

The Accordance of British Diplomacy with US Diplomacy for Kosovo during 1998

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Abstract

The decisive role in stopping the bloody conflict in the areas of former Yugoslavia was the joint British and American diplomacy efforts. The decision of international diplomacy, that the Albanians are not participants, the protagonists of their fate at the Dayton Conference, empowered the feeling and projects of Serbian nationalism, whereas the Albanians were disappointed with this decision. In these circumstances KLA activity began to be supported by Albanian population and bloody conflict started to expand in Kosovo as well. British and American diplomats were determined to support and vote resolutions of the Security Council on the condemnation of the violence in Kosovo made by all parties in the conflict. Resolutions for Kosovo were decisive in legitimizing international engagement in resolving the conflict in Kosovo and establishing peace in the Balkans.

Keyword: Diplomacy, British, American, Resolution, Kosovo, Dayton

The Dayton Agreement and the non-inclusion of Kosovo leadership in resolving the Kosovo issue began to increase dissatisfaction with the peaceful resistance,¹ which was not supported by international diplomacy to end the Kosovo problem. The Dayton completely changed the position of Kosovo Albanians². They realized that peaceful resistance³ was not taken into account by the great powers that were focused on stopping the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “Those who fought were invited to Dayton “was the answer that the then chief of the US diplomatic mission in Belgrade Robert Perin told to President Rugova when asked why Kosovo was not invited to these negotiations⁴. The failure to implement the Education Agreement showed that the Milosevic regime was only gaining time in front of international diplomacy and that it would not give up on the demands of Albanians.

In these circumstances, the opportunity for active peaceful resistance started by students of the University of Prishtina, with the organization of peaceful protests and requests for return to school facilities⁵. During peaceful demonstrations of Albanian students and professors for returning to school facilities, Serbian police had used brutal violence against protesters⁶. During this period dissatisfaction with the LDK-led peace politics was growing⁷. In these circumstances, the activity of the Kosovo Liberation Army begins to grow. In these circumstances, the activity of the Kosovo Liberation Army begins to grow and support from the unsatisfied Albanian population with the peaceful politics that was ignored at the Dayton conference. The KLA became aware of the remarkable actions organized during 1997, and especially its massive revival in 1998⁸. Serb forces began mass killing and maltreatment of Albanians, especially in those areas where KLA operated. In late February and early March 1998, Serb forces killed many Albanian civilians in the villages of Likoshan and Qirez in the Drenica region, including elderly people, pregnant women and children.

¹ Christopher R. Hill, *Outpost Life on the Frontlines of American Diplomacy*, Simon & Schuster, New York ,October, 2014, p. 121.

² Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Kosovo Short History of a Balkan Central region*, page 253 Koha, Pristina, November 2012

³ Enika Abazi. *Kosovo Issue and International Diplomacy (1991-1999): An Unpredictable Conflict*. Historical Studies, Institute of History, Tirana, 2012, (66 (3-4), pp. 182-216), page 202

⁴ Blerim Shala, *Years of Kosovo 1998-1999*, Koha, Pristina, 2012, p.22

⁵ Bujar Dugolli, *1st October of change 1997-1999*, University of Prishtina, 2013, p.134.

⁶ Department of State, Press Conference, Jams Fullan, October ,2 1997.

⁷ Urtak Hamiti. *US Foreign Policy and Albanian Issue 1989-1999*, University of Tirana, PhD Thesis 2015

⁸ Jems Pitifer. *Kosovo Liberation Army from a secret war to a Balkan uprising 1948-2001*, Onufri, Tirana, 2013, p. 134.

Photos and other evidence of the dead from the scene were very horrible, and they testified that Serbian forces had massacred the civilian population regardless of gender and age. The International diplomacy responses were harsh to the policy of repression and violence of Serbian forces. These scenes of killed Albanian civilians shook the international public. At the same time, these unhindered developments in the field, with the brutality of the Yugoslav Army, demonstrated the inefficiency or disinterest of the international community to go beyond the declarative condemnations of those actions. The "Christmas Warning" of the former US President Bush the old (from December 24, 1992⁹) was left only as a symbolic, no-effect warning. Due to the scenes of murders and massacres the meeting of the contact group was called in March. The US Secretary of State made a visit to Europe before the London summit and had asked the European allies to give a strong response to Belgrade's government for ending violence in Kosovo. On March 7, 1998, in Rome, Madeleine Albright stated: "We will not stay and look at Serbian authorities to do in Kosovo what they did in Bosnia ¹⁰..."

