

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AEGEAN CRISIS

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

"I am seriously concerned about the Greek-Turkish crisis over the Imia islet in the Aegean Sea. I am also deeply disappointed with the delayed and muddled response of the administration to this crisis which began on December 25, 1995.

"The situation in the Aegean steadily escalated for more than one month before the administration attempted to intervene to defuse the crisis. This absence of U.S. leadership reflects the administration's inattention to developments in a region of the world vital to U.S. national interests. When the administration finally did intervene -- after Greek and Turkish naval forces were on the brink of hostilities -- the State Department spokesman on February 1, further heightened tensions with careless and uninformed remarks.

"If the NATO Alliance is to remain strong, we must use our leadership to mediate when there are disputes such as this between two NATO allies. We cannot afford to wait until two of our allies are on the brink of war. Furthermore, the United States must stand firm on the principle of respect for international law, including international treaties and borders. We must ensure that this matter is resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law."

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