

Speech by the High Representative at the Nippon Press Centre in Tokyo

It am particularly pleased to be in Tokyo today to talk about Bosnia. Bosnia matters to us all as a human tragedy. Wherever we come from, we have suffered with the people of Bosnia over the past four years. We have seen its dramas through the eyes of the world media, and done what we could through the United Nations and our own bilateral efforts to alleviate the suffering and achieve an end to the war. Thanks to the agreements signed in Dayton and Paris last year, there is now a real chance of helping Bosnia back to prosperity and peace.

This is important for the people of Bosnia, a European people with a proud multiethnic tradition who have been the prime victims of the ethnic turmoil arising in many countries in Eastern Europe from the ruins of the Cold War. But it is also important for the international community at large. Just as the crisis of Cambodia mattered well beyond Asia and was met by a global response co-ordinated by the United Nations, in the same way Bosnia has given rise to a global alliance. Japan took a leading responsibility in Cambodia, just as the Europeans are carrying most of the economic and military burden in Bosnia. But it is vitally important that, as in Cambodia, we have the involvement of the United States, in the case of Bosnia, a particularly strong US diplomatic and military role. Assuring security and stability is important on both sides of the world, and I particularly welcome the co-operation of the US, Europe and Japan in this enterprise. Bosnia is not only proving that the international community can work together effectively on these vital questions, but it also represents a remarkable opportunity for us all to take a stand in favour of the universal values of tolerance, freedom and peace.

Creating peace in Bosnia will require a great deal of the Bosnians themselves, divided as they are following the savagery of war. But in addition, it will only be possible for them to rebuild their economy and put together the pieces of their broken society if we are willing to support the process from the outside.

This will make demands of us, of a political as well as a financial nature, for some years ahead. But I am encouraged by my talks here to know that Japan means to play its part. Your Prime Minister stressed the global implications of Bosnia at the Asia-Europe summit in Bangkok last month, and I believe it represents a good example of the sort of co-operation envisaged in the Bangkok declaration adopted at the end of that meeting.

A year ago, it would have been difficult to imagine we would have this opportunity. The warring parties, the Croat-Muslim Federation on the one hand, the Republika Srpska on the other, did not seem capable of talking to each other. The main international players were failing to agree on a coherent strategy. But a combination of skilful diplomacy and robust military intervention has given us this chance. My theme today is that we will need to follow through with economic assistance and a continuing political commitment if peace is to be assured in Bosnia and any semblance of prosperity is to be restored. Japan is already playing an important part as a member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Conference dating from London last December. I very much look forward to her playing a full part in the donor conference in Brussels later this week where the stress will be on economic reconstruction.

I see three main tasks for Bosnia in the period ahead, which I might sum up as my "Three R s for Bosnia" : reconstruction, reintegration and reconciliation. They are each interlinked, and they provide a framework for considering what the Bosnians have to do, and what we have to do, if the process is to succeed.

The need for physical reconstruction is obvious to anyone visiting Bosnia today. More than sixty percent of the housing stock has been damaged, much of it beyond repair. Production in what was in many ways the industrial hub of Yugoslavia is at less than five per cent of pre-war totals. Up to 80 percent of the population was till recently still dependent on humanitarian aid flows for food. At first sight, the picture is grim indeed.

But the people of Japan know from their experience what can happen when people begin to believe in the future again. I sense that people around Bosnia are daring to hope again. There is little physical evidence of this in the streets, where winter is only now ending and serious reconstruction programmes have not yet started. But it is there in the hearts and minds of ordinary people.

The extent of the devastation makes Bosnias task more difficult, yet in some ways easier. It will never be possible

to build up the heavy, labour intensive industries to their previous levels. Many of the young conscripts returning from the war will not find work in the short-term. I have pointed very regularly to the danger that the armies of soldiers could be demobilised into becoming new armies of the unemployed, with all the social problems that could bring. On the other hand, many of the old industrial plant formed part of an antiquated socialist economy which in any case was dying. Bosnia has an educated and talented workforce which will do well if it is given the right tools. The challenge is to come up with the projects, the expertise and the finance to relaunch the Bosnian economy.

I have been working closely with the World Bank, the European Commission and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other international organisations to ensure that there is a serious and realistic blueprint for the reconstruction programme. For short-term emergency assistance, restoring the infrastructure and putting in place the first elements of a productive economy, some \$1.8 billion will be required, to be invested in 1996. About one third of this has been raised, since the first donors conference last December, but we need another \$1.2 billion. That is our target at the meeting this week. We are certainly not there yet.

The projects we finance now must have an immediate and visible effect.

