# Joint Statement – New York, 26 Sept. 95

## Joint Statement

For the second time in three weeks, the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have met under the auspices of the Contact Group. The meeting was held in the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and co-chaired by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard C. Holbrooke and EU Special Negotiator Carl Bildt.
The Contact Group and EU Special Negotiator announce today that the three Foreign Ministers, speaking for their governments – the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which also represents the Bosnian Serbs in a joint delegation – have authorized us to issue the attached Further Agreed Basic Principles. All three governments – and their Presidents – agree that these principles will govern additional negotiations. Moreover, the Co-Chairmen reiterated that the issues of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium will be a top priority in an overall pace settlement.

The principles issued today take us one more important step on the road to peace. As important as this step is, we remain a long way from peace.

Although we still have a long and difficult path ahead of us, today's agreement does mark another important step forward for several reasons.

First and foremost, it establishes clearly that both sides agree that Bosnia and Herzegovina will have a Parliament or national assembly, a Presidency, a Constitutional Court, and makes provisions for free and democratic elections under

international supervision. In our view this means direct, free and democratic elections would be held as soon as possible when the necessary conditions exist.

These are obviously significant, if incomplete, achievements, which must be fleshed out in much grater detail in the next round of negotiations. For example, what are the *"other matters"* referred to in the second sentence of paragraph 6.6? Although this must be negotiated, in our view they should include such important matters as foreign trade, customs administration, international financial affairs, currency administration, citizenship and passports, protection of borders, and other matters. These issues must be solved before we can achieve the settlement we seek.

There are many other important issues not resolved, or even addressed, in today's document. Above all, the territorial issues are still unresolved, and will be the subject of very tough negotiations. In this connection, the Contact Group reiterates its strong support for the sovereignity and territorial integrity of the states of the region.

We are also committed to insuring that, at the end of the negotiating process, the above institutions and their manner of operations and decision-making will be fully consistent with democratic principles. We shall continue to avoid mechanisms that could make the governmental institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina un-democratic or non-functioning in their operations.

We also must address the presence of several different military forces on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in such a manner as to ensure that their presence and activities are consistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The American negotiating team will return to the region, starting in Sarajevo, on Thursday. The EU Special Negotiator,

Carl Bildt, will continue work also on the constitutional and reconstruction efforts which will be addressed by the EU Foreign Ministers in Luxembourg October 2 before he proceeds to the region. Russian negotiator, First Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, will return to the region next week.

The attached Basic Principles have been agreed upon today by H.E. Muhamed Sacirbey, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), H.E. Mate Granic, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Croatia (Croatia); H.E. Milan Milutinovic, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia), and witnessed by Representatives of France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and by the European Union Special Negotiator for the Former Yugoslavia.

New York

September 26, 1995

## Office of the High Representative