

to all who were hurt and to all who were involved, and my desire not to see any more people hurt by this process and caught up in it. And I was commenting that it seemed to be something that most reasonable people would think had consumed a disproportionate amount of America's time, money, and resources and attention, and was now—continued to involve more and more people. And that's what I tried to say.

And all I wanted to say was I believe it's time for us to now go back to the work of the country and give the people their Government back and talk about and think about and work on things that will affect the American people today and in the future. That's all I

meant to say, and that's what I believe, and that's what I intend to do.

NOTE: The President's 163d news conference began at 1:17 p.m. in the Catherine Hall at the Kremlin. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In their remarks, the two Presidents referred to Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa of Japan; Prime Minister-designate Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty; and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Reporters referred to former White House intern Monica S. Lewinsky and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. The tape did not include a complete translation of President Yeltsin's remarks.

Joint Statement on the Situation in Kosovo *September 2, 1998*

The Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation noted with concern that the situation in Kosovo continues to deteriorate, causing growing alarm among the world public about the growing negative consequences for regional stability. Despite extensive attempts of the Contact Group, OSCE, and other international institutions, there has not yet been success in achieving an end to the armed clashes and senseless bloodshed and in initiating serious and meaningful negotiations between the authorities in Belgrade and leaders of Kosovo Albanians that would make it possible to agree promptly on measures to build confidence and security in the province as an interim step on the way to a final settlement of the Kosovo problem including the definition of the status of enhanced Kosovo self-government with strict respect for the territorial integrity of the FRY.

The escalation of tension in Kosovo inflicts heavy suffering on innocent civilians. Over 200,000 people were forced to leave their homes as the result of armed clashes. The situation is aggravated by large-scale destruction of houses, food shortages, and the risk of epidemic disease. The threat of humanitarian catastrophe is becoming ever more real.

Slobodan Milosevic, as President of the FRY, must order a halt to all repressive actions against

the civilian population in Kosovo. All violence by all Kosovo Albanian armed groups must cease immediately. President Milosevic and the Kosovo Albanian leadership must intensify the negotiating process.

Urgent measures should be taken promptly to prevent humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo. Necessary conditions should be created without delay for the refugees and displaced persons to return freely to the places of their permanent residence before the advent of winter. The scope and acuteness of the problem call for urgent joint actions of the authorities in Belgrade, the Kosovo Albanians, and international humanitarian organizations. Constant international monitoring in the field, accompanied both by progressive withdrawal of Serb security forces to their permanent locations, and the cessation of armed actions by the Kosovo Albanians, are needed to inspire confidence among people in their safety and prospects for restoring normal life. A mechanism for creating favorable conditions in the most heavily affected locations in the province—a series of "pilot projects"—should be set in motion immediately. The Serb authorities should implement in practice unimpeded access to all areas of the province for humanitarian organizations and diplomatic observers.

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The cessation of violence and amelioration of the humanitarian situation would facilitate the creation of a favorable environment for progress in the negotiating process over the entire range of issues. President Milosevic and all Kosovo Albanian leaders should engage actively in the negotiating process, with a view toward achiev-

ing a political solution to the crisis and a framework for durable peace in Kosovo.

Moscow
September 2, 1998

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement on a Protocol to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons

September 2, 1998

The Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation, recognizing the threat posed by biological weapons, express strong support for the aims and tasks of the Ad Hoc Group of States Parties to establish a regime to enhance the effective implementation of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. We urge the further intensification and successful conclusion of those negotiations to strengthen the Convention by adoption of a legally binding Protocol at the earliest possible date.

We have agreed to contribute to accomplishing these tasks. Consequently, the United States of America and the Russian Federation will make additional efforts in the Ad Hoc Group to promote decisive progress in negotiations on the Protocol to the Convention, to ensure its universality and enable the Group to fulfill its mandate.

We agree that the Protocol to the Convention must be economical to implement, must adequately guarantee the protection of national se-

curity information, and must provide confidentiality for sensitive commercial information. We also consider it extremely important to create a mechanism for implementation that will be consistent with the scope of the measures provided for in the Protocol.

We recognize the necessity for the Protocol to include those measures that would do the most to strengthen the Convention.

We express our firm commitment to global prohibition of biological weapons and for full and effective compliance by all States Parties with the Convention prohibiting such weapons.

We support the language in the Final Declaration of the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention (1996) that the Convention forbids the use of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons under any circumstances.

Moscow
September 2, 1998

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement on the Exchange of Information on Missile Launches and Early Warning

September 2, 1998

Taking into account the continuing worldwide proliferation of ballistic missiles and of missile technologies, the need to minimize even further the consequences of a false missile attack warn-

ing and above all, to prevent the possibility of a missile launch caused by such false warning, the President of the United States and the President of the Russian Federation have reached