

**Security Council**

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3633rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 23 February 1996 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Croatia", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the further report of the Secretary-General of 14 February 1996 (S/1996/109) submitted pursuant to its resolution 1019 (1995) on Croatia.

"The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 8 January 1996 (S/PRST/1996/2). The Council acknowledges that the incidence of human rights violations has been greatly reduced. However, it expresses concern that isolated incidents of killings and other violations of human rights have been reported. The Council also acknowledges the significant progress made by the Croatian Government in alleviating the humanitarian plight of the mostly elderly Serb population who remain in the former sectors in the Republic of Croatia. The Council looks to the Croatian Government to ensure the security and well-being of that population and to ensure the provision of basic humanitarian assistance, including access to medical facilities, pension allowances and property. The Council also looks to the Croatian Government to pursue vigorously prosecutions against those suspected of past violations of international humanitarian law and human rights against the local Serb minority.

"The Security Council calls upon the Croatian Government to give due consideration to granting amnesty to local Serbs remaining in detention on charges arising from their alleged participation in the conflict.

"The Security Council reiterates that all States must cooperate fully with the International Tribunal and its organs established pursuant to its resolution 827 (1993). It notes that Croatian legislation providing for full cooperation with the International Tribunal is reported to be imminent. The Council urges the Government of the Republic of Croatia to uphold its obligations with respect to the International Tribunal unreservedly and without delay.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned at the situation of those refugees from the Republic of Croatia who wish to return. It condemns the fact that effective measures have not so far been taken in that respect. It calls upon the Croatian Government to ensure the expeditious processing of all requests from refugees. It underlines that the exercise by members of the local Serb population of their rights, including their right to remain, leave or return to their homes in safety and dignity, and reclaim possession of their property, cannot be made conditional upon an agreement on the normalization of relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Council demands that the Croatian Government take measures forthwith to ensure that those concerned may fully exercise these rights. The Council also calls upon the Croatian Government to rescind its earlier decision to suspend articles of the constitutional law affecting the rights of national minorities, and to proceed with the establishment of a provisional human rights court. It reminds the Croatian Government once again that the promotion of strict respect for the rights of persons belonging to the Serb minority is relevant to the successful implementation of the Basic Agreement of 12 November 1995 on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1995/951, annex).

"The Security Council welcomes and supports the Croatian Government's agreement to the establishment by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe of a long-term mission with a view to monitoring respect for human rights throughout the Republic of Croatia. The Council pays tribute to the valuable work carried out by UNCRO and the European Community Monitoring Mission in this field over the past year.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed and to report in any case no later than 20 June 1996, drawing inter alia on information available from other relevant United Nations bodies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the European Community Monitoring Mission, on the progress of measures undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Croatia in the light of this statement.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter".
