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**UNITED NATIONS PROTECTION FORCE IN CROATIA**

**BY**

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USAWC INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

**United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Croatia**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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The last decade of the twentieth century began with the stormy events and tremendous changes in the world. In the Balkans, the hurricane of a Greater Serbia prevailed where the idea that "all Serbs will live in one state" led to a bloody war. Instead of accepting democratic principles and a community of states, Serbia launched a war of aggression in the belief that in a short period they could crush all opposition and remain in control of the entire Yugoslav area. They miscalculated. The process of democratization and education affecting all of Eastern Europe did not bypass the former Yugoslavia. From unexpected resistance there emerged new, sovereign and internationally recognized states. The Republic of Croatia, one of those nations, emerged for the first time since 1102, and was accepted into the United Nations. It was a dream dreamt by many, but only realized by this current generation of Croatsians. War meant sacrifice, destruction, and displacement of the Croatian people. This work is the result of the attempt to present an overview and explanation of the events occurring in Croatia during the mandate of UNPROFOR in order to provide a solid basis for political thought and attitudes towards Croatia and Croatsians. The conditions leading up to the aggression against Croatia, the arrival of the United Nations peacekeeping force of UNPROFOR, and the chronology of events from 1992-1995 in Croatia are the topics of this Strategic Research Project.



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## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The name Croat (*Hrvat*), which is probably of Iranian origin, was first mentioned in the second or third century, near the Sea of Azov. The Croats migrated to southern Poland around Cracow, where White Croatia was located. Around the year 630, they arrived in the western part of the Balkan peninsula, and defeated or assimilated the Illyro-Celtic tribes, which had already adapted to Roman culture. The Croats also freed themselves from the Avars, and established two principalities, one on the territory of the former Roman province of Dalmatia and the other in the Pannonian region. The first principality was known as the coastal or Dalmatian Croatia, and the other as the Pannonion or Sava Croatia. The Croats soon accepted Christianity, and became an integral part of Western Christian civilization. The most notable among the Croatian princes was Branimir (879-892), who established firm ties with the Pope, and in 879 obtained recognition from the Vatican—a first in the history of the Croats.

During the reign of Tomislav (910-928), Croatia, along with Bulgaria, became the strongest state in the area between Germany and Constantinople. He organized a strong army and navy, and annexed Sava

Croatia. Through this act, the two Croatian principalities were united for the first time. At the height of his power, Tomislav crowned himself king (925).

In 1091, the Hungarian army invaded Croatia, and Petar, the last Croatian king, was killed in battle. However, the Hungarians were unable to take Croatia by force, and thus signed a treaty in 1002, by which the Croatian kingdom was incorporated into Hungary. From 1002 to 1526, the Croatian-Hungarian state was not a very significant factor in the region between the German and the Byzantine Empires, but was a rival to the Venetian state on the Adriatic Sea.

From 1526 to 1790, most of Croatia was under Ottoman rule. Due to the constant wars with the Turks, they lost a large part of their national territory, particularly eastern Slavonia, southern Dalmatia, Lika, Krbova, and their former capitals, such as Knin and Bihac. At that time, Croatia along with Hungary, was the vanguard and defender of central Europe. Its territory on the borders facing Turkey were excluded from administration of the ban and organized as a defensive cordon, called the Military Frontier, under direct rule from Graz and Vienna. The Turks took hundreds of thousands of Croats and sold them as slaves in the East. The Turks, and then the administration of the Military Frontier, settled thousands of non-Slavic

Vlachs and Serbs into their homes. In this manner, Croatia lost its territory and over a half of its population.

From 1790 to 1918, Croatia was part of Austria-Hungary. After the Berlin Congress in 1879, Austria-Hungary obtained Bosnia-Herzegovina; as a result, Croats living there found themselves in the same state as the rest of the Croatian people. When the Military Frontier was dissolved in 1881, its parts were united to their historical, mother country of Croatia. However, unification with the Military Frontier enlarged the number of Serbs in Croatia. After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire following World War I, Croatia joined the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929.

