

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release CIA Historical  
Collections Division AR 70-14  
1OCT2013

DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force  
27 September 1995

### Cease-Fires in the Balkans: A Historical Overview

*The previous country-wide cease-fires that have lasted the longest have done so either because the warring parties had some mutual interest in temporarily reducing the level of violence or because weather would have limited fighting in any event. The presence of peacekeeping forces probably has influenced somewhat the longevity of cease-fires, but has not been decisive.* [REDACTED]

*UN forces in Bosnia are adequate to monitor implementation of an in-place cease-fire as long as they enjoy complete freedom of movement. They are not sufficient, however, to deter any of the warring parties from deciding to abandon the peace process.* [REDACTED]

Some incentive for both sides to comply with a cease-fire--possibly including a desire to build up forces prior to renewed fighting--has been the key factor in cease-fire maintenance. The "successful" cease-fires to date have codified a willingness to cease offensive actions when none of the factions would benefit by them:

- The interposition of UN forces between government forces and Krajina Serbs in Croatia in 1991 limited fighting, but the conflict had more or less stalemated by the time a lasting cease-fire was finally worked out. Moreover, both Croats and Krajina Serbs initially chose to interpret the UN's mandate as working in their favor, and each had an incentive to halt the fighting. UNPROFOR then increasingly served to maintain an armistice line rather than to observe a cease-fire. Croatia used the cease-fire to build up its forces until it had gained a significant military advantage, whereupon the "cease-fire" collapsed abruptly with Zagreb's seizure of three of the four UN sectors this year.
  - The Croat-Muslim cease-fire which led to the establishment of the Federation in 1994 has successfully held to this day, although the Croat-Muslim relationship remains uneasy. Both Croats and Muslims had good reason to halt the bloody interethnic fighting which plagued central Bosnia in 1992 and 1993, and the cease-fire allowed both Bosnian Croats and Muslims to confront a common Serb adversary jointly.
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- The longest-lasting Bosnian cease-fire, from 1 January to 1 May of this year, was in effect during the winter, when poor weather effectively limited any side's ability to conduct ground operations. During that period, the Bosnian Serbs largely settled into a defensive posture, while the Bosnian Army used the cease-fire to train, equip, and re-organize its forces before resuming offensive operations later in the spring.

The presence of even relatively large numbers of UN peacekeepers has not deterred determined Balkan combatants from mounting attacks:

- When Croatia attacked into UN Sector West in May and into UN Sectors North and South in August, the presence of large numbers of UN peacekeepers was not an effective deterrent or brake on operations. Croatian Army forces were simply directed to bypass any UN positions which had not already been occupied and to continue their advance.
- The Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) overran the Srebrenica and Zepa safe areas in July, despite the presence of UN peacekeepers in both towns and small-scale NATO airstrikes immediately prior to the fall of Srebrenica.

Conversely, a small number of observers may be able to patrol a confrontation line, if they are allowed freedom of movement and there is some reason for the combatants to respect that confrontation line or demilitarized zone.

- A minor UN presence--about eight personnel--backed up by a credible threat of NATO airstrikes has so far prevented any Bosnian Serb offensive against Gorazde since the British and Ukrainian peacekeepers departed in late August.

If the negotiating parties entered into a cease-fire agreement in good faith, the UN could monitor compliance relatively quickly using existing peacekeepers and military observers. Large numbers of outside forces would not be needed immediately so long as observers already in the country enjoyed freedom of movement and the terms of the peace agreement--such as demilitarized zones, limitations on training and maneuvers, and on-site inspections of heavy weapons at declared sites--were designed to simplify verification of compliance.

- Greater problems may arise with the transition from the current UNPROFOR to a Peace Implementation Force, as some UNPROFOR elements withdraw, some remain and assume new mandates, and other new implementation forces enter the country.

~~SECRET~~