

Bob Dole

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



**NEWS
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BOSNIA PEACE ACCORD

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

SAN DIEGO -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today issued the following statement:

"I hope and pray that the agreement reached in Dayton this morning is one that contains the elements necessary for a lasting and just peace. I know that our diplomats have worked around the clock to achieve a deal. While I have not seen the details, I hope this agreement is not one that merely papers over differences, that effects a partition of Bosnia, that undermines the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or that leaves the Bosnian government indefinitely dependent on the international community. The goal of the United States should be a Bosnian state that is unified, democratic, and able to defend its territory and its people.

"As for next steps, I spoke to the President today, and I am pleased that he has recognized that the Congress must have a reasonable period of time to review the agreement. The President told me that there would be about three weeks before the agreement would be formally signed. Furthermore, I welcome the President's pledge to ask the Congress for support of the deployment. The Congress has a constitutional responsibility to give this matter its most serious consideration. The Congress has clearly stated its view -- a bipartisan view -- that the President should seek Congressional authorization prior to any deployment of American military forces.

"In my view, the President has not yet made the case to the Congress -- or to the American people -- for a massive deployment of American troops to Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement this agreement. He will have many questions to answer in the coming weeks, including: Why is sending 20,000 Americans to Bosnia the administration's preferred option for implementing this agreement? Are there alternatives to deploying American ground forces? Will the Bosnians be enabled to defend themselves through the lifting of the arms embargo and the supply of arms and training? Are NATO's mission objectives achievable? What guarantees do we have that Serbian President Milosevic will halt military support for Bosnian Serb forces and turn over indicted war criminals?

"This is a very serious matter. It will require thorough deliberation by the Congress. We have no greater responsibility than to prevent the needless shedding of American blood. And so, we must ensure that the United States does not become involved in a failed endeavor. I expect that the Congress will turn to this issue in earnest before we adjourn this year. At long last American leadership is being exercised -- I only hope that it is being exercised in the pursuit of the right objectives."

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