

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires
extérieures

92/36

AS DELIVERED

AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
TO THE
LONDON PEACE CONFERENCE ON THE
FORMER SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

LONDON, England
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Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada

External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

Mr. Chairman:

As you have underlined, this Conference faces a daunting challenge and we all must be determined to succeed, despite the thread of pessimism that runs through all discussions of this topic. What are our goals? I don't think that anyone expects us to resolve the crisis in two days. We pray for -- and work for -- a durable cease-fire. That may be unrealistic this week, but what we can achieve, with determination and political will, is the intensification of a peace process with a real chance of success.

Leaders in the former Yugoslavia have not responded to the efforts of regional organizations to help resolve the crisis. We are here, therefore, in a context which includes the broader international community and reflects its determination to see this crisis ended.

Canada, among others, has tried to make a meaningful contribution to resolving the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, through peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and monitoring missions. But, as with other members of this Conference, Canada has been horrified and frustrated by the failure of the parties, particularly but not exclusively Serbians, to stop the senseless killing.

Our citizens are angry. They are outraged by the acts of barbarism. They are offended by the farce of endless cease-fires; of agreements cynically reached and violated; of promises made and broken. Their hearts go out to the civilians directly affected; their disgust with leadership that allows this to continue grows daily.

Representatives here, today, are charged with a heavy responsibility. Time has run out. This may be the last chance to avoid a disaster of even more tragic dimensions. There is no room in this conference for those who are not prepared to participate in good faith and who are not motivated by a sincere desire to bring this tragedy to an end.

There can be no possibility of success unless each of us shares sincerely the objectives of this meeting. We all must be prepared to make it work.

We must stop the killing. Already, too many lives have been lost, too many homes shattered, too many people put to flight. In human terms, the costs have been unspeakable. The warring parties themselves must agree to lay down their arms. The responsibility for ensuring that this happens rests directly with the political and military leaders of communities in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia. There must be a general cease-fire.

We are all painfully aware that previous cease-fires have failed to hold. While leaders meet and reach agreement, the killing continues and the hideous process of "ethnic cleansing" goes on. This is dreadfully wrong.

We have before us an essential and well thought-out set of principles to form the basis of a negotiated settlement. We must adopt this here in London and see that all parties concerned abide by it. Agreement to these principles is essential to making progress; I think it crucial that the principles emphasize the dreadful issues of detention camps, forcible expulsion of civilian populations and the deliberate interference with the delivery of humanitarian aid.

There can be no exception to these principles. If armed bands on any side are led by local warlords not answerable to anyone, then surely all delegates to this Conference must brand them as outlaws. I choose this word carefully, and I mean it in its most literal sense. These groups would be declared outside the law. Accordingly, they would not receive support or protection from any of the states or leaders represented at this Conference, and they would be answerable before the appropriate judicial tribunals including, possibly, war crimes tribunals -- a proposal we believe should be considered by this Conference.

Genuine direct negotiations, as opposed to rhetorical battering among all parties, must begin. The existence of extremists on all sides cannot be used as an excuse to prevaricate. The parties must come together, mindful that Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) principles are fundamental to this process.

There is surely no reason why differences, deep as they may be, cannot be resolved through peaceful negotiations rather than bloody violence. There is nothing mysterious about ending the killing: the only way to stop is to stop. The role of the international community in this Conference has to be that of the honest broker. The international community must be prepared to accept its responsibility to see that a just and fair-minded peace is achieved. We need imagination, flexibility and determination to end the suffering.

This Conference and the negotiations it will launch have another equally important purpose -- to provide a framework within which all the republics of the former Yugoslavia can settle their differences and work out their long-term future together. Here again, the international community has a vital role. But our presence as an international community, our willingness to assist, does not let the peoples and governments of the former Yugoslavia off the hook. They themselves must find new ways to live together. Think ahead to when today's children in the region, physically and emotionally scarred by war and hatred, are grown up; they will have to live in the future as neighbours. Geography will see to that. The sooner this reality is faced, the better.

We are concerned that tension in Kosovo does not lead to another tragic outbreak of fighting. It is not good enough for the Serbian authorities to say this is an internal matter. Human rights and human dignity are not internal matters. We must

address this issue here this week. If there is any place in Europe that is ripe for preventive diplomacy, Kosovo surely is.

The principle of human rights is also still at issue in the Krajinas. Tenuous progress is being made. To advance further, the government in Zagreb must make greater efforts to give the residents of Krajina the sense of security they need. Serbs there must, for their part, accept that Krajina is and will remain part of Croatia.

We in the international community have stressed the need to bring humanitarian relief to the people of Sarajevo and other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have taken active measures with the help of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), to get supplies in to those who most need them. These efforts have been beset with difficulties.

Two weeks ago the Security Council reaffirmed the determination of the international community to make deliveries possible. Surely compassion in among even the most black-hearted dictates that Resolution 770 must be implemented fully.

Canada believes this can best be accomplished by enlarging the mandate and size of UNPROFOR. Peacekeeping will have to become more active, more dynamic. The people of Sarajevo are not alone in their needs; there are many others and we must help them, too.

The Canadian Government is ready to make further efforts in support of this essential humanitarian work, and has decided to make available to the United Nations 1,200 more Canadian troops for this purpose. We welcome the commitments of others to this common effort. We remind the representatives of all parties in Bosnia of their obligation to facilitate, not to impede, deliveries of food and medicine to civilians whatever their ethnic group. It is totally unacceptable and loathsome that aid convoys are fired upon or mined.

If the fighting is not stopped immediately, the Security Council must consider a resolution authorizing enforcement of the sanctions imposed in Resolution 757 and the arms embargo imposed by Resolution 713. This should apply to the Adriatic, the Danube and the land frontiers. This would be another important demonstration of international will and determination.

This Conference must stress that the international missions of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) and the CSCE be given immediate and complete access to all camps, wherever they are.

I denounce, in the strongest manner possible, the non co-operation of Bosnian Serbs at Manjaca in refusing to open the camp to inspection by the Special Rapporteur of the UNCHR, Mr. Mazowiecki. This is flagrant disrespect for the collective will of the international community, to say nothing of inhumane

and cruel treatment of inmates, innocent or otherwise. No wonder our publics have every reason to believe the worst concerning these camps.

The courage of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is exceptional, and it must be assisted in its vital work of ensuring humane treatment of all prisoners and captives.

Representatives of those engaged in the conflict in Bosnia, present here today, must bear in mind their personal duty to ensure that the Geneva Conventions are fully observed in every village and every camp.

The tragic plight of those driven from their homes by fear, by fighting or by "ethnic cleansing" has touched us all. Neighbouring areas and countries have had to bear a particularly heavy burden and need international help and support.

The international organizations that are central to dealing with the humanitarian situation require generous support. Canada will contribute \$15 million to the UNHCR's next appeal, and will also contribute \$5 million to the ICRC to help specifically with its work with prisoners of war and in hostages/others in the camps.

With such issues as these at stake, and so many lives at risk, this Conference cannot afford to fail. We cannot accept the implications of such a defeat. We cannot accept that "ethnic cleansing" be legitimized and that those outside the law continue to impose their will with impunity. The parties that are responsible will be liable and the states that condone what is happening will be ostracized. They will find themselves pariahs, cut off from the community of nations in every aspect of normal discourse and relations.

There can and should be another way ahead. Leadership in the region must abandon their unrealistic dug-in positions that serve no purpose except that of their own ambition. Surely it's not too much to ask for good faith and sincere commitment to the pursuit of peace. We can make real progress here toward reaching a future free of violence and cruelty and discord, one that is in the interest of everyone present and most particularly of the people they lead.