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United States Leadership On Bosnia



The White House
Office of Public Liaison
December, 1995

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

c/o International Rescue Committee • 122 East 42nd Street • New York, NY 10168-1289
Telephone 212.551.3086 • Facsimile 212.551.3186 • Internet wcrwc@intrescom.org

facsimile

to: Melanne Vermeer
fax #: 202-456 6244
from: Diana Quick
re: Catherine O'Neill
date: April 8, 1996
pages: 5 page(s) total, including cover sheet

If you do not receive all the pages of this fax, please call me at (212) 551 3087. Thank you.

Dear Ms. Vermeer:

Attached please find a copy of the fax that Catherine O'Neill sent last week - Wendy Young, our Washington Liaison, discussed this with Nicole in your office this morning. We hope that Mrs. Clinton will be able to meet with Catherine and other members of our delegation to Bosnia on April 19.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diana Quick

Diana Quick

*They're
meeting with
you on Thursday.*

Catherine O'Neill
1078 Napoli Drive
Pacific Palisades, California 90272

To Melanne Verveer
First Lady's Office

Re- Bosnia visit of Nancy Rubin, Jurate Kazickas, Rose Styron and
Catherine O'Neill April 9th - 16th
Request for meeting with Mrs. Clinton in Washington April 18th or
19th.

I am so glad that Mrs. Clinton will be visiting Bosnia. As you know
from the reception you attended at Nancy Rubin's, the Women's
Commission for Refugee Women and Children delegation will arrive
shortly after her(and perhaps) your visit.

Our focus will be on the status of repatriation for families. We
have a particular interest in the many widows who will be return-
ing with their children. We are concerned that the economic
stimulus programs which are being put into effect by the US and
other donors keep them in mind. We are also terrible concerned
about the landmines and the potential danger they might pose to
returning children.

Enclosed is a draft itinerary of our visit. We are hoping to have
some support from the US forces in the Tuzla area. The UNHCR has
told us that they will help us in getting to Banja Luka.

If your office has any projects you would like us to visit,
please let us know. As you can see we plan to visit with women
from all three groups.

I was in Bosnia in the fall of 1992. At that time we met women and
their children streaming out of Bosnia..describing what they had
endured. Our report "Balkan Trail of Tears" received quite a bit
of attention. I have testified before Congress, been on Nightline
(with Sen. Dole) Cnn, CBS , NPR etc. discussing humanitarian
aspects of this crisis.

On return, we will meet with major editorial Boards, journalists,
the Hill and various offices within the Administration.

We would love to meet with Mrs. Clinton and compare notes and
observations..and share recommendations.

Would she have time available on April 18th or 19th? Our office
in New York is handling the details of our visits upon our
return. I have asked Elizabeth Walker(2125513089) to follow up
with you in seeing if a get together can be arranged when we
return. Thanks. I look forward to a talk.

My best,



Tel 3104547109

Fax 3104591386

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1996 DELEGATION TO FORMER YUGOSLAVIA**TENTATIVE Itinerary**

(as of 3/22/96)

Tuesday, April 9

Delegation briefing in NYC (10:00 AM)

Depart New York for Zagreb (@ 7:30 PM)

Wednesday, April 10Arrive **Zagreb** (@ 1:45 PM)IRC pick-up & transport to UNHCR to pick up *Blue Cards*

Meetings at UNHCR with:

★	Pierre Jambor (UNHCR Chief of Mission)
3:15 ★	Irina Petrovic (UNHCR social services)
4:00 ★	Mostafa Khezry (UNHCR Protection Officer)

Transfer to Hotel Sheraton

Dinner at Italian Embassy and/or with key IRC staff and refugee representatives

Thursday, April 11

Morning meetings in **Zagreb** with (begin @9:00AM): ★ Peter Galbraith (US Ambassador)
 ★ Karen Klemp (BPRM State Dept. official)
 ★ Charles Aananson (USAID)