During World War II, an "independent" Croatian state was established for the first time in eight hundred years. It was similar to the puppet governments which the Nazi occupiers inspired in the other occupied countries, such as Vichy France. All of these governments, against the best interests of their people, collaborated with Hitler's Germany and committed terrible crimes. The "Ustashes" (Fascists) were never more than 60,000 strong, while the majority of the Croatian people refused to accept fascism and actively fought against it. For example, during the most difficult period

of the war, before 1943, five out of nine Tito-led army corps fought against the Germans in Croatia.

After the communist regime of Josip Broz Tito was established, Croatia became one of the six constituent provinces of the Republic of Yugoslavia. A revival of nationalism in 1971, however, led to a crackdown in Belgrade.

### THE CONFLICT IN CROATIA

When the unified communist party of Yugoslavia fell apart in 1990, democratic elections became possible, in which Slovenia and Croatia could reject the communist system. In the Croatian elections, the Croatian Democratic Union, led by Franjo Tudjman won the elections.

The province held a referendum in May 1991, in which 92 percent of the people of the Republic of Croatia voted for independence. By June 1991, after the popular referendum, the Republics of Croatia and Slovenia both declared themselves independent from Yugoslavia. The Republic of Serbia, nevertheless, strongly disapproved of these declarations of independence, and expressed grave concern over the fate of Serbs remaining in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On 7 October 1991,

formal independence was declared, and Croatia recognized as an independent nation was recognized by Germany in December 1991, and by the rest of the European community in January 1992.

The Serbian minority within Croatia, readily convinced by propaganda emanating from Belgrade, felt that the Croatian government was no better than the former "Ustashas" (Fascists) under Nazi rule, and faced the threat of expulsion or even genocide. Their preparations for armed resistance to the authorities in Zagreb began well before the first free multi-party elections in Croatia in early 1990. Serbian opposition to an independent Croatia grew to such an extent that, by the summer of 1990, the minority in Croatia were in a state of open rebellion focused on the town of Knin with the protection of the Serbian-led Federal Yugoslav Army (YNA)<sup>(2)</sup>. The Croatian population, nonetheless, consists of 70% Croats, 12% Serbs, and less than 1% Muslims.

By July 1991, just after the declaration of independence, Serbian forces launched full scale hostilities with an offensive into eastern Croatia and in support of the Serbian minority's bid for secession<sup>(3)</sup>. The poorly equipped and ill-trained Croatian forces therefore faced the twin threats of an uprising by well-armed, local Serbian irregulars and a major attack by

regular YNA forces in the east . Croatian resistance was also hampered by the arms embargo imposed on all parties in former Yugoslavian by UN Security Council Resolution 713 of September 1991. In practice, the embargo imposed an uneven distribution of force as the Serbians in effect controlled the YNA and its military arsenal. Accordingly, a large proportion of Croatia's efforts were diverted towards stemming the Serbian advance in eastern Croatia. Serbian militias operating around the Knin were able to occupy large upland areas of Croatian territory adjoining Bosnia. By the end of the hostilities in January 1992, more than a quarter of Croatia was held by Serbian forces, including a strip of territory on the western bank of the River Danube, contiguous with the former Yugoslav state.

#### UNITED NATIONS INVOLVEMENT

The collapse of the former Yugoslavia in 1991 seemed to take the international community by surprise. The European Community (EC) began an attempt to mediate the conflict with their efforts in mid-1991 to dispatch a fact-finding mission of observers. However, their attempts to stop hostilities in Croatia and to resolve the crisis in the framework of the Conference on Yugoslavia proved unsuccessful.

The United Nations involvement in the former Yugoslavia began on 25 September 1991, when the Security Council met at the ministerial level to unanimously adopt Resolution 713 <sup>(7)</sup>. This resolution called upon all members states to implement immediately a "general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia." The Council commended the effort of the EC with the support of the states participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)--now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)--to restore peace and dialog in Yugoslavia and invited the Secretary General to offer his assistance.

