

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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CROATIA UPDATE

WASHINGTON - Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today released the following statement on the recent Serb attack in Zagreb:

"On Wednesday, the capital of Croatia was subjected to a vicious attack by militant Serb separatists. This was the second day in a row that Zagreb was attacked by rockets armed with cluster bombs. The attack occurred at noon, when civilians were out having lunch. The principal targets were the Children's Hospital and the National Theater where a ballet company was rehearsing. Several people were killed and dozens were wounded, bringing the total number of casualties to about 200 people.

"There are those who say that the Croatian government provoked the attack by conducting a military operation that returned a 200 square mile area back to Croatian control. That argument misses the point. Nothing, I repeat, nothing, justifies an attack on innocent civilians -- on children in this case. The U.S. Ambassador was right when he condemned these attacks as 'a clear violation of basic principles of human decency.'

"I am aware that it is U.N. practice to shift the blame and muddy the waters in their pursuit of neutrality between aggressors and victims. But, to do so -- whether in this case, or in the case of attacks on civilians in Bosnia -- is reprehensible.

"Furthermore, if the U.N. were doing its job in Croatia -- if the U.N. had implemented its mandate to demilitarize the sectors of Croatia under their control thereby clearing the way for reintegration of these occupied territories -- the Croatian government may not have taken the action it did on Monday. Let us not forget, the occupied areas are part of the territory of Croatia. So while the international community should urge the Croatian government and its forces to fully respect the human and civil rights of the population in the areas they have retaken, it should not urge Croatia to give up control of reclaimed territory."

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