AND

Croatian Officials (begin @11:00AM): ★ Dr. Damir Zoric (Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees)
 ★ Maja Kurent (Dept. Head for Cooperation with Relief NGOs)
 (?) Jarovic Mnamer (Office of Republic for Humanitarian Aid)

Lunch meeting at IRC Umbrella Grant site with women leaders of grantees

IRC transport to airport

IFOR plane to **Sarajevo** (depart @ 5:00PM, arrive @ 6:00PM)

Check-in at Holiday Inn

Dinner with IRC staff

Friday, April 12

Breakfast in **Sarajevo** with journalist/human rights advocates: ★ Dika Kapic (Journalist for Bosnia paper & Corridor)
 ★ Nadja Mehmedbasic ("")
 ★ Aera Kapetamovic (Women of B-H)

Meetings in Sarajevo with (begin @10:00): ★ John Menzies (US Ambassador)
 ★ Craig Buck (USAID)
 (?) Rene van Rooyen (UNHCR Coordinator, Special Operation for former Yugoslavia)
 (?) Soren Jessen-Petersen (UNHCR Special Envoy for former Yugoslavia)
 ★ Cindy Gurnsey (UNHCR Sr. Protection Officer)
 ★ Kris Janowski (UNHCR Press Officer)
 ★ Jock Covy (Chief of Staff, Office of Carl Bildt)
 ★ Mona Kai Sutphen (Human Rights Adviser, Office of Carl Bildt)
 ★ Robert Frowick (Director, OSCE)
 ★ Bill Stuebner (OSCE)
 ★ John Fawcett (Deputy Director, International Management Group)
 ★ Rory O'Sullivan (World Bank Bosnia director)

Bosnian Officials: ★ Officials from Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons
 ★ Nudzeim Recica (Republic Minister for Humanitarian Affairs)
 + Haris Basic (Deputy Minister for Humanitarian Affairs)
 ★ Amela Omer-Saftic (Head of TV-Bosnia-Herzegovina)

Afternoon site visits around Sarajevo to: ★ CARE Canada
 ★ Stope Nade Community Centers (Marie Stopes Int'l.)

Saturday, April 13

Breakfast meeting in **Sarajevo** with women leaders of IRC Umbrella Grantees

Site visits to programs around Sarajevo: ★ IRC Umbrella Grantees (CORRIDOR, Project Sanya)
 ★ American Refugee Committee
 Medecins Sans Frontiers
 ★ Local women's groups (Muslim/Islamic?)
 ★ Oslobjenje (Local women reporters)

(Rose Styron: IFOR transport from Sarajevo to Zagreb
 Dinner with Viet and local women journalists)

Group: UNHCR transport from Sarajevo to **Tuzla** (early PM)
 Check in at Hotel Tuzla

Sunday, April 14

(Rose Styron departs Zagreb for Boston @ 9:30AM)

Breakfast meeting with: ★ Ri Ryan (UNHCR Press Officer)

Meetings and site visits in **Tuzla** (AM) with: ★ Bosfam (local NGO)
 ★ Bospo (local NGO)
 ★ NPA (demining education)
 ★ ICRC
 ★ AMICA (local women)
 ★ MEDICA (local women)
 (?) IFOR
 SIDA (reconstruction)
 OTI (reconstruction)
 ★ IRC Physical Therapy (landmine survivors)

Dinner with local IRC staff

Monday, April 15

UNHCR transport from Tuzla to **Banja Luka** (AM)

Meetings and site visits in Banja Luka region: ★ IRC Shelter Project
 ★ ICRC
 ★ Human Rights Watch monitor

UNHCR transport from Banja Luka to **Zagreb** (early PM)

Check in at Hotel Sheraton

★ Convene in evening to work on delegation report in preparation for U.S. press/media briefings
 Dinner with senior IRC staff?

