nederland en Joegoslavië te bevorderen.

Ook steunt Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië met financiële acties slachtoffers van de recente NAVO-agressie, waaronder een kinderziekenhuis in Belgrado.

Met publicaties probeert Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië informatie over de situatie in Joegoslavië te verspreiden.

Een donatie aan Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië zal worden gebruikt om deze doelstellingen te bereiken. Het gironummer is 82 42 822 ten name van Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië, Amsterdam.

Voor inlichtingen kunt u contact opnemen met
Stichting Nederland Joegoslavië,
Sloterkade 20, 1058 HE Amsterdam
Telefoon 020-615 11 22
(op werkdagen tussen 13.00 en 17.00 uur)

De economische belangen van de bezetters

In toenemende mate wordt duidelijk dat de belangrijkste NAVO-landen de stationering van de internationale vrede troepen in Kosovo and Metohija vooral baseren op economische belangen. Onderzoek, uitgevoerd door persbureau Tanjug, onderstreept dit.

Fransen

De noordelijke sector, het district Kosovska Mitrovica, wordt door Franse troepen gecontroleerd. Vijf jaar voor de NAVO-agressie tegen Joegoslavië heeft Frankrijk grote interesse getoond voor de non-ferro metallurgische component

olie-industrie NIS.

Italianen

Italiaanse troepen bezetten het district rondom Pec, het westen van Kosovo and Metohija. Onmiddellijk werd de Zastava Iveco fabriek bezet waarmee FIAT uit Italië al jaren een samenwerkingsverband heeft. Waarnemers denken dat de Italianen deze sector ook wilden hebben vanwege de relatieve nabijheid van de Adriatische Zee en de Italiaanse grens.

Duitsers

Duitsland heeft de militaire controle

Waar zijn de 'Killing Fields' van Kosovo?

Evenals bij de kwestie Srebrenica, doemt ook nu weer de vraag op naar de in grote getale aangekondigde vondsten van massagraven. Zijn deze ontsproten aan de breinen van de NAVO-deskundigen of bestaan ze echt. Zo ja, overleg dan de bewijzen, zodat tenminste met zekerheid kan worden gesteld dat de NAVO-bombardementen inderdaad een humanitaire inslag hebben gehad.

Volgens de bevindingen van het Joegoslavië Tribunaal in Den Haag, waren in de Trepca-mijnen (Kosovo) 700 lijken van etnische Albanese verborgen. Een recent onderzoek door hetzelfde tribunaal in oktober 1999 heeft echter uitgewezen dat daarvan geen spoor te vinden was.

Na vier maanden van forensische onderzoeken door internationale experts dient een legitieme vraag te zijn: hoeveel lichamen van door Serviërs vermoorde Albanese zijn er gevonden? Deze slachtoffers van etnische zuiveringen waren immers de oorzaak van de oorlog?

Op 22 maart 1999 (één dag voor de luchtaanvallen) zei Tony Blair: "Wij moeten handelen om duizenden onschuldige mannen, vrouwen en kinderen te redden van een humanitaire catastrofe, van dood, barbarij en etnische zuiveringen door een brute dictatuur". De volgende dag, toen de oorlog begon, verklaarde de president van de Verenigde Staten, Bill Clinton: "Wat wij proberen te beperken, is zijn (Milosevic) mogelijkheid om een militaire overwinning te behalen waardoor hij kan voortgaan met etnische zuiveringen en het afslachten van onschuldige mensen. Wij zullen alles doen wat in ons vermogen ligt om hem tot een vredesakkoord te dwingen".

Toen de oorlog al een paar dagen aan de gang was verklaarde de woordvoerder

Op 2 augustus werd het aantal met duizend slachtoffers verhoogd door de commandant van de Verenigde Naties te Kosovo, Bernard Kouchner. Volgens zijn zeggen waren al elfduizend lichamen gevonden. De gegevens waren hem verstrekt door ICTY, zo zei Kouchner. ICTY ontkende echter dergelijke informatie te hebben verstrekt. Uiteindelijk hield men officieel vast aan tienduizend etnisch-Albanese slachtoffers, gevallen door Servische moordenaarshanden.

Langzamerhand blijkt dat er voor deze cijfers geen bewijsgronden zijn. Massamoorden en massagraven zijn moeilijk te verbergen. Men hoeft alleen maar te denken aan Nazi-Duitsland, Cambodja of Rwanda om te weten dat massamoord zijn sporen nalaat. Bovendien schijnt niemand echt zijn best te doen om echte bewijzen boven tafel te brengen. Van de acht in Kosovo aanwezige mensenrechtenorganisaties is er niet een daadwerkelijk belast de lijken van de slachtoffers te ontdekken en indien ontdekt, de doodsoorzaken vast te stellen. Uitgebreid onderzoek in de Trepca-mijnen (bij Mitrovica) heeft voorsnog niets opgeleverd. Volgens de laatste rapporten zijn in graven ongeveer honderd lichamen ontdekt.