Secretary General Javier-Perez de Cuellar appointed Mr. Cyrus Vance, former U.S. Secretary of State, as his Personal Envoy for Yugoslavia, on 8 October 1991. On 23 November 1991, Mr. Vance convened a meeting in Geneva, and the President of Croatia, the President of Serbia, the Secretary of State for the National Defense of Yugoslavia, and Lord Carrington, Chairman of the EC's Conference on Yugoslavia attended the meeting. The parties reached agreement on an immediate cease-fire and expressed the wish to see a speedy establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

By its Resolution 724 of 15 December 1991, the Security Council approved a report by the Secretary-General which contained a plan for a possible peacekeeping operation. A small group of military officers, civilian police, and United Nations Secretariat staff arrived in Croatia to prepare for the implementation of this plan.

On 2 January 1992, the Personal Envoy convened a meeting in Sarajevo with military representatives of the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Yugoslav Army. At this meeting, the Implementing Accord for an unconditional cease-fire was signed.

On 21 February 1992, the Security Council, by its Resolution 743, established the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) for a period of 12 months as an interim arrangement to create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the crisis within the framework of the EC's Conference on Yugoslavia. The Council requested the Secretary-General to deploy immediately those elements of UNPROFOR which could assist in developing an implementation plan. The Security Council authorized the full deployment of UNPROFOR by its Resolution 749 dated 7 April 1992.

# UNITED NATIONS PROTECTIONS FORCE (UNPROFOR)

FEBRUARY 1992 - MARCH 1995

## INTRODUCTION VANCE PLAN, UNPA

In early 1992 the first contingent of the UN peacekeepers was deployed in Croatia. The spread and escalation of the conflict swiftly saw the additional deployment of UN forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia.

A proposal for a UN peacekeeping operation in Croatia was published as Appendix III to the Secretary-General's report dated 11 December 1991. The plan, widely known as the Vance Plan, had been devised by Cyrus Vance and Marack Goulding, Assistant Secretary-General for political issues. The key elements of the Vance Plan were the following:

- 1) withdrawal of the YNA from Croatia;
- 2) demilitarization of the UN Protected Areas (UNPA) with the continued functioning, on an interim basis, of local authorities and police under UNPROFOR supervision in proportions reflecting the pre-war ethnic structure of the population and pending the achievement of an overall political solution to the crisis, and full protection of human rights;

- 3) providing all appropriate support to humanitarian organizations; and
- 4) returning displaced persons to their homes in the UNPA, under conditions of full safety.

According to the Vance Plan, UN troops were stationed in the part of Croatia designated as UN Protected Areas (UNPA). It was stated explicitly that UNPA were areas “in which Serbs constitute the majority or substantial minority of the population where inter-communal tensions have led to armed conflict in the recent past.” In the UNPA, all armed forces in them would be either withdrawn or disbanded, and the role of UNPROFOR was to ensure that these areas remained demilitarized.

UN police monitors were proposed to supervise the work of the local police force, “formed from residents of the UNPA in question, in proportions reflecting the national composition which lived in it before the recent hostilities.” UNPROFOR, together with the humanitarian agencies of the UN, would also ensure the safe and peaceful return of displaced persons to their homes within the UNPA. The entire area under the UN protection was divided for operational purposes into four “sectors” (east, west, north and south) (Appendix B)<sup>(3)</sup>. There were significant differences amongst the

UNPA with regard to pre-war national composition, geography, effective military control before UNPROFOR's deployment, and other characteristics.

#### UNPROFOR'S FIRST YEAR IN CROATIA (1992).

Although the original plan had not provided for these circumstances, the situation on the ground made it necessary for UNPROFOR to take control of the "Pink Zones". The term was applied to those parts of the territory outside of the original UNPA, which remained under Serbian control after the cessation of hostilities in January 1992. The most extensive zones were established around Sector South, which contained the occupied parts of the municipalities of Sinj, Drnis, Sibenik, Zadar, Gospic, and Otocac. All of these towns had Croatian majorities. However, most of the Pink Zones were predominantly inhabited by Croats before the war.