Tuesday, April 16

Morning "Refugee Women Forum" with IRC staff & local women leaders in **Zagreb** (@9:00AM)
 IRC transport to airport (@11:30AM)
 Depart Zagreb for New York or Washington (@ 2:30PM)

Welcome Home!

file Bosnia

**THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND RECOVERY
IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:
Move Women From Background to Foreground!**



© UNHCR/A. Hollmann

**Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children
Delegation Visit to Bosnia and Croatia**

April 9 - 16, 1996

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The Struggle for Peace and Recovery in Former Yugoslavia: Move Women from Background to Foreground!

I. Introduction

The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children made its first post-Dayton Peace Accords visit to Bosnia and Croatia in April 1996. This was the sixth visit of a Women's Commission delegation to the region since the outbreak of war in Bosnia in 1992. The purpose of the delegation was to assess the progress of the humanitarian situation since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords five months ago.

The delegation focused on refugee repatriation and the return of the internally displaced, with emphasis on refugee women and children, especially the many widows who will now be responsible for their families after a war which killed 250,000 people, most of them men.

The Women's Commission visited Sarajevo, Tuzla, Banja Luka and Zagreb. We drove across much of Bosnia-Herzegovina and spoke to people involved in all aspects of the situation -- US officials, UN officials, government officials, NGO international staff and local staff. Most especially we talked to the women: lawyers, doctors, judges, executives, journalists, writers, teachers, therapists and staff of local organizations which had emerged during the war. We met with women who are leaders of refugee and displaced groups and we met with refugees still huddled together in collective centers -- the elderly, widows, young and old.

We also spoke with former soldiers, and we spent time with the people who had suffered through one of the greatest international tragedies of this war -- the people from Srebrenica who, under the watchful eyes of the UN and the international community, were forced from their UN Security Council guaranteed "safe haven." The women and children of Srebrenica were put on buses and sent to Tuzla, while the men, young and old, were executed. Eight thousand men remain unaccounted for ... and many women live in hope that somehow they will be found.

This four year war has resulted in more than a

UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women: In A Repatriation Situation

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women include ways to protect returning refugees by including them in program planning.

* Institute programs to ensure that women have equal access to the procedures for voluntary repatriation so that those who want to return are able to do so, and that those fearing return are provided protection against refoulement.

* Provide information to refugee women as well as men to help them make informed choice about repatriation options.

* Assess the legal standing of refugee women who have been integrated into local communities, with particular attention to legal provisions that limit the rights of women, e.g., property rights.

quarter of a million deaths. Families have been devastated and those who are suffering most are the widows and children. Some women who have not seen their husbands for years are still clinging to the desperate hope that their husbands will come back. The widows are among the most tragic of all the people we met in former Yugoslavia.

Crammed into collective centers, many women are still in shock, unable to do anything except grieve for all they have lost. They want to return home but don't know when and how and live one day to the next with little hope and much sadness.

No one throughout the region - local or international aid officials - had any available statistics on the numbers of women who were now single heads of households. But we know the numbers must be staggering. Many of the women left without husbands have few skills with which to support themselves and their children. They came from small villages where they worked in their gardens and did traditional women's work --cooking, sewing, and caring for the children.

So far, the talk of reconstruction has focused on physical rebuilding. However, reconstruction and humanitarian aid and social support must go hand in hand. Social reconstruction must also be a priority and women from all sides of the conflict in former Yugoslavia are ready, willing and more than able to participate in this process.

II. Areas of Concern

1. Widows -- The Ignored Victims

We did not find programming that was taking into account the specific needs of widows -- those women both in and out of their homes who will need to reintegrate into the economy to support their families. Most surprising was that we did not meet any UN or international aid official or local official who had identified the number of widows in the population with which they were dealing; this after a war which killed 250,000, the vast majority of them male.

Local governments and international aid agencies are not adequately addressing the needs of the women who will now be the family's sole bread winner. They are not being integrated into the new economy. While many women are overburdened by their loss, e.g., the widows of Srebrenica, others are desperate to move on with their lives.

