Denver Summit – 22 June 1997

Denver Summit of The Eight

Statement on Bosnia And Herzegovina

We, the Leaders of the Eight, reaffirm our commitment to full implementation of the Peace Agreement, and to the goal of Bosnia and Herzegovina becoming a single democratic, prosperous and multi-ethnic nation. We welcome the accomplishments since the 1995 Peace Agreement. Significant challenges remain but we are determined to accelerate the implementation of the Peace Agreement and to reinforce the progress made in the last eighteen months.

We firmly endorse the political declaration adopted at the Sintra Ministerial on May 30, 1997, and join the Steering Board in demanding intensification of effort by the Parties toward fulfillment of their obligations under the Peace Agreement. To ensure that all the Parties are held accountable, our full assistance will be contingent upon their own full implementation of all aspects of the Peace Agreement. We pay tribute to Carl Bildt's outstanding contribution as High Representative to the cause of peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome his successor, Carlos Westendorp, and promise him our full support.

We are working to create conditions for a self-sustaining peace. We support the mission of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) to help provide a secure environment by June 1998. We will continue to provide materials and financial support for the International Police Task Force's efforts to restructure, train and equip police, in order to establish public order and safety for all the Bosnian people consistent with international democratic standards.

Some elected officials are harmfully blocking key aspects of economic reconstruction, delaying international assistance. We welcome Friday's parliamentary approval of essential economic laws, but delays in doing so and failure to approve an International Monetary Fund program caused further postponement of the needed Donors' Conference. When the Parties meet the necessary conditions, we are prepared to implement the full reconstruction program and to support considerable debt reduction by the Paris Club.

The authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina must uphold fully the right of refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in a peaceful and orderly manner. We will support those communities that work cooperatively to support returns. Those who fall to do so will lose access to economic assistance.

There must be justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina if peace is to endure. Both Bosnian entities, as well as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia, have obligations under the Peace Agreement to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Those indicted must be turned over to the Tribunal and to stand trial. Full access to economic and other assistance, as well as integration in regional and international institutions, is dependent on compliance with these obligations.

All authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina must work to accelerate the development of democratic institutions, including accelerating efforts to establish independent news media. We shall contribute the necessary support for the conduct of municipal elections.

We urge the national, entity and local authorities to make Brcko an early example of implementation of all aspects of the Peace Agreement.

We remain concerned that Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the regional signatories to the Peace Agreement, are not demonstrating a stronger commitment to the peace process. They must also make significantly greater progress to meet international standards of human rights, democratic processes, media freedom and treatment of minorities and refugees. Further progress towards integration in European and international institutions will depend on improvements in these areas.

The international community will maintain a long-term engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Balkan region as a whole. We are prepared to continue to help the states of this region, but our continued commitment is not unconditional. We call upon the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to meet their responsibilities and obligations, and to work for a democratic, stable and secure future for their citizens.

Office of the High Representative