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LETTER DATED 14 APRIL 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a communication dated 12 April 1999 which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

Annex

[Original: English]

Letter dated 12 April 1999 from the Secretary-General
of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to
the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on Stabilization Force (SFOR) operations. I would appreciate your making this report available to the United Nations Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations Security Council on
Stabilization Force operations

1. Over the reporting period (21 February-20 March 1999), there were approximately 34,500 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all 19 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and from 17 non-NATO countries. The increase in numbers compared to the last report reflects ongoing force rotation.
2. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols, with combat aircraft flying approximately 132 hours. Ground patrols were intensified in sensitive areas in order to guarantee a secure environment, both before and after the Brčko arbitration decision in early March (see below).
3. SFOR continues to monitor entity compliance with Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), which prohibits the transport of weapons into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, by inspecting Government-owned factories and weapons storage sites, and by monitoring crossing points on the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. To date, no violations of resolution 1160 (1998) have been reported.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

4. Over the reporting period, the parties remained substantially compliant with most military aspects of the Peace Agreement. However, the period was characterized by heightened tension, particularly in the Republika Srpska, owing to the continuing political instability there, and to the 5 March Brčko arbitration decision. On 16 March, around 20,000 people demonstrated in 30 cities across the Republika Srpska, ranging from 50 people in Pale to 6,000 people in Banja Luka, protesting against the Brčko arbitration and the removal, on 5 March, of Republika Srpska President Poplasen by the High Representative. SFOR troops monitored the demonstrations, all of which took place without incident, and with no reports of violence.
5. Tensions also arose within the Federation, particularly in Mostar, Stolac and Capljina, following the 16 March car bomb attack in Sarajevo on Mr. Leutar, a Bosnian Croat and the Federation Deputy Minister of the Interior, who subsequently died as a result of his injuries. SFOR provided support to the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) and to the local police in their investigations of this incident.
6. Over the reporting period, SFOR troops conducted a total of 352 military weapons storage site inspections: 83 Bosniac; 51 Bosnian Croat; 183 Bosnian Serb; and 35 Federation. Two illegal weapons sites were discovered in Jahorina and Kuda in Multi-National Division (South-East). In the site at Jahorina, SFOR troops confiscated 250 hand grenades, 3 M-79 anti-tank weapons, one 120 mm mortar, two 82 mm mortars, 4 anti-tank rocket launchers, four AT3 anti-tank missiles and large quantities of ammunition. In Kuda, SFOR troops seized 80

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hand grenades, 7 anti-tank grenades, 6 rifle grenades, two M80 anti-tank rocket launchers with 2 rockets, 3 sub-machine guns, 1 shotgun, 15 kilograms of explosives, 68 mines and large quantities of ammunition. All the weapons seized were subsequently destroyed by SFOR.

7. The reduction period under the weapons and ammunition storage programme, which ended on 28 February, resulted in the Entity armed forces closing 91 per cent of those sites required to be closed or consolidated (129 of 141 sites). The remaining 9 per cent will be closed or consolidated shortly.

8. SFOR monitored 512 training and movement activities during the period: 133 Bosniac; 49 Bosnian Croat; 175 Bosnian Serb; and 155 Federation. Training and movement bans were imposed on: the 3rd Corps of the Bosnian Serb Army from 27 February until further notice because of the involvement of personnel in the smuggling of weapons; on the 1st Bosnian Serb Army Guards Corps from 21 to 23 February for non-compliance with senior officer appointments; on the 11th MP Battalion of the Bosnian Serb Army from 26 February to 12 March for non-participation in a programmed activity; and on the 1st Rapid Reaction Brigade of the Bosniac Army from 26 February to 19 March for non-participation in a programmed activity. In addition, the Republika Srpska Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade (PATB) remains under the training and movement ban imposed in August 1997.

9. On 24 February, SFOR troops seized two lorry-loads of weapons at a checkpoint near Brčko. Investigations revealed the involvement of active duty personnel of the Bosnian Serb Army's 311th Infantry Brigade in the attempted arms smuggling, and COMSFOR subsequently ordered the disbandment of the Brigade. This began on 2 March, with SFOR removing weapons and equipment belonging to the Brigade for subsequent destruction.

10. Entity armed forces demining teams continued to conduct counter-mine support operations in order to ensure their readiness for the new summer demining campaign, which is due to begin on 19 April. Between 8 February and 14 March, despite the adverse weather conditions, nine demining teams in Multi-National Division (South-East) conducted 101 mine-clearing operations, removing 42 anti-personnel mines and 6 items of unexploded ordnance from 3,176 square metres of land.

Cooperation with international organizations

11. Within capabilities, and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including IPTF, the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

12. SFOR continues to provide support to the Office of the High Representative in its efforts to open airfields and to expand civil air operations. The Memorandum of Understanding for Mostar airport was extended during February to permit the expansion of air cargo and airmail operations. Preparatory work for the refurbishment of the Sarajevo air terminal is continuing, together with the installation of airfield lighting.

13. SFOR also continues to play an active role in supporting the efforts of the Office of the High Representative to establish joint institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, SFOR, together with the Office of the High Representative and OSCE, has been working to further develop the Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM), inter alia, through the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Committee. This subject was due to be discussed at the 9 March SCMM meeting, which was, however, cancelled owing to the political situation in the Republika Srpska.

Outlook

14. SFOR will continue to monitor the situation closely in the light of ongoing operations in Serbia and Kosovo. An influx of Kosovar refugees is likely to increase tension. Isolated acts of intimidation and violence can also be expected to continue as a result of the return of refugees and displaced persons.