In the collective centers that we visited, in Tuzla and Banja Luka, we saw displaced women coming together to share their woeful stories which offered some support at a difficult time. But there were no mental health facilities or professional counselors to help the healing process. Some women have been in these centers for two, three years doing nothing but sewing or knitting to pass the time and it seemed to us a terrible missed opportunity when these women could have been taught some

COLLECTIVE CENTERS IN TUZLA AND BANJA LUKA ADD TO MISERY

The conditions in the four collective centers we visited in these two cities did not meet even the most basic standards of health and privacy.

Sanitary facilities were inadequate - two bathrooms for 70 people, etc. In the center in Tuzla, cooking stoves were placed dangerously close to bunk beds. Plastic garbage bags filled with the meager belongings of the families were stacked around the rooms.

In one large room in a school in Banja Luka, 50 people were sleeping in 12 beds. One family -- mother, father, five children including a two week-old baby -- huddled together in one bed. One young man, clearly sick, lay motionless next to a young girl. There was a total lack of privacy. Here, the Serb refugees expressed similar fears about returning to their homes.

new skills - simple bookkeeping or typing or a language.

Project Sanja (a US-funded project - a local NGO due to have its funding cut off by US AID) was working in Sarajevo. It was one of the better collective centers we visited. Women met regularly in a brightly decorated room as their children played in the background. They said they gathered to relax, knit and smile. But the tears flowed freely when the women started to talk about going home. Mostly Muslims, they wanted to go, but were very frightened about returning to their villages. "If someone would guarantee my safety, I would go back," said one woman from Zepa who thinks her husband and son are in concentration camps. "But I don't believe I can go home."

One mother of five with a three month old baby who left her home in July 1992 said her neighbors turned against her, pushed out her family and burned her home. She wants to go back to her village but is terrified. "It was my neighbors who did this to me," she wailed in disbelief. "How can I ever trust them again?"

The women lamented the life they had left behind. "Before we had houses, plenty of land, gardens. Now in the town we are lost." Some women said they would be willing to resettle in another village if the government offered to help them.

They felt strongly that the government should emphasize special programs for women especially widows. They want workshops, more educational opportunities and skills training. "I have to be the mother and father to my children. It's very hard to do without money," said one widow. "I feel pain in my heart because I cannot provide my children with what they need."

Many women said, "Our only hope is that the government would do something for us."

2. Demobilized Soldiers -- Provide Them with Options

Everywhere we looked the streets and roads were filled with young men, sitting around in cafes with no jobs and nothing to do. Women told us that domestic violence is on the increase and that alcohol abuse and family tensions are increasing. Women also say that some men are psychologically unfit for work, that they are maimed internally and externally.

James Wolfensohn, the World Bank Chief, who visited Sarajevo last week, called for putting the 250,000 soldiers being demobilized in the federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to work. He noted that, "We can only achieve enduring peace when they have jobs." Mr. Wolfensohn said in an interview that his plan to create employment through public works and infrastructure programs should be treated by governments as "the top priority."

Carl Bildt, the senior civilian administrator in Sarajevo, backed this call for jobs. Mr. Bildt said many jobs also would be created in the longer term when the rebuilding of roads, rail line, electricity plants and telecommunications systems got underway. "One quarter of a million men are currently being demobilized," Mr. Bildt said, "and the armies of soldiers must not turn into the armies of the unemployed."

Economic development which creates jobs and opportunities is key for demobilized soldiers, but it should not come at the price of excluding widows and women who head households from participating in the economic reconstruction. "Men get jobs, women get counseling," has too often been the response in post-war situations.

3. Women's groups -- Sources of Strength and Reconciliation

Throughout Bosnia, the war has brought together strong and able women. They are aware of all the challenges, and they are willing to work across what they call "ethnic" boundaries. They are coming together, planning meetings of women to prioritize post war concerns -- but they are doing so without real support from local government authorities, and without much interest from the major UN and US representatives in the area. One UN official who attended with us a meeting with women in Banja Luka called it "splendid" and said he did not know that women's groups were doing this kind of work.