Under the Vance Plan, Croatia might have insisted that these areas should be handed over unconditionally following the withdrawal of the YNA. In order to avoid a possible outbreak of hostilities, Croatia agreed to have UNPROFOR assistance in reinstating Croatian authorities in the Pink Zones. The UN Secretary-General expressed his gratitude for Croatia's flexibility in this issue; however, in due course, the Pink Zones effectively

became integral parts of the UNPA. In other words, they stayed under the control of the Republic of Serb Krajina in Knin. In spite of a clear legal framework, UNPROFOR did not succeed in persuading Serbs to cooperate on this issue.

During UNPROFOR's first year, the experience in Croatia was a mixed one. Its principal success was to ensure the complete withdrawal of YNA forces from the territory of Croatia, including the Prevlaka Peninsula. Until the fourth week of January 1993, UNPROFOR's presence also helped to prevent a recurrence of hostilities in the UNPA and the Pink Zones.

However, the uncooperative attitude of the local Serbian authorities prevented the UNPROFOR from achieving the demilitarization of the UNPA and the disarming of the Serbian Territorial Defense and irregular forces. As a result, UNPROFOR was not able to establish the conditions of peace and security that would have permitted the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes in these areas. In addition, they were not able to establish border controls.

An atmosphere of terror and intimidation in many parts of the four sectors characterized much of the first ten months of the mandate period. Efforts of the United Nations civilian police to prevent human rights abuses

in the UNPA did not prove fully successful. Beginning in November 1992, however, the situation did show improvement in all but a few areas, and the maintenance of law and order was gradually enhanced through the reorganization and redeployment of the local police.

On 5 December 1992, Croatian President Dr. Franjo Tudjman, declared that the willingness of his government to agree to an extension of UNPROFOR's mandate of 12 months was dependent on the progress in a number of other areas, to include: complete disarmament of all paramilitary forces and militia in the UNPA and the Pink Zones; a destruction of their heavy weapons; voluntary and unconditional return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in the UNPA; maintenance of tight controls by UNPROFOR in those border areas where the boundaries of the UNPA coincided with internationally recognized frontiers of Croatia; and restoration of Croatian authority in the pink zones. He also urged the Council to grant UNPROFOR an enforcement mandate. The Serbians refused to enter into negotiations with the Croatian government, which requested the return of the UNPA and pink zones to the Croatian control.

The Krajina Serbian leadership in the UNPA, however, refused to consider those territories to be part of Croatia, and rejected talks on the

basis that the plan was not explicitly intended to prejudge a political solution to the Yugoslav crisis. Further, the Serbians argued that the two parties to the original plan, the President of Serbia and the Federal Yugoslav military authorities in Belgrade, no longer had a recognized legal status in the areas where UNPROFOR was deployed. Therefore, the mandate and deployment of UNPROFOR required new discussions with the Republic of Serb Krajina.

In these circumstances, the Secretary-General saw three options with regard to UNPROFOR's mandate in Croatia as the initial period of 12 months drew to a close. First, UNPROFOR could withdraw, but withdrawal from UNPA would almost certainly result in the resumption of large-scale hostilities, and would nullify the political effort and the material resources already invested. Secondly, the mandate could be modified, but any enforcement capability "would be a fundamental contradiction of the nature and purpose of UNPROFOR's deployment in Croatia, as a peacekeeping force entrusted with the implementation of a plan agreed by all parties." A third option was that the mandate could be renewed without any change.

In the Secretary-General's judgment, the difficulties which UNPROFOR and the Security Council faced in Croatia could be attributed to two principal factors: the inability to implement the peacekeeping plan, and

the lack of an agreed settlement to the conflict between the Republic of Croatia and the Serbian populations living the UNPA and the Pink Zones.

UNPROFOR'S SECOND YEAR IN CROATIA (1993).

On 10 January 1993, the Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council extend UNPROFOR's existing mandate for an interim period up to 31 March 1993 in order to give the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) the necessary time for negotiating. On 19 February 1993, the Security Council adopted Resolution 807, by which it extended UNPROFOR's mandate for an interim period until 31 March 1993.

