

NATO MUST ACT IN KOSOVO

BALKAN ACTION COUNCIL • COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE • INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP • NEW ATLANTIC INITIATIVE • PROJECT FOR THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

January 29, 1999

Dear President Clinton,

Only strong action and sustained U.S. leadership can address the largest security crisis in Europe today. Serbian forces under the command of President Slobodan Milosevic are again slaughtering civilians and threatening the stability of the region, as many of the same forces did in Croatia and Bosnia. Milosevic has broken every commitment he made to the United States and NATO nearly four months ago concerning the Kosovo crisis, underscoring yet again the limits of our ability to rein in Milosevic by diplomacy alone. Rather than reducing and withdrawing his forces, Milosevic has increased and aggressively redeployed them. He has shelled and attacked unarmed civilians with the artillery and tanks he agreed to remove. He has blocked and threatened the unarmed OSCE monitors to whom he promised free access. And his officials are destroying evidence of recent atrocities, such as the summary execution of more than 45 ethnic Albanians at Racak, and are otherwise impeding the investigations of the International War Crimes Tribunal.

We believe the following actions are essential:

- NATO should use air power as necessary to compel the removal of Serbian forces used to attack and repress the civilian population and prepare the way for the introduction of NATO ground troops. Only a NATO ground presence can prevent the return of those forces, the growth of radical Albanian nationalism and spread of war in southeastern Europe. Only NATO troops can shield humanitarian aid workers and the civilian monitors, including hundreds of Americans, who otherwise risk becoming hostages of Serbian forces.
- Implement a three-year cooling-off period by imposing an interim political settlement that restores pre-1989 self-government for Kosovo within a democratic federal framework. Use the interim period to reestablish civilian institutions, return hundreds of thousands of refugees to their homes, restore regional stability, and prepare for a referendum in Kosovo on final status after three years.

Mr. President, all eyes are turned to Washington. Only forceful U.S. leadership can stop Milosevic from continuing with this new round of ethnic cleansing. As a newly expanded NATO approaches its 50th anniversary in Washington, the savagery in Kosovo endangers more than civilian life and regional stability. It threatens the interests of the United States, the credibility of NATO and the gains we have achieved in Bosnia.

Sincerely,

Morton I. Abramowitz Zbigniew Brzezinski Richard Burt
Frank Carlucci Bob Dole Philip Kaiser Max M. Kampelman
Jeane Kirkpatrick Peter Kouler William Kristol Mel Levine
William E. Odom Wayne Owens Richard Perle Eugene Rostow
Stephen Solarz Helmut Sonnenfeldt William Howard Taft IV
Vin Weber Caspar Weinberger R. James Woolsey