Op dit moment zijn nog steeds forensische teams uit verschillende landen in Kosovo op zoek. De teams zijn ingezet door de volgende 15 landen: Oostenrijk, België, Canada, Denemarken, Finland, Frankrijk, Duitsland, IJsland,

aanwezig is.

4. De lichamen worden opgegraven voor autopsie.
5. De bevindingen worden naar Den Haag gerapporteerd.

'Bijproduct' van het onderzoek zijn de aantallen opgegraven lijken.

Een paar voorbeelden uit de praktijk De FBI heeft 124 lichamen gevonden in de Britse sector. De leeftijd ligt tussen 4 en 94 jaar. De meeste blijken te zijn gestorven in maart en april. Tijdens twee missies heeft de FBI "dertig begraafplaatsen ontdekt met bijna 200 lichamen".

Het Spaanse team heeft 187 lichamen gevonden. Geen massagraven. NAVO-satellietfoto's van vermeende massagraven bleken omgeploegde akkers te zijn. Inlichtingen aan KFOR over massagraven zijn voornamelijk afkomstig van het UÇK en blijken op zijn zachtst gezegd voor nuancering vatbaar.

Het onderzoek naar de slachtoffers is niet slechts een morbide exercitie, maar kan ook grote politieke gevolgen hebben. Het kan Europese regeringen zoals de Duitse en Italiaanse, doen wankelen. Als zou blijken dat de NAVO heeft gelogen over Servische wrede daden, dan is elke rechtvaardiging voor het bombarderen van Joegoslavië een farce! Eén ding kan al wel worden gezegd: het aantal doden dat door Servisch geweld zou

seera in de...
Glogovac, welke zij nu controleert.
Franse firma's hadden reeds aanbetalingen gedaan voor importen van zink en het produceren van zink in Trepca.

Britten

Britse interesse voor de thermo-elektrische energiecentrales is de reden om het centrale deel van Kosovo and Metohija te bezetten. De haast waarmee de controle over de centrales werd overgenomen, is evident. Net als het wegsturen van Servische werknemers. Voorheen, toen privatiseringen in Servië werden aangekondigd, hebben de Britse firma's British Power, Bankers' Trust en Nat West zeer veel interesse getoond voor de stroomopwekkingsindustrie van Obilic en de fabrieken van de Servische

met het Duitse Komintern. Ze hadden al haar installaties en productietechnologie voor het produceren van banden en V-snaren verkregen via de Tsjechische firma Matador. Duits kapitaal financiert 60 procent van Matador. De Duitsers hebben deze sector waarschijnlijk ook gekozen vanwege de topkwaliteit wijnen van Metohija. Ruim 40 miljoen liter topkwaliteit wijn, geproduceerd met de beste ecologische technieken uit Duitsland, werden in de kelders van Mala Krusa, Metohijavino in Suva Reka, en Orvino te Djakovica, aangetroffen na de terugtrekking van het Joegoslavische leger. Voor het verbreken van de Duits-Joegoslavische handelsbetrekkingen heeft de Duitse firma Racke jaarlijks 25 miljoen liter Metohijawijnen gekocht.

ringen door de Serviërs inderdaad hadden plaatsgevonden, omdat het duidelijk was dat misdaden tegen de mensheid waren begaan. Net na de oorlog in juni, raketde Clinton het wereldgeweten weer op door te verklaren: "de NAVO heeft zojuist systematische pogingen tot etnische zuiveringen en volkerenmoord gestopt".

Experts namen alvast een voorschot op de forensische onderzoeken door te verklaren dat "de Serviërs tijdens hun campagne van etnische zuiveringen ongeveer 2.500 Kosovaarse Albanesez hadden geslachttofferd". Volgens het Britse ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken ging het zelfs om "tienduizend mensen die in 100 bloedbaden zijn vermoord".

Zweden, Zwitserland, Groot-Brittannië, en de Verenigde Staten. De Verenigde Staten hebben het omvangrijkste team gestuurd van 62 deelnemers. België, Duitsland en Groot-Brittannië ieder twintig en de meeste andere landen tien. Er zijn dus ruim 200 onderzoekers in Kosovo. Tot nu toe hebben deze "tussen de 150 en 400 suspected sites" onderzocht. Zij gaan naar de volgende methode te werk:

1. KFOR-troepen bevestigen het bestaan van een verdachte plek.
2. Het Tribunaal geeft vervolgens opdracht aan de experts deze plek te onderzoeken.
3. Een graf wordt als massagraf geïdentificeerd indien er meer dan één lichaam

(Bron: Stratfor)

De Nederlandse commandant in Orahovac, luitenant-kolonel Van Loon, toonde zich in het dagblad Trouw tevreden over de prestaties van KFOR in de stad. De Vrouwen van Orahovac reageren op enkele citaten van de officier.

"Met KFOR is het elke dag slechter dan de dag ervoor"

"Als het voor Albanesez en Serviërs ergens in Kosovo weer mogelijk wordt samen te leven, dan is het in Orahovac."

Simka: "Er leefden ooit 4200 Serviërs in Orahovac. Nu vragen 2400 van hen wanhopig om evacuatie. Het geeft aan wat voor leven er vandaag de dag mogelijk is."