The Co-Chairmen of the ICFY held several rounds of talks in New York and Geneva with representatives of the governments of Croatia and the Serbian population living in the UNPA and the pink zones. While some progress was made in these talks, fundamental differences remained between the two parties. The Secretary-General told the Security Council that more time would be needed to bring the negotiations to a meaningful conclusion. He therefore recommended the extension of UNPROFOR's mandate for a further interim period of three months.

On 30 March 1993, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNPROFOR with Resolution 815, in which the additional interim period would conclude on 30 June 1993. It also reaffirmed its commitment to ensure the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Croatia. The resolution required the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the methods for effectively implementing the peace plan. He noted, nevertheless, that the presence of UNPROFOR was indispensable for controlling the conflict; for fostering a climate in which negotiations between the parties could be promoted; for preventing the resumption or the escalation of conflict; for providing a pause for the continued efforts of the peacemakers; and for supporting the provision of essential humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNPROFOR for an additional three months to 30 September 1993.

The large Serbian-occupied areas posed a significant military threat by forcing the Croatian armed forces to defend an extremely long line of confrontation, and the unresolved status of the region deterred international investment and virtually precluded viable economic development. Croatia therefore launched two offensives against the Serbian-held areas. In March

1993, in an operation code-named *Maslenica*, Croatian forces regained control of Serbian held areas around the Maslenica bridge near Zadar in order to rebuild and reopen it. This bridge was very important because it divided Croatian territories into a northern and southern parts. In September 1993, Croatia commenced a second offensive known as the *Medak*, with the aim of breaking the siege of Gospic.

Following the renewed outbreak of hostilities in Croatia, intensive efforts were made within the framework of the ICRC and by UNPROFOR to bring about a cease-fire and a restoration of the prior status of territories in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 802.

On 20 September 1993, the Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council renew the mandate of UNPROFOR for a period of six months. In this process, the principal objective of UNPROFOR could only be to keep the peace in order to permit negotiations to take place. To enhance the security of UNPROFOR, he requested the extension of close air support to the territory of Croatia. The Security Council had already authorized Member States to take all necessary measures through the use of air power in support of UNPROFOR.

On 24 September 1993, the Croatian government announced to the Security Council that if the UNPROFOR Mandate was not amended to promote energetic implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, then the UN forces would have to leave Croatia not later than 30 November 1993. On 4 October 1993, the Council by Resolution 871, extended the mandate for a period of six months through 31 March 1994.

On 17 December 1993, Croatian representatives and local Serbian authorities in Croatia signed a Christmas Truce Agreement mediated by UNPROFOR. The two parties undertook to cease all armed hostilities along all existing lines of confrontation from midnight on 23 December 1993 until midnight on 15 January 1994. They also agreed to implement certain confidence-building measures, and to open negotiations as soon as the truce took effect on a "general and lasting" cease-fire, with the separation of forces on both sides.

UNPROFOR'S THIRD YEAR IN CROATIA (1994).

On 29 March 1994, in Zagreb, representatives of Croatia and the local Serbian authorities in UNPA concluded a cease-fire agreement aiming to achieve a lasting cessation of hostilities. The agreement was concluded in the presence of the representatives of the Russian Federation and the

United States, and further witnessed by the ICFY representatives and the Commander, UNPROFOR.

On 31 March 1994, the Security Council, through Resolution 908, extended the UNPROFOR mandate for an additional six-month period terminating on 30 September 1994. UNPROFOR activities in Croatia focused on the monitoring of the general cease-fire agreement on 29 March 1994. By the end of May 1994, UNPROFOR reported almost total compliance with the agreement with a general cessation of hostilities, withdrawal of forces beyond fixed lines of separation, and the placement of heavy weapons in agreed storage sites. UNPROFOR assumed exclusive control over the zone of separation which covered an area of over 1300 square kilometers. Serbians announced their intention to pursue full integration with other Serbian areas in the former Yugoslavia and stipulated unrealistic conditions for talks. Thus, opening negotiations at this stage were impossible.

