

to that vision: in the fragility of new democracies; in the proliferation of deadly weapons and terrorism; and surely, in the awful specter of ethnic cleansing in Southeast Europe, where Mr. Milosevic—first in Croatia and Slovenia, then in Bosnia, now in Kosovo—has inflamed ancient hatreds to gain and maintain his power. He is bent on dehumanizing, indeed, destroying a whole people and their culture and, in the process, driving his own people to deep levels of distress.

We're in Kosovo because we want to replace ethnic cleansing with tolerance and decency, violence with security, disintegration with restoration, isolation with integration into the rest of the region and the continent. We want Southeastern Europe to travel the same road as Western Europe half a century ago and Central Europe a decade ago.

But we are fundamentally there because the Alliance will not have meaning in the 21st century if it permits the slaughter of innocents on its doorstep. This is not a question of territorial conquest or political domination but standing for the values that made NATO possible in the first place.

This is the mission of NATO at the age of 50 on the edge of a new century, determined to reach forward into the future with a united continent, with a collective defense, remaining open to new members from the Baltics to the Black Sea, remaining committed to work with partners for peace and progress, including Russia and Ukraine, and others who are willing to work for the values and the future we dream of. This is the kind of alliance we come to this summit to reaffirm and to build for the future.

Almost 100 years ago, President Theodore Roosevelt said something that could well be applied to a united Europe and to our united transatlantic Alliance today. Of America's coming of age in the world, he said, "We have no choice as to whether we will play a great part in the world. That has been determined for us by fate, by the march of events. The only question is whether we will play it well or ill."

Our nations played our part well after World War II, from the Berlin airlift to the founding of NATO, to the restoration of hope and confidence in Western Europe. We played it well after the cold war, from the

reunification of Germany to the enlargement of NATO, to the support we have offered democratic, open government in Russia and Ukraine, and the reach out we have done to other partners for peace. We played it well when we joined together to end the slaughter in Bosnia.

Now, we rise, as we must, to this new and fundamental challenge to the peace and humanity of Europe. Our message is clear: Peace and humanity will prevail in Kosovo; the refugees will go home; they will have security; they will have their self-government; the last European dictatorship of the 20th century will not destroy Europe's long-awaited chance to live, at last, together in peace and freedom.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary General Javier Solana of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary; President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic; President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Javier Solana.

## **Joint Statement on Kosovo**

*April 23, 1999*

1. The crisis in Kosovo represents a fundamental challenge to the values for which NATO has stood since its foundation: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is the culmination of a deliberate policy of oppression, ethnic cleansing and violence pursued by the Belgrade regime under the direction of President Milosevic. We will not allow this campaign of terror to succeed. NATO is determined to prevail.

2. NATO's military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) supports the political aims of the international community, which were reaffirmed in recent statements by the UN Secretary-General and the European Union: a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo where all its people can live in security and enjoy universal

human rights and freedoms on an equal basis.

3. Our military actions are directed not at the Serb people but at the policies of the regime in Belgrade, which has repeatedly rejected all efforts to solve the crisis peacefully. President Milosevic must:

- Ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression in Kosovo;
- Withdraw from Kosovo his military, police and para-military forces;
- Agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- Agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons, and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations; and
- Provide credible assurance of his willingness to work for the establishment of a political framework agreement based on the Rambouillet accords.

4. There can be no compromise on these conditions. As long as Belgrade fails to meet the legitimate demands of the international community and continues to inflict immense human suffering, Alliance air operations against the Yugoslav war machine will continue. We hold President Milosevic and the Belgrade leadership responsible for the safety of all Kosovar citizens. We will fulfill our promise to the Kosovar people that they can return to their homes and live in peace and security.

5. We are intensifying NATO's military actions to increase the pressure on Belgrade. Allied governments are putting in place additional measures to tighten the constraints on the Belgrade regime. These include intensified implementation of economic sanctions, and an embargo on petroleum products on which we welcome the EU lead. We have directed our Defence Ministers to determine ways that NATO can contribute to halting the delivery of war material including by launching maritime operations, taking into account the possible consequences on Montenegro.