On March 9, 1998, the "Contact Group" (USA, UK, France, Germany, Italy and Russia) met in London to discuss on Kosovo¹¹. Regardless of denouncing the use of violence as a solution to the crisis in Kosovo by the decisions of the contact group¹², Serbian forces continued their offensive throughout the summer and autumn of 1998, killing many innocent civilians¹³. The crisis in Kosovo was the topic of the meeting of President Clinton and Yeltsin in Moscow on 1 and 2 September 1998, in the joint statement presidents. "The United States and Russia must work together to end the conflict in Kosovo. The Contact Group decisions adopted at the 9th and 25th of March 1998 paved the way for the adoption of Resolution 1160 / 31.3.1998 by the Security Council. The adopted resolution condemned the killing of Albanian civilians by Serbian police forces and the use of excessive police force against Albanian demonstrators in peaceful protests¹⁴. The resolution also condemned the activities of the KLA and guaranteed the sovereignty of Yugoslavia, whereas Russia did not agree on the embargo on armament¹⁵. At the meeting of 16 June 1998 in Moscow between President Boris and Slobodan Milosevic, it was also discussed about respecting the resolution 1160. Following the meeting, a joint press release was issued by which Milosevic pledged to comply with UN Security Council Resolutions 1160 that the accredited diplomats in Belgrade move freely in the territory of Kosovo¹⁶. Serbian military forces did not respect the resolution and as reported by different international organizations operating at that time in Kosovo¹⁷. US diplomats were active in finding a solution to the Kosovo issue and had many meetings with Serbian government representatives. In a tense meeting with Milosevic in Belgrade, President Clinton's Representative Robert Gelbard asks him to refrain from violence against the unprotected civilian population in Kosovo and to support the solution of the problem on the diplomatic way pursued by the Contact Group¹⁸. Support for international intervention in Kosovo, in particular the legitimacy of the NATO bombing campaign came from various sources, especially to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe¹⁹, as described and legitimized with the seventh chapter of the United Nations charter. The most active world leaders in this regard was US President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, respectively they described the conflict in Kosovo as "an assault with tanks and artillery over unprotected population whose leaders had accepted peace" or "the first fight for value "and" to avoid what could become a humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo. US President's Advisers demanded that the military threat be based on Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter legitimizing the humanitarian protection of the civilian population that was without shelter, displaced within the territory of Kosovo, reaching 100,000 people in the fall of 1998.

⁹ Bush Presidential Library, DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force [3] [OA/ID CFO1747] Kosovo.

¹⁰ David and Philip Auerswald, *The Kosovo Conflict. A diplomatic History through documents, excerpts from Press Conference by Secretary Albright and German Foreign Minister Kinkel*, March 8, 1998, fq. 100-103

¹¹ Contact Group Meeting, Statement on Kosovo, London, 9 March 1998, Statement, 223.

¹² Bujku, 10 March 1998, Prishtinë, 1998.

¹³ Dario Malnar, *USA and Kosovo*, P,174, Koha, Prishtinë, 2013.

¹⁴ Security Council Resolution 1160 (1998), 31 March 1998.

¹⁶ Resolution 1160 of the Security Council has voiced support for a peaceful solution to the Kosovo problem which would include an extended status for Kosovo, considerably, a wider degree of autonomy and meaningful self-administration, condemning all acts of violence made by each party...

¹⁶ Dario Malnar, *USA and Kosovo*, 164, Koha, Prishtinë, 2013.

¹⁷ Amnesty International, annual report, 1998, Kosovo.

¹⁸ Christopher R. Hill, *Outpost Life on the Frontlines of American Diplomacy*, p142, Simon&Schuster, 2014

¹⁹ Dario Malnar, *USA and Kosovo*, P 52, Koha, Prishtinë, 2013.

Following the offensive of Serbian military and police forces in summer and autumn 1998, the displacement of the civilian population within Kosovo grew dramatically²⁰. Following these acts of the Serbian regime, international diplomacy reactions that demanded tougher diplomatic measures combining with the military threat also grew. US President's National Security Adviser Sandy Berger in the report prepared for President B. Clinton²¹ requires that severe measures be taken before the winter to stop Serb forces fighting in order to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe of displaced civilians within Kosovo's territory and also asking the Albanians not to provoke²².