Banja Luka is a city with ancient mosques leveled to the ground, a city where most Muslim families have been driven out -- their homes occupied by Serbs who proudly identify themselves by placing the Serbian flag in their windows. It is a city where Serb refugees told us that the mistreatment they receive from local authorities is like "spitting" on them. One Serb refugee told us she was better treated in Muslim Zenica than in Banja Luka.

Yet there is an organization of local women, Duga, which states it works with all nationalities and wants to help all victims. The Daga women had just completed their first post-war meeting with a woman Muslim leader from Tuzla. They say they want to help build the peace.

4. Children -- The Hope For the Future

The littlest victims of the war must not be forgotten. Children who have witnessed murders and rapes and lived through bombing and destruction of their villages need special counseling to cope with these traumas. One program in Sarajevo in need of funds holds puppet shows teaching lessons of tolerance and peace to refugee children. They would like to have children's centers all over Bosnia with trained psychologists and social playrooms.

The deplorable living circumstances in Sarajevo during the war - no water, no electricity and extended periods in damp basements while the city was being shelled - have caused severe health problems for children - asthma, bronchitis, tuberculosis, and even arthritis. Hospital resources are strained in meeting these needs.

During the war, thousands of children were separated from their families, but there has been progress on this front. The director of an orphanage we visited in Tuzla cared for more than 1,000 children, but now houses about 150, aged five to 18. SOS Kinderhof in Sarajevo said the numbers of children without parents were reduced significantly to about 400 now, and that those were living with relatives or in foster homes.

5. Landmines -- Not My Problem

More children than adults have been killed by landmines or unexploded shells. In Croatia alone, these weapons have killed 263 children. Everywhere we went, we were told that landmines posed one of the greatest barriers to safe return of the population. There is no substantial training going on of local people who will be charged with landmines removal. People are being sent back to front line villages where there has not been landmine clearance. The US forces are adamant that landmine clearance is not their problem, except for their own personal safety. They are not doing any training of local officials in landmine clearance, although they do have experts with them in the US IFOR force.

When one UN official was asked what should our priorities be for helping refugees, he said, "Demining,

demining, demining." There are 3 million mines in Croatia (whose population is 4.5 million) and three million more mines throughout the rest of the war area. "The international community is not fully aware of the problem," said Damir Zoic, a Croatian official. People need training for landmine removal.

Refugees are fearful of returning to their homes because of nearly daily reports of someone being killed by a mine. If one family gets hurt upon returning, others are afraid to go back to the village. In a village near Tuzla, a woman and her two children were killed in her kitchen garden. In another instance, a child detonated a mine and when the parents ran to help, all three were killed.

Farmers are afraid to plant and till their fields because of mines. One man was spotted rolling a huge tire in front of him on his field - as if that would protect him from an explosion.

We were told that demining is the sole responsibility of the people who planted the mines. But no one has any clear idea of where the mines are. There are a few incomplete maps and no one knows for sure where the enemy planted mines. Local officials complain that they do not have enough trained people or adequate equipment for demining. In Croatia, we were told that some demining equipment is considered military and is under embargo.

6. Information and Communication -- Not Happening

A critical problem we encountered everywhere was the total lack of information regarding refugees and relocation. Displaced men and women had no idea what would be happening to them and felt confused and lost.

International relief officials may know the terms of the Dayton Accords as they affect refugee and displaced returnees, the way property issues will be handled and what will happen in the elections. But the resident and refugee populations do not. People, whether they live in their own homes or not, are very confused about the finality of the situation and some displaced people seemed to think that they could get the return of their territory to a new political entity through the elections.

7. Resentment Toward Returning Refugees

There is great resentment towards refugees who left the country, did not suffer the hardships of war, and who now, many believe, will return with money in their pockets made in Germany or elsewhere to a country where people's financial and internal resources are depleted.

The region has suffered an enormous brain drain as many of the best and many of the best educated left the region. The schooling for many others was interrupted by four years of war. We did not find groups who were thinking through the need to support re-integration of the population into areas where they will be joining people of common heritage.

