

Bosnia Fact Sheet: The Road to the Dayton Peace Agreement

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- The international community is united in its desire to see the Balkan conflict resolved at the negotiating table. The United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and other nations, acting separately and in groups, have attempted to resolve the Balkan conflict through negotiations since it began in 1991.
- In October 1992, European Union mediator Lord David Owen and UN mediator and former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance proposed a draft constitution organizing Bosnia into a decentralized federation. This became known as the "Vance-Owen" plan.
- In February 1993, President Clinton, at the beginning of his Administration, named the first U.S. special envoy to UN-EU joint negotiations, Ambassador Reginald Bartholomew. In May 1993, U.S. efforts helped gain the parties' agreement to the Vance-Owen plan, but the Bosnian Serbs subsequently renounced the accord.
- In early 1994, with UN-EU efforts bogged down, the United States decided to undertake more active involvement, seeking to back diplomacy with the threat of NATO air power in protecting safe areas and UN peacekeepers.
- In March 1994, the new United States special envoy, Ambassador Charles Redman, and other U.S. officials led negotiations between Bosnia's Muslims and Croats which resulted in a cease-fire, the formation of a bi-communal Federation, and improved relations with neighboring Croatia.
- Later in the spring of 1994, the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany established a five-nation Contact Group, with the goal of brokering a settlement between the Federation and Bosnian Serbs. The Contact Group based its efforts on three principles:
 1. Bosnia would remain a single state;
 2. That state would consist of the Federation and a Bosnian Serb entity;
 3. These two entities would be linked via mutually-agreed constitutional principles, which would also spell out relationships with Serbia and Croatia proper.
- In July 1994, the Contact Group put forward a proposed map presenting a 51/49 percent territorial compromise between the Federation and Bosnian Serbs. The Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian Governments all accepted the proposal. The Bosnian Serbs repeatedly rejected it. However, all of its key principles were accepted as the basis for negotiations at the November 1995 proximity peace talks in Dayton.
- In the fall of 1994, Serbia announced it was withdrawing support for the Bosnian Serbs, would seal them off economically, and would allow a UN-EU team to monitor the border closure. The Security Council then offered a temporary

suspension of some of the economic sanctions that had been in place against Serbia since 1992.

- In the summer of 1995, a series of events changed the situation on the ground:
- In July, two UN-declared safe areas, Srebrenica and Zepa, were overrun by Bosnian Serb forces.
- In July and August, Croatia retook most of the territory held for three years by separatist Krajina Serbs, and thus presented itself as a counterweight to further Serb aggression in the region.
- In response to the fall of the safe areas, President Clinton insisted that NATO and the UN make good on their commitment to protect the remaining safe areas. The Allies agreed to U.S. insistence on NATO decisiveness at the London Conference on July 21, and threatened broad-based air strikes if the safe areas were attacked again.
- In late July, President Clinton decided that the changes on the ground and the new resolve displayed by NATO provided the basis for an all-out diplomatic effort to end the conflict. In early August, he sent his National Security Adviser, Anthony Lake, to present a U.S. peace initiative to our NATO Allies and the Russians.
- In mid-August, U.S. negotiators, led by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, began intensive shuttle diplomacy with the parties to the conflict. The deaths of three members of our negotiating team--Ambassador Robert Frasure, Dr. Joseph Kruzal, and Colonel Nelson Drew--were an enormous tragedy, but our efforts for peace intensified.
- In late August, a Bosnian Serb shell killed 37 people in a Sarajevo market. NATO and the UN issued an ultimatum to the Bosnian Serbs:
 1. Stop shelling Sarajevo.
 2. Stop offensive action against the remaining safe areas.
 3. Withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo.
 4. Allow road and air access to Sarajevo.
- On August 30, after the Bosnian Serbs refused, NATO began heavy and continuous air strikes against the Bosnian Serb military--with many missions flown by American pilots. The Bosnian Serbs then complied with the NATO demands.
- At meetings sponsored by the Contact Group in Geneva (September 8, 1995) and New York (September 26, 1995), the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia (now also representing the Bosnian Serbs) agreed to basic principles for a settlement in Bosnia:
 - The preservation of Bosnia as a single state;
 - An equitable division of territory between the Muslim/Croat Federation and a Bosnian Serb entity based on the Contact Group's 51/49 formula;
 - Constitutional structures;
 - Free and fair elections;
 - Respect for human rights.
- In early October, the United States helped broker a cease-fire, now holding throughout Bosnia.
- The United States and the other Contact Group countries convened the parties to Dayton, Ohio to begin "proximity peace talks" on November 1.

- On November 21, the parties initialed the Dayton Peace Agreement.