



## Security Council

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LETTER DATED 12 MARCH 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 11 March 1998, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I would appreciate your bringing it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

Annex

Letter dated 11 March 1998 from the Secretary-General  
of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed  
to the Secretary-General

In accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I enclose herewith the fourteenth monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) (see appendix). I would appreciate your making the report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

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Appendix

Fourteenth monthly report to the Security Council on the  
operations of the Stabilization Force

1. There are approximately 35,000 troops currently deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all the nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and 20 non-NATO countries.
2. Over the reporting period (21 January-20 February), the Stabilization Force (SFOR) continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols. A total of 2,750 sorties were flown by combat aircraft, with the SFOR helicopter fleet flying 203 hours. Between 8 and 13 February commanders and staff from the countries contributing forces to SFOR's Strategic Reserve Force (Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Turkey, United States of America) deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina to conduct pre-exercise reconnaissance in preparation for Exercise Dynamic Response '98, a deployment exercise for SFOR's strategic reserve, which will take place between 25 March and 7 April.
3. Over the reporting period, SFOR continued to secure the transmission towers used by Srpska Radio Television (SRT) at Duga Nijva, Udrigovo and Veliki Zep in Multinational Division North (MND(N)) and at Trebevic and Leotar in MND (South-East). On 13 February, interim arrangements for the management of the SRT were signed by President Biljana Plavšić, the Republika Srpska Minister of Information and the Senior Deputy High Representative. Discussions between SFOR and the Republika Srpska Government are under way to reach agreement on transferring control and security of the SRT towers.
4. On 22 January, in support of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, SFOR troops in Bijeljina detained a person indicted for war crimes. He was subsequently transported to The Hague. On 14 February, two others voluntarily surrendered to SFOR troops in Bosanski Šamac. They too were subsequently transported to The Hague.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

5. The parties remain generally compliant with most military aspects of the Peace Agreement across the whole area of operations. However, over the reporting period, there has been increased tension in Drvar, in MND (South-West), and in Stolac in MND (South-East). In Drvar, which has been identified as a priority area for minority refugee returns in 1998, 14 Bosnian Serb homes have been destroyed by arson since 31 January. Serbs from the town have expressed their desire to return but have been hampered by the arson attacks. Bosnian Croat local police have been accused by the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) of participation in the arson attacks and of mistreating Bosnian Serb refugees. At the beginning of February, in Stolac, the Bosnian Croat Chief of Police was decertified by the IPTF and subsequently relieved of his duties by the cantonal authorities, following accusations that he had given tacit approval for attacks against Bosniac and Serb refugees trying to return to the area.

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6. On 11 February, a weapons amnesty programme was publicly launched. The Bosnian Presidency's Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM) and the armed forces of both entities expressed their support for the amnesty and the entities have agreed to issue the appropriate legislation by 19 March. The programme will be in two phases, the first focusing on mines, ordnance and warlike matériel and the second on weapons. This initiative will be led by the entities, with the support of SFOR and other international organizations in theatre, in particular the Office of the High Representative and IPTF. Local police are taking the lead in organizing and running the amnesty, with the entity armed forces providing support in the handling of mines and explosives. SFOR will provide the appropriate assistance. The collection period will last from 2 March to 15 April.

7. At the meeting of the Joint Military Commission on 16 February, the SFOR Deputy Commander, Operations, issued instructions to the parties requiring them to reduce both combat and infrastructure sites by a further 25 per cent to approximately 400 sites. The execution of this programme will begin on 1 May 1998, following approval by SFOR of the entities' plans, and will end on 20 December 1998.

8. The Republika Srpska Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade remains subject to the control of SFOR. A ban on all activities continues to be imposed on the Brigade until further notice owing to its non-compliance with the instructions of the SFOR Commander. On 12 February, SFOR convened a Joint Special Police Subcommission meeting in Bijeljina to discuss bringing the Police Unit for the Protection of People and Buildings under SFOR control. SFOR will shortly issue an amended set of instructions for specialist police, confirmation of the buildings and VIPs to be guarded and any other special compliance instructions regarding personnel lists and the structure of specialist police units.

9. Over the reporting period, SFOR carried out a total of 383 military weapons storage sites inspections: 107 Bosniac, 117 Bosnian Croat, 7 Federation and 152 Bosnian Serb. The following weapons were confiscated: from the Bosniacs, 80 kilograms of non-authorized explosives; from the Bosnian Croats, 4,700 small arms rounds; and from the Bosnian Serbs, 1 rocket-propelled grenade launcher, 7,145 rocket-propelled grenades, 18 rifle grenades, 97 hand grenades, 3 mortar shells, 12 mines, 46 long-barrelled weapons and 24,116 small arms rounds.

