

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Saturday, September 2, 1995

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BOSNIA

DOLE URGES CONTINUED NATO PRESSURE ON BOSNIAN SERBS

WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today issued the following statement regarding the ongoing diplomatic activity on Bosnia and the halt in NATO's bombing campaign:

"Whether the upcoming Geneva meeting and any follow-up talks will be any different than the many diplomatic failures that preceded it will depend on several factors: First, U.S. leadership; second, U.S. and allied commitment to a just and stable settlement in Bosnia -- instead of a peace that merely ratifies Serb gains made through aggression and ethnic cleansing; third, a swift and firm timeline for translating Serb words into action; and fourth, U.S. and allied determination to keep the pressure on the Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian government -- military, political and economic pressure. The past three and a half years have demonstrated that Serb promises are worthless and that the only meaningful measure of progress must be results on the ground in Bosnia.

"Because the Serb military continues to threaten Sarajevo, I believe that the halt in NATO's bombing campaign was premature. It is not enough to get the Serbs to Geneva. At the very least, the Serbs must not be allowed to keep a stranglehold on Sarajevo and other so-called safe areas. For all the talk of peace, Serb guns still surround Sarajevo, Serb shells reportedly hit the city again today, and the airport is still shut down. Lifting the siege of Sarajevo must be the minimum objective of NATO's military operation. Let us keep in mind that the damage done to Bosnian Serb military facilities is not irreversible, and that there has been no change in the territorial holdings of the Bosnian Serbs.

"In my view, the only hope for achieving a just and lasting settlement in Bosnia is to keep the pressure on the Bosnian Serbs and the Milosevic regime. Therefore, in my view, the Clinton administration should exercise its leadership in NATO in support of continued NATO military action, at least until the siege of Sarajevo is lifted. NATO's long overdue bombing campaign is not a substitute for allowing the sovereign government of Bosnia to defend itself. I have indicated that I am willing to consider postponing Senate action to override President Clinton's veto of the bipartisan bill to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia only if NATO military action proves to be part of a new and effective policy which leads to a just and lasting peace settlement. However, I would caution the administration that Congress's patience is limited."

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