Mirjana: "Het was tot de komst van KFOR mogelijk. Vanaf nu niet meer."

Natasja: "Onder de huidige omstandigheden is dat niet mogelijk. Ze houden ons opgesloten in een getto. Dat is geen samenleven van Serviërs en Albanesez."

"Sommige Serviërs bellen weer met hun Albanese burens, bijvoorbeeld met de vraag of iemand soms een mijn op hun erf heeft gelegd."

Simka: "Daar weet ik niets van. Ik zie het ook niet als een stap in de goede

richting van een beter contact met de burens als een Serviër alleen maar informeert naar hoe het met zijn huis gaat."

Natasja: "Ik heb zelf gesproken met de man die mijn huis heeft ingenomen. Hij gebruikt al mijn spulletjes die waren achtergebleven. Deze Albanesez vertelde me dat het UCK hem het huis heeft toegewezen - inclusief de inboedel."

"Ze zitten in een getto, dat ga ik niet bestrijden. Wij bewaken de inwoners, dat is correct."

Mirjana: "Is het normaal dat aan het begin van de 21ste eeuw mensen in een getto worden vastgehouden? Hitler deed hetzelfde. Zijn opvolgers doen nu in Kosovo hetzelfde."

Natasja: "Onder de Serviërs zijn geen oorlogsmisdadigers. Zou het niet logisch zijn dat eventuele criminelen onder de Serviërs als eerste zouden proberen te vluchten? En waarom houden

ze de kinderen vast? Zijn dat ook potentiële oorlogsmisdadigers?"

"Toch gaan er regelmatig kleine groepjes naar Servië voor de uitbetaling van salarissen en laatst bijvoorbeeld om nieuwe schoolboeken te halen. Dan leveren wij begeleiding en halen ze een week later weer op."

Simka: "Dit citaat toont een gruwelijkheid die geen grazen kent. Het is het toppunt van cynisme dat door een normaal denkend mens niet kan worden begrepen. Moeten de burgers van Orahovac dankbaar zijn omdat enkelen hun salarissen nog ophalen? Geld waarvoor ze niets kunnen kopen omdat er in Orahovac geen plek is waar Serviërs inkopen kunnen doen. Als KFOR in staat is sprookes te produceren dan zou zij een school voor de Serviërs kunnen oprichten, maar deze mensen die in een gebied van 400 bij 400 meter

wonen, moeten zelfs de meest elementaire levensbehoeften ontberen. Hoe kan men zich in die situatie druk maken om school?"

Mirjana: "Volgens mij is de school gesloten voor Serviërs uit Orahovac. Dit is pure fictie."

"Onder de Serviërs zitten nog wel degelijk extremisten. Sommigen belden Albanesez op met de mededeling: 'Wacht maar tot de Russen komen. Dan zullen we jullie wel krijgen'. Erg onhandig."

Simka: "Op dit citaat geef ik geen commentaar. Zelfs een kind gelooft zo iets niet."

Mirjana: "Dat is een verzinsel met de bedoeling de Serviërs zwart te maken. De Serviërs durven niet over de drempels van hun huizen te stappen. Laat staan de Albanesez te bedreigen. Ze zouden direct worden vermoord. De

Serviërs leven in angst voor de Albanesez terreur."

Natasja: "Precies omgekeerd: het zijn de Albanesez die de Serviërs bellen met de mededeling dat ze allemaal afgeslacht worden. Zij zeggen dat geen van hen Orahovac levend mag verlaten. De Serviërs zullen daar sterven, in Orahovac."

"Het is heel bijzonder wat de jongens en meisjes hier voor elkaar hebben gekregen. Ze hebben zich te pletter gewerkt en een goed product neergezet."

Simka: "Tijdens hun mandaat is een groot aantal Serviërs gekidnapt en vermoord. Ongeveer 136 Servische huizen zijn tot de grond afgebrand, negen Serviërs werden gearresteerd en 1200 wisten te ontsnappen."

Natasja: "Met hen was het elke dag slechter dan de dag ervoor."

Despotovic, Ruza

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NATO Excused Mass
Murder Of Civilians
By Using
Speeded-Up Film
1-6-00

BERLIN (AFP) - Videotape shown by NATO to explain the killing of at least 14 civilians aboard a train on a bridge in Serbia last April was shown at triple its real speed, the German daily Frankfurter Rundschau reports in its Thursday edition.

The alliance had sought to excuse the killing of the civilians by saying the train had been traveling too fast for the trajectory of the missiles to have been changed in time.

NATO warplanes fired two missiles at the 50 metre (yard)-long bridge over the Juzna Morava River at Grdelica Klisura, some 300 kilometers (180 miles) south of Belgrade on April 12 during its campaign to force Belgrade's troops to leave Kosovo.

NATO's supreme commander in Europe, US General Wesley Clark, shortly afterwards showed two videotapes of the train appearing to be traveling fast on the bridge, and said it had then been impossible to alter the missiles' trajectories.

The Frankfurt newspaper said the two videotapes were both shown at three times normal speed.