In the wake of developments in Kosovo, a special place also takes the statement made by Mr. Robert S. Gelbard, Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State of the United States of America, on March 10, at the US Office in Pristina. Among others, he states he is saddened with recent developments (the murder of at least 80 people, including women, children and many innocent civilians). "The most important message I can leave with you today is that the use of violence from each element of society will only cause further violence but will not produce a lasting and positive solution to the Kosovo problem"²³. He said that Serbian government forces used brutal, disproportionate and overwhelming force to carry out these operations in a completely out of the rule of law, while the Contact Group insisted that Belgrade move immediately to avoid and reduce tensions. He stressed that the Contact Group showed seriousness to ensure that President Milosevic understands that now it is the right time for a political solution²⁴. The United States remains prepared and determined to take part in facilitating this solution.

The Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State of the United States reminded the responsibilities of the Serbian government. He stated: "Governments have special responsibilities; the government has the responsibility to resolve political conflicts through peaceful and political means and to address its actions in a responsible and proportionate manner, in accordance with the rule of law and international standards. This government, which is the Belgrade authorities - has violated the rule of law, has ignored its obligations to protect the rights of all citizens, ignoring international obligations to provide humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC and UNHCR unrestricted access to necessary humanitarian aid. The only answer that this government seems to know is how to approach the ten-year old political debate in Kosovo, which is, violence and repression. On this occasion, he commends the Kosovo Albanian leadership, saying that the leadership of Kosovo Albanians has adhered to principles against violence and unconditioned dialogue. This is the only message that will effectively unite the people of Kosovo and is the only way to ensure continued international support. Finally, he called Ibrahim Rugova, LDK and students leadership to stay in the peace course. During that time period, the intention of US Administration continued to be the return of the autonomy that Kosovo enjoyed with the 1974 constitution; the main reason for this was the fear that stability in Macedonia and Albania could be overthrown and that President Rugova's peaceful politics would weaken by the actions of the KLA²⁵. British politics under Tony Blair's approach to the Kosovo problem is well-known especially after the 20-minute phone talk between President Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair²⁶, where they discussed the crisis in Kosovo.

²⁰ Clinton Presidential Library Record ID: 9804443, To: Beegun, Dana, Keywords: Kosovo Humanitarian Assistance, Subject: Letter from Interaction re Kosovo Conflict, Date: 30 June 98

²¹ Clinton Presidential Library Box Kosovo Action Memorandum for The President From: Samuel Berger Subject: Kosovo: Preparing for an Ultimatum, September 24, 1998 The White House Washington

²² Clinton Presidential Library, Collection: Clinton Presidential Records NSC Jan. 1999-dec 2000, Kosovo OA/Box Number 630000 Folder Title: [03/30/1999-07/01/1999

²³ American Office in Pristina, March 10, 1998, Official statement for Media made by Robert Gelbard the representative of President Clinton.

²⁴ The Contact Group imposed new sanctions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and demanded that President Milosevic and his government take immediate steps to: 1) stop the violence; 2) To provide the international community, including media and humanitarian organizations and other NGOs, access to Drenica and throughout Kosovo; 3) to engage publicly and start a dialogue process on Kosovo's status; 4) cooperate in implementing the action plan approved by the Contact Group ministers, which has 10 elements.

²⁵ Rame Buja, Kosovo in the Yugoslav Crisis, f, 234, AAB Riinvest, Pristina, 2011.

²⁶ Clinton confers with Blair on Kosovo June 7 1998, UPI Archives.

It is well known that these two statesmen have talked about their concern over the escalation of the situation in Kosovo, which could lead to a second war in the Balkans; they also discussed the proposal of Prime Minister Blair, which proposal was that Great Britain would seek a new UN Security Council resolution authorizing the use of military force, if necessary, in order to calm the crisis in Kosovo. British Prime Minister Blair was one of those who favored the entry of ground troops, not just the air war²⁷. Another very important step for Kosovo taken by Prime Minister Blair was his interview given to the BBC²⁸ and his speech at the House of Representatives²⁹. In this speech, among others, he states: "We must act, to save thousands of innocent men, women and children from a humanitarian catastrophe, from death, barbarism and ethnic cleansing made by a brutal dictatorship; to maintain the stability of the Balkan region, where we know chaos can devour the whole of Europe."³⁰