Croatian criticism of the UN's peacekeeping performance was clearly summarized in a resolution passed by the Croatian parliament on 23 September 1994. According to that resolution, the UN operation was judged to be unsuccessful because it had failed to secure the following:

- (1) disarmament and disbanding of all armed groups operating in occupied territories of Croatia;
- (2) safe return of all displaced persons;
- (3) guarantees for the safety and protection for all those who inhabited presently occupied territories before aggression;
- (4) immediate installation of Croatian government control in the pink zones and later in the rest of the occupied territories in accordance with the 1991 Constitutional Law which provides autonomy for the Serbs;
- (5) control of Croatian boundaries towards Serbia and parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina under the control of Bosnia Serbs.

In a statement issued on the same day, the UN Secretary-General stressed that while he was "...painfully aware of the frustration of the Croatian people that a final political settlement has eluded us." His earlier report to the Security Council on 17 September 1994 clearly indicated UNPROFOR's shortcomings. In that report, he stated that the original mandate had proved difficult to implement, and that demilitarization of the UNPA, the restoration of Croatian authority in the pink zones, and the

establishment of border controls, and assistance for the return of displaced persons, remained unfulfilled.

The four points stressed by the Secretary-General were exactly what the government of Croatia perceived as the key failings on the part of the UN force. All four required either enforcement of the consent of both parties for their implementation. UNPROFOR had neither the means nor the mandate for enforcement action of this nature.

On 20 September 1994, the Security Council through Resolution 947, extended UNPROFOR's mandate until 31 March 1995. The March 1994 cease-fire agreement helped to create a climate conducive for negotiations pursued under ICFY auspices as well as for follow-up measures undertaken by UNPROFOR.

Another step towards confidence-building and an eventual resolution of the Croatian conflict was made on 2 December 1994, when the Croatian sides concluded an agreement on economic issues. This agreement provided for the re-establishment of water and electricity services, the reopening in Croatia of the Zagreb-Belgrade highway, and the reopening of the oil pipeline through the Krajina. In parallel with the economic negotiations, two ICFY negotiators together with the Ambassadors to

Croatia of the Russian Federation and the United States—the “Zagreb Four”—worked on a plan for a political settlement of the conflict between the Croatian government and the local Serbian authorities in the UNPA.

No progress was made on the deployment of international monitors on Croatia’s international borders with Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). There was a continuing increase in the restrictions on UNPROFOR’s freedom of movement imposed by both sides, coupled with a significant decrease in their willingness to cooperate. The number of violations of the cease-fire agreement also increased from the Serbian side.

#### UNPROFOR FOURTH YEAR IN CROATIA (1995)

On 12 January 1995, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman announced that UNPROFOR’s mandate in Croatia would not be renewed after its next expiration date on 31 March 1995, and that the UN force would therefore have to leave Croatia by the end of June 1995. President Tudjman stated that “Croatia’s overall experience during the past two years “had brought him to the conclusion “that, although UNPROFOR has played an important role in stopping violence and major conflict in Croatia, it is an indisputable fact that the present character of the UNPROFOR mission does not provide

conditions necessary for establishing lasting peace and order in the Republic of Croatia (9). This bold Croatian move was brought about by what Croatians perceived as major failings on the part of the UN force.

UNPROFOR in Croatia was regarded with some justification as merely helping to preserve an unsatisfactory de facto situation analogous to the UN operations in the divided Cyprus. The Croatian fear of this process, which was referred to as "Cypriotization," would result in a permanent institutionalized partition of Croatia, and was the main factor prompting President Tudjman's frustration in Croatia of the UNPROFOR's lack of progress on the issue of the Croatian Serb call for full independence and union with the Bosnian-Serb Republic and Serbia proper.

For more than three years, UNPROFOR maintained a traditional peacekeeping role fulfilling a disengagement mission by patrolling lines of confrontation and reporting incidents between opposing forces (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). However, the UNPA were by no means demilitarized. No discernible progress was evident on the return of refugees in the Serbian-occupied areas, and no sincere talks on reintegration of the UNPA into Croatia proper had taken place. This unfavorable situation did not

essentially change even after alterations to the peacekeeping mandate in April 1995.