10. SFOR continues to support, on a case-by-case basis, the IPTF-led inspections of local police stations. Weapons in excess of the expected inventory are immediately confiscated and subsequently destroyed. Over the reporting period the following weapons were confiscated: from the Federation, 26 grenades, 3 mines, 10 rifles, 1 long-barrelled weapon and 828 small arms rounds; and from the Republika Srpska, 2 rifles, 19 grenades, 306 small arms rounds and 5 120-mm mortar rounds.

11. Over the reporting period, no unauthorized checkpoints were reported. The new common licence plate approved by the High Representative in January was made available to the public on 15 February and will be compulsory for all vehicles within Bosnia and Herzegovina from 31 July 1998. With effect from 30 April, the new licence plates will be mandatory for any vehicle-owner wishing to travel abroad.

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12. During the reporting period, SFOR troops monitored a total of 508 training and movement activities: 124 Bosniac, 65 Bosnian Croat, 114 Federation and 205 Bosnian Serb. On 31 January, SFOR lifted the ban that had been placed on the Butila Unit of the Federation Rapid Reaction Brigade for non-compliance during the elections and for threatening behaviour. Currently there are no training and movement bans imposed on either armed force.

13. Over the reporting period, SFOR monitored 170 demining operations carried out by the entity armed forces: 54 by the Bosniacs; 95 by the Bosnian Croats; and 21 by the Bosnian Serbs. Both entities continue to demonstrate satisfactory compliance with the counter-mine campaign. The SFOR programme to train deminers is running smoothly, with 76 students graduating at the end of January (30 Bosnian Serb, 30 Bosniac and 16 Bosnian Croat). The entities began their own courses on 16 February, with the graduates from the first SFOR course acting as instructors.

14. The last meeting of the Subregional Consultative Commission discussed modalities for reconfiguring a limited number of tanks for use in demining. Progress in this area continues and the entities are working closely with SFOR in their efforts to move the process forward.

#### Cooperation with international organizations

15. Within its capabilities, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, working routinely with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office of the High Representative, IPTF, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

16. SFOR is continuing to support the installation phase of the municipal elections, primarily through providing a secure environment and area security, and through participation in the OSCE election results implementation committees at regional levels. On 31 January, SFOR supported the meeting of the Republika Srpska National Assembly in Banja Luka by ensuring a safe environment and freedom of movement to and from the city for all Assembly members. On 4 February, SFOR supported the inaugural meeting of the Zepce Municipal Council and, between 10 and 19 February provided a safe environment for, and movement to, the Municipal Council meeting in Srebrenica.

17. SFOR continues to provide assistance to the Office of the High Representative in the field of civil air traffic, with particular reference to expanding civil air operations at Sarajevo airport. SFOR has held several meetings with airlines and the Office of the High Representative to facilitate future commercial activity within the country and has provided advice on resolving the problems caused by the lack of a bilateral airspace agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

18. SFOR has continued to provide support to the efforts of the Office of the High Representative to establish common institutions, with particular emphasis on the Standing Committee on Military Matters. The Standing Committee met on 11 February and was briefed by a representative from NATO headquarters on NATO's proposed security cooperation activities with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The

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Standing Committee also discussed military representation abroad and agreed that, initially, representatives would be posted to Washington, Brussels and Vienna. It was further agreed that they would represent the entities and Bosnia and Herzegovina and would submit reports to the Presidency, the Standing Committee and the Ministries of Defence. The next meeting of the Standing Committee is provisionally scheduled for 18 March.

19. SFOR continues to develop proposals to increase support for the return of displaced persons and refugees, including through additional support to the Reconstruction and Return Task Force chaired by the Office of the High Representative.

#### Outlook

20. Tension is likely to rise in Brčko in anticipation of the arbitration decision, which is expected in mid-March. SFOR will continue to contribute to a secure environment by enhancing patrols in the area.

21. On 20 February, following consultations with the non-NATO countries contributing to SFOR, the North Atlantic Council agreed that, subject to the necessary mandate from the Security Council, NATO is prepared to organize and lead a multinational force in Bosnia and Herzegovina following the end of SFOR's current mandate in June 1998.

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