

BACKGROUND

CANADA'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Canada is participating fully in international efforts, including those of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), to promote a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. In September 1991, Prime Minister Mulroney led the call for the UN Security Council to deal with this issue. Last August, in London, and again in December, in Geneva, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, participated in the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, co-chaired by the UN and the European Community. Canada has been an active supporter of the Conference efforts to seek an early political settlement to the crisis and to provide relief to its victims.

Peacekeeping

Some 1 200 Canadian troops and 45 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) monitors have been deployed since April 1992, with the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR). One of the largest contributions to the international force, the Canadian contingent is based in Daruvar, Croatia. In June 1992, in response to a UN request, the contingent was sent to Sarajevo to reopen and to maintain security at the airport. Its presence there made possible the airlift of relief supplies for the population of Sarajevo and other Bosnian cities. In early August, the Canadian troops resumed their duties in Croatia.

An additional contingent of 1 200 Canadian troops was sent in support of the UN Security Council Resolutions that provide for the military protection of relief convoys in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On December 23, 1992, the UN Secretary-General informed the government that the deployment of this second Canadian peacekeeping battalion to Banja Luka was not possible. In February, 1993, Canada agreed to a request by the UN to deploy this battalion to central Bosnia to support the delivery of humanitarian assistance in that area and in the east. The troops have arrived in the area and are starting their humanitarian tasks. Canada also provided a small contingent of 180 troops for an interim deployment in January/February 1993, into the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, with a preventive mandate of monitoring any development in the border area with Serbia.