Following Croatia's diplomatic offensive and threat to eject UN forces, the Security Council finally voted through resolutions by which UNPROFOR was divided into different operations. The original name was kept only for the UN operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNPROFOR)(6). The operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was renamed UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), while the operation in Croatia was renamed UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO).

The Croatian government insisted not only on a new name but also on new tasks for the peacekeepers. However, Resolution 947 did not propose any essential changes to the mandate, but defined UNCRO as an interim arrangement tasked with creating the conditions conducive to a negotiated settlement consistent with the territorial integrity of Croatia. Instead of offensive control of international boundaries, as Croatia insisted, the Security Council authorized UNCRO only for "help in controlling, by monitoring and reporting, the crossing of military personnel, equipment, supplies and weapons."

Nevertheless, the new name did not resolve existing problems. To be fair to the UN peacekeepers and negotiators, it became abundantly clear over three years of fruitless negotiations that the rebel Serbians were simply not interested in remaining part of Croatia and refused any form of autonomy they were offered. Their state of mind was particularly clear when they rejected the so-called "Z-4 Plan," drafted by international mediators, which proposed the status of a "state within a state" for the Knin region.

The existence of major Serbian-held areas, particularly the Krajina in the heart of the state--virtually slicing the continental and coastal parts of Croatia in two--was a critical obstacle to the nation's prospect for political and economic security. For example, a renewal of the once significant Dalmatian tourist industry was rendered impossible by the threat of Serbian shelling. As a result, Croatia changed its position. Instead of a cooperation and patience, Croatia started to practice a sort of "realpolitik," and therefore launched two offensives against the Serbian-held areas.

In May 1995 in an operation code named "Flash," Croatian forces regained the Serbian-controlled part of Western Slavonia. Following another round of abortive negotiations in Geneva, Croatia launched in August 1995, another offensive known as "Storm" with the aims of breaking

the siege of the UN safe haven of Bihac in Bosnia and establishing Croatian government rule in the former UN Sector North and South. Immediately after the operation, the Adriatic pipeline, connecting the Croatian terminal at the coast with Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, was reopened. Also, after more than four years, Zagreb and Split were reconnected by railway. Moreover, the operation enabled the return of more than 100,000 displaced persons.

After the fall of Krajina and Serbian-held parts in the Western Slavonia (former UN Sectors North, South and West), Eastern Slavonia (UN Sector East) was the only occupied part of Croatia remaining. The Serbian-held region covers the eastern-most part of Croatia along the Danube River with an area of 2,580 square kilometers amounting to 4.6% of Croatia's state territory. In response to the new situation, the UN's presence in Croatia has been significantly reduced, but the UN presence will continue in the Croatian Danubian Region until the end of the extended mandate through 15 January 1998.

#### CONCLUSION:

UNPROFOR is the largest, the most expensive and complex peace operation in the history of the United Nations. Its goals were both of a

military and civilian nature: to keep the peace and build confidence between warring sides, and to help achieve a final political solution and restore normal life to Croatia, where it was deployed. The annual cost of the UNPROFOR operation have been estimated as US\$ 1.2 billion. During the UNPROFOR mandate in Croatia, 56 peacekeepers have been killed, and 506 have been wounded.

The ambiguous nature of the Vance Plan concerning the role of the UN peacekeepers and the future of the UNPA was at least partially responsible for this failure. UNPROFOR was caught between the Croatian interpretation of the plan—that the UN role should be to assist the Croatian authorities to reassert their control over the Serbian-occupied areas, to disarm the Serbians and assist in the return of Croatian refugees to the UNPA—and the Serbian view, that the UN force was there to protect the Serbian-held areas, and ensure their autonomy.

UNPROFOR therefore suffered from the unenviable position of attempting to supervise an agreement which it had neither the mandate or the resources to enforce, and ultimately was even unable to extend its own authority throughout the UNPA, which remained under the control of the local Serbian authorities.

The Croatian people believe, nevertheless, that UNPROFOR has played an important role in stopping violence in many major conflicts in Croatia <sup>(11)</sup>.

