

my good friend Congressman Mfume for his willingness to lay down his political career for even higher public service. It is a wise choice. It will give us a better future. And we are all here to celebrate as I ask the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals, Judge Harry Edwards, to come forward and administer the oath to the new president and CEO of the NAACP.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Department of Justice. In his

remarks, he referred to Myrlie Evers-Williams, chair, board of directors, NAACP; Roger Wilkins, author and professor, George Mason University; Jaimie Smith, student, Baltimore School of the Arts; Jason Hines, student, Morgan State University; Ayinde Jean-Baptiste, student, Whitney Young Magnet High School; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Coretta Scott King, founder, and Dexter King, president and chief executive officer, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-violent Social Change, Inc.; and former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp.

Statement on the Balkan Peace Process *February 20, 1996*

This afternoon I met with my senior national security team to review the situation in Bosnia. I received a report on this weekend's meeting in Rome with the Presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia.

I am pleased that in Rome, the Balkan leaders recommitted themselves to keeping peace on track. The parties pledged to resume contacts with the NATO-led Implementation Force, to reunify Sarajevo on schedule, to release all remaining war prisoners, to remove any remaining foreign forces, to cooperate in the investigation and prosecution of war crimes, and to strengthen the Bosnian-Croat Federation and reunify Mostar.

I have instructed my foreign policy team to continue efforts to convince all the parties that their Rome commitments must be implemented faithfully and without delay. The road to peace is a hard road, but it is the right road. We are proud to be part of the NATO force, and I am pleased to be meeting with NATO Secretary General Solana today.

While serious problems remain, it is important to keep the situation in Bosnia in perspective. After nearly 4 years of war, peace will not take hold overnight. We should not lose sight of the remarkable progress that has been made since Dayton. The cease-fire is holding. The zones of separation are in place. And in Sarajevo, once a dying city haunted by snipers and shells, the markets are filled. People are back on the streets. Builders are repairing shops and small

businesses in the center of town. Sarajevo has come back to life, with a future for all of its people.

These are the kinds of tangible benefits that will help give all the people of Bosnia a greater stake in peace than in war. Tomorrow, I am sending to Capitol Hill a supplemental appropriations request for \$820 million to support IFOR and its mission. This includes \$200 million to assist the essential process of civilian implementation—specifically, economic reconstruction and reform, deployment of international police monitors, and demining. I will work with Congress to secure these funds as quickly as possible. The sooner the Bosnian people recover the blessings of a normal life, the surer the chances for a peace that endures.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the enormous dedication of Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, who has spearheaded the peace effort for us since last August. As Ambassador Holbrooke steps down, I want to thank him for his service to our Nation. The people of Bosnia and American people owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude. My new Special Adviser for Implementation of the Dayton accords, Ambassador Robert Gallucci, one of our most experienced and successful diplomats, joined our meeting today and will continue our mission of moving the peace process forward.