The most pressing priorities are electricity generation and transmission, roads and rail networks, and water and gas projects. Telecommunications is another vital area. If these building blocks of the modern economy can be put in place, I am confident that local industries like construction, cement, and wood processing will revive. This will only be a beginning. The estimate is that \$5.2 billion will be necessary over a 3-4 year period to set in train the more substantive economic development on which Bosnia's long-term future will hinge. Fairly soon, we shall have to start considering this perspective. But the priority this week is the jump-start to boost confidence and set the process in motion. The European Union has so far set the pace in making funds speedily available. Just before I arrived in Washington last week, Congress committed itself to a \$200 million package for civilian reconstruction. One of the subjects of my talks here in Tokyo is obviously the prospects for Japan making a substantial commitment.

Reconstruction is good for its own sake, in the effect on people's quality of life. But it also has an important political dimension, which I would identify with the need to reintegrate the country. After forty-two months in the trenches, psychologically as well as physically, Bosnia's people are perhaps the most divided in the world – with the possible exception of the people just across the sea from Japan. The question is not whether there is a danger of partition, but whether the communities in Bosnia can come out of their self-imposed isolation to work together as they did in the past. As we saw in the dramas around the reunification of Sarajevo, the forces of ethnic separation are currently stronger than the forces for ethnic integration. Only four or five months after the signing of peace, this is perhaps not surprising.

But reintegration has to occur, and for two very good reasons. Economically, the political entities will not survive without each other – or if they do, it will be at a ludicrous cost in efficiency and incoherence. You only need to look at a detailed map of Northern Bosnia to see how wasteful it would be to have separate water systems, telecommunications, railroads and so on. I find that as soon as I get experts from the two sides together to discuss practical questions like these, they make quick progress in contrast to their behaviour when they discuss politics. That is why it is sensible and cost effective to encourage projects which extend over the territory of the two entities, binding them closer together. Indeed in some areas it is difficult to design a serious infrastructure project which does not have this effect.

But even more importantly, a failure to achieve reintegration would carry a long-term political cost. Partition can bring peace in the short term. But if people are able to nurse their historical grudges and keep their prejudices against co-operation alive, this will be disastrous in the long term in a region where different races and cultures have co-existed for centuries. The prospects for areas of mixed population in the region like Macedonia, Kosovo or Vojvodina will be bleak if the trend towards ethnic conflict is not reversed.

Within Bosnia reintegration will only really be possible on the basis of reconciliation. This has been the greatest disappointment so far, but it still holds the key to Bosnia's common future. In the early weeks of this year, my office had some success in bringing leaders of the communities together. The joint bodies prescribed by the Dayton agreement were set up quite smoothly – the Joint Interim Commission, bringing together the Prime Ministers; the Joint Civilian Commission bringing together political figures and representatives of the international agencies – particularly for Sarajevo. Through the difficulties we have experienced, particularly over the Sarajevo transition, we have preserved a modicum of co-operation in these bodies, and there is now a wider range of joint activities involving human rights, property claims and maybe most importantly, preparations for the elections which will be

supervised by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

We should be under no illusion that these elections, due in the late summer or early autumn, will be the magic wand to deliver a country reconciled and at peace with itself. Elections tend to have the effect of creating divisions between people, not uniting them. Nevertheless, these elections will mark an important moment in returning Bosnia to democratic ways, and in creating a new structure of legitimacy for the future. I would hope that voters will turn their backs on politicians who represent the old political games of exploiting ethnic tensions, especially in the Republika Srpska. But that decision must be for them. Our responsibility will be threefold:

- to provide the finance and the expertise for free and fair elections to take place, properly supervised and monitored;
- to do what we can to ensure free and fair access for all political views, notably through the media;
- to bring to bear all our influence and pressure to ensure that the joint institutions prescribed by Dayton are set up according to plan.

Under the heading of reconciliation, I would also mention the work of the International War Criminal Tribunal. Dealing effectively with war crimes will be vital for reconciliation. Peace needs justice to be sustainable for the long term.

All of these questions will require constant attention, vigilance and support. Opening our pocket-books will be important, but it will not be the whole story.

Continuing our political involvement will in my view also be essential, even as we pass the prime responsibility to the politicians themselves. We have seen over the past fortnight with the question of prisoner release just how important external pressure can be. It was only by threatening to postpone this weeks donors conference that we have been able at last to force the parties into compliance with the undertakings they had made in the Peace Agreements – though there is still a question mark over the Bosnian Serbs.

We will not be able for the indefinite future to sort out every individual difficulty that comes up along the way. But by demonstrating our determination now, we are making clear our resolve to stay engaged. I am confident that with time this engagement will increasingly take the form of encouragement rather than threats, carrots rather than sticks. The new Bosnia will have to earn our continuing support – but if the Bosnians play their part, they will deserve it.

As I stressed at the outset, we have formed a truly global alliance to meet the challenge. My own staff includes representatives from some twenty nations, including, I am happy to say, Japan. It is an enterprise of which we can all be proud. Now we must ensure its success.