6. NATO is prepared to suspend its air strikes once Belgrade has unequivocally accepted the above mentioned conditions and demonstrably begun to withdraw its forces from Kosovo according to a precise and rapid

timetable. This could follow the passage of a United Nations Security Council resolution, which we will seek, requiring the withdrawal of Serb forces and the demilitarisation of Kosovo and encompassing the deployment of an international military force to safeguard the swift return of all refugees and displaced persons as well as the establishment of an international provisional administration of Kosovo under which its people can enjoy substantial autonomy within the FRY. NATO remains ready to form the core of such an international military force. It would be multinational in character with contributions from non-NATO countries.

7. Russia has a particular responsibility in the United Nations and an important role to play in the search for a solution to the conflict in Kosovo. Such a solution must be based on the conditions of the international community as laid out above. President Milosevic's offers to date do not meet this test. We want to work constructively with Russia, in the spirit of the Founding Act.

8. The long-planned, unrestrained and continuing assault by Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces on Kosovars and the repression directed against other minorities of the FRY are aggravating the already massive humanitarian catastrophe. This threatens to destabilise the surrounding region.

9. NATO, its members and its Partners have responded to the humanitarian emergency and are intensifying their refugee and humanitarian relief operations in close co-operation with the UNHCR, the lead agency in this field, and with other relevant organisations. We will continue our assistance as long as necessary. NATO forces are making a major contribution to this task.

10. We pay tribute to the servicemen and women of NATO whose courage and dedication are ensuring the success of our military and humanitarian operations.

11. Atrocities against the people of Kosovo by FRY military, police and paramilitary forces represent a flagrant violation of international law. Our governments will co-operate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to support investigation of all those, including at the

highest levels, responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. NATO will support the ICTY in its efforts to secure relevant information. There can be no lasting peace without justice.

12. We acknowledge and welcome the courageous support that states in the region are providing to our efforts in Kosovo. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania have played a particularly important role, not least in accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo. The states in the region are bearing substantial economic and social burdens stemming from the current conflict.

13. We will not tolerate threats by the Belgrade regime to the security of its neighbours. We will respond to such challenges by Belgrade to its neighbours resulting from the presence of NATO forces or their activities on their territory during this crisis.

14. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the region.

15. We reaffirm our strong support for the democratically elected government of Montenegro. Any move by Belgrade to undermine the government of President Djukanovic will have grave consequences. FRY forces should leave the demilitarised zone of Prevlaka immediately.

16. The objective of a free, prosperous, open and economically integrated Southeast Europe cannot be fully assured until the FRY embarks upon the transition to democracy. Accordingly, we express our support for the objective of a democratic FRY which protects the rights of all minorities, including those in Vojvodina and Sandjak, and promise to work for such change through and beyond the current conflict.

17. It is our aim to make stability in Southeast Europe a priority of our transatlantic agenda. Our governments will co-operate urgently through NATO as well as through the OSCE, and for those of us which are members, the European Union, to support the nations of Southeast Europe in forging a better future for their region—one based upon democracy, justice, economic integration, and security co-operation.

NOTE: The joint statement was issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, DC, on April 23 and 24. It was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

## **The Washington Declaration**

### ***April 23, 1999***

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, declare for a new century our mutual commitment to defend our people, our territory and our liberty, founded on democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The world has changed dramatically over the last half century, but our common values and security interests remain the same.

2. At this anniversary summit, we affirm our determination to continue advancing these goals, building on the habits of trust and co-operation we have developed over fifty years. Collective defence remains the core purpose of NATO. We affirm our commitment to promote peace, stability and freedom.

3. We pay tribute to the men and women who have served our Alliance and who have advanced the cause of freedom. To honour them and to build a better future, we will contribute to building a stronger and broader Euro-Atlantic community of democracies—a community where human rights and fundamental freedoms are upheld; where borders are increasingly open to people, ideas and commerce; where war becomes unthinkable.

4. We reaffirm our faith, as stated in the North Atlantic Treaty, in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reiterate our desire to live in peace with all nations, and to settle any international dispute by peaceful means.

5. We must be as effective in the future in dealing with new challenges as we were in the past. We are charting NATO's course as we enter the 21st century: an Alliance committed to collective defence, capable of addressing current and future risks to our security, strengthened by and open to new members, and working together with other