## ENDNOTES

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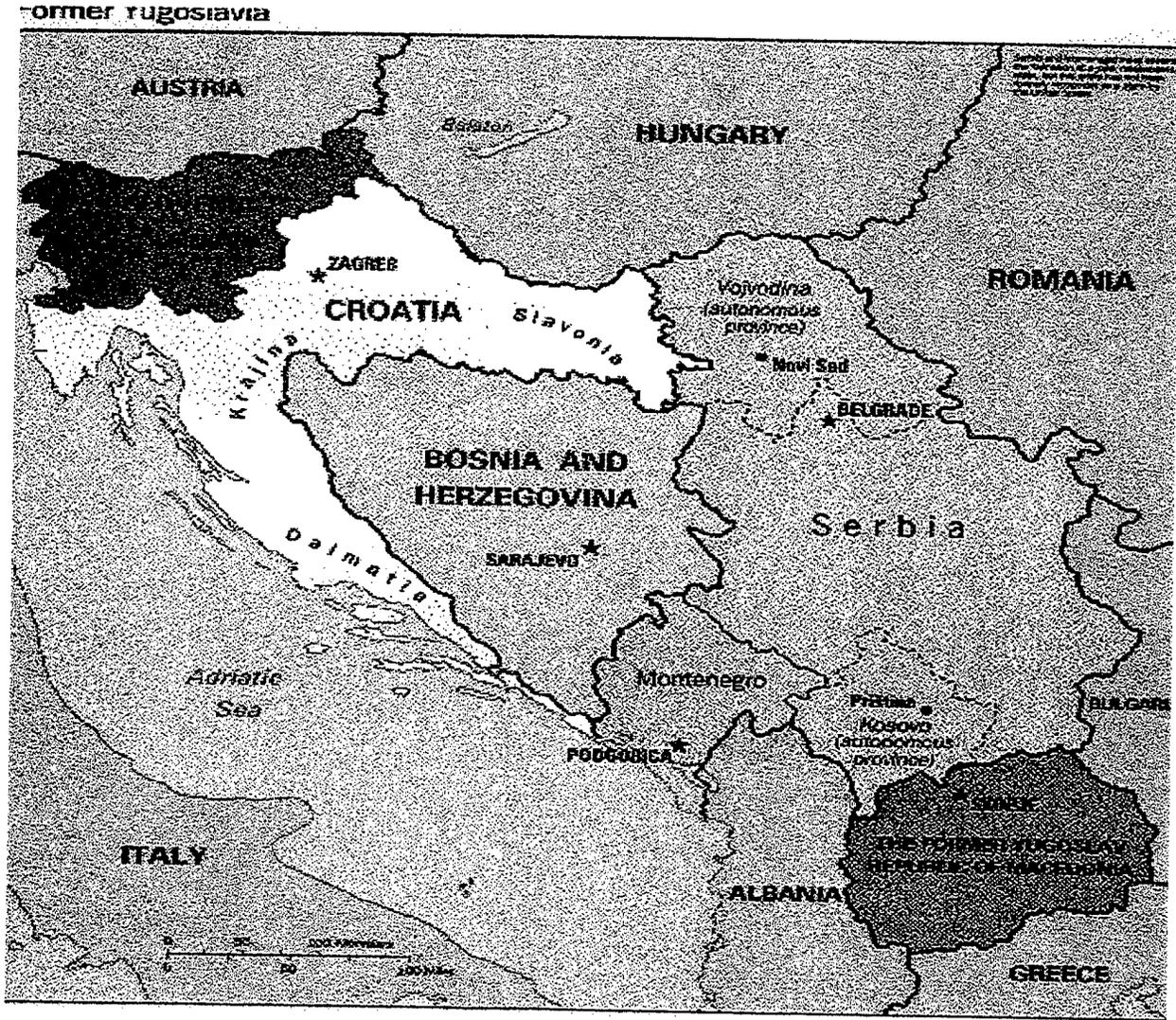


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APPENDIX A





APPENDIX B

UNPA and Pink Zones In Croatia