The humanitarian situation became dramatic in Kosovo after the offensive of Serbian forces in the summer of 1998, war escalated, and in autumn 1998 the number of displaced and refugees exceeded 300,000. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated: "In recent weeks, the international community has witnessed shocking atrocities in Kosovo ... which have been revealed thanks to the KDOM³¹ and other reliable sources."³² On 23 September 1998, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution number 1199, for which China again abstained. The resolution is based on Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which among others, foresees the request for an immediate ceasefire.³³ A special role related to this resolution had the British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook,³⁴ who on November 23 at a press conference talks about the situation in Kosovo, with a special emphasis on refugees who were without shelter and sufficient food within Kosovo's territory. Foreign Secretary Cook predicted that if the fighting did not stop, the situation would lead to an unforeseeable humanitarian catastrophe. For this reason, British diplomacy actions were very active in international institutions, including the key role of the British diplomacy in adopting the United Nations resolution on Kosovo. He (Robin Cook) also played a special role in the talks that took place at the Rambouillet Castle. Among the many statements made by Secretary Cook, it is worth pointing out his speech at the House of Representatives³⁵, where he speaks of the massacre in Reçak village. He told how General Drewienkiewicz has informed him that the bodies he had seen in the village were mainly shot at the head or neck, so they were executed, they were of all ages, including old gray hair men and that none of the bodies were dressed in a uniform. He even calls this "War Crime", adding that Europe will once again face a possible humanitarian crisis as a result of Serbian repression within Kosovo.

While, after NATO intervention in Kosovo, among others, Cook mentions that, "In Kosovo, Europe has witnessed the persecution of an entire nation and that such persecution has not been seen since Hitler's or Stalin's days. We have acted because the time of mass deportation and ethnic cleansing belongs to past of Europe and we will not allow it to return again. "The position of British diplomacy influenced other international diplomacies that they also be determined to liberate Kosovo from the Serbian occupation. British diplomacy was committed to developments in Kosovo, with particular attention and concrete initiatives to contribute to the conflict resolution in Kosovo.

At the meeting held in March 1998, after the Serbian offensive in the historic Prekaz village, the Contact Group meeting in London was urgently held. The role of British diplomacy at this meeting was very important in strong decisions against the Yugoslav government for the use of force against the vulnerable Albanian population. The US Secretary of State before the meeting in Paris said: "The time of moral condemnation of Belgrade's policy has passed and I expect the allies to have a strong and clear position for the Yugoslav Government".

²⁷ Kosovo Conflict: U.S. Public Diplomacy and Western Public Opinion Mark Smith Center on Public Diplomacy University of Southern California, page 25

²⁸ March 26, 1999, the interview of Prime Minister Tony Blair given to BBC.

²⁹ Tony Blair's statement in the House of Commons, 23 March 1999.

³⁰ Presidential Library Bill Clinton, Collection Records, Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1997-2007 FOIA2006-0217-F.

³¹ Diplomatic Monitoring Mission in Kosovo (KDOM)

³² UN Secretary-General's Report, 3 October 1998 New York.

³³ Security resolution 1199 (1998), 23 September 1998

³⁴ "Edited transcript of a press conference by the foreign secretary robin cook", Ljubljana, Slovenia, 23 November 1998, from fco web site at <http://www.fco.gov.uk>.

³⁵ the secretary of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs (Mr. Robin Cook) speech in the house of commons, 18 January 1999.

Conclusion

British and American diplomats were the most active in their efforts that the disintegration of Yugoslavia to happen peacefully and without bloodshed. This is evidenced by the diplomatic efforts of both governments in the United Nations Security Council in drafting and request for approval of resolutions by members, so that the processes go forward with respect for international law, for joint intervention in cases of political crises in different regions of the world. The two diplomacies followed this course in the case of Kosovo that for every action they demanded to have the approval of the Security Council, although they encountered obstacles by permanent members such as Russia and China. The adoption of two resolutions on Kosovo was important in stopping the fighting and the risk of a humanitarian catastrophe that could happen in Kosovo on the eve of the winter of 1998. Despite diplomatic efforts to resolve the Kosovo problem, no goal was achieved without the combination of force and diplomacy. Respectable agreements between the peoples of the Yugoslav federation were successful only when the diplomatic interference in itself had the use of force.

Despite the British and US diplomatic offensive to avoid escalation of the conflict in the areas of Yugoslavia and establishing peace through Security Council resolutions, peace was not established. Only with the humanitarian military intervention of NATO Pact, peace and security were established in the entire Balkan region. Despite the British and US diplomatic offensive to avoid escalating the conflict in the areas of Yugoslavia and establishing peace through the Security Council resolutions, this was not achieved, as in the case of Kosovo. The bloody conflict stopped thanks to NATO intervention that was attacking Serbian military objectives for 78 days until they reached Kumanovo's agreement, signed on 12 June 1999, between Serbian and local officials. Serbia had to admit the placement of NATO troops in Kosovo, and the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo.

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