8. Returning to Areas where Neighbors Drove You Out -- For Most, Not Likely

While the Dayton Peace Accords provide for the return of minorities to areas from which they were ethnically cleansed -- and many people we spoke with said they would want to go back to their homes -- all said they would only do so if they felt secure. There is no plan currently in place for any international body to insure that security. While policy planners say they do not want to ratify ethnic cleansing, they are unwilling to risk their own personnel in helping people return to areas where they will feel in danger.

9. Human Rights -- Gender-Related Rights Must be Taken into Account

There do not appear to be functioning mechanisms for human rights concerns which are gender-specific. Procedures to improve reporting of physical and sexual protection problems should be implemented. Civilian forces need special training and focus -- and women should be included in the forces. Property rights specific to women whose husbands have died need to be understood. Additionally, resources -- humanitarian and economic -- must be made available in a nondiscriminatory way to ensure the full participation of women in the reconstruction process.

10. War Crimes Tribunal -- No Protection of Evidence

People are living in fear. The War Crimes Tribunal has indicted 57 people, but only a few of those indicted are in custody. Radovan Karadic and General Mladic, indicted Bosnian Serb leaders, continue to be free. Official efforts must be made immediately to acknowledge the suffering of victims and to honestly reckon with the past. Restoring confidence among potential War Crimes Tribunal witnesses, many of whom are women, is essential. Repatriation without fear, reconciliation, and free and fair elections are not likely until indicted war criminals are arrested.

The 60,000 IFOR troops currently in Bosnia are not being used to protect sites of mass graves, or areas of mass execution, once they are identified. The IFOR troops will accompany UN investigators while they are at the site, but when they leave, so do the troops -- so the site is left unprotected.

The delegation interviewed many women who talked about the importance of the War Crimes Tribunal. "If you don't punish the war criminals, you have not done anything. All women on all sides think this," said the President of the Women's Association of Tuzla.

11. Right of Return -- Property and Politics

There are indications that authorities are using the displaced population to be sent to villages that are on the front line with the new boundaries of the Dayton Accords. These villages are the ones most likely to be devastated and empty, because they were in areas of heavy fighting and mined. The UNHCR should ensure that people know they do not have to return to these areas; they have a choice.

The right to regain your house or the value of your house is a critical aspect of resolving the crisis in the region. While the international property commission called for in the Dayton Accords has been organized, there were critical problems brought to our attention:

1. We did not speak to any refugee or displaced person who had any idea at all that the Dayton Accords dealt with property claims.
2. The funding for compensation has not been identified.
3. Mechanisms to validate the value claims submitted by refugees will be extremely complex given the level of destruction and the shortage of local personnel.
4. Once again, widows will need full access in every way to the property commission and its benefits.
5. According to a UN official, a good idea would be to have a registration of claims available to the international community, so if there is a pattern of discrimination, it can be followed up on.
6. Bosnia has passed a law stating that claims to return to houses and apartments that are not privately owned must have been submitted by January 1996. If this provision is not amended, many refugees and displaced families will not be able to return to their homes. Many people feel that those who stayed through the war effort have a higher claim to publicly-owned houses.

"There is a law and there is morality," said a woman attorney in Sarajevo. Sorting this out will be one of the more sensitive and complex issues in the reconstruction.

12. SLOW -- The Pace at All Levels is Behind

Whether it be in getting reconstruction going, mines removed, refugees and displaced persons back to their homes, election information issues out to the people or the human rights processes on track ... all is moving slowly.

While the international newspapers trumpet there is enough money for Bosnia, in Bosnia the post-war funds are not flowing, and since the "High Representative's" Office does not have the power of the purse, there appears to be lack of international co-ordination and agreed prioritizing. Major donors are each doing their own projects based on their priorities.

III. Areas of Positive Movement

1. No Military Hostility - The greatest positive is that hostilities have ceased and it appears that all sides are abiding by the military requirements of the Dayton Accords.
2. The international community, official and NGO, is present in almost more than sufficient numbers.
3. Locally run NGOs or voluntary associations have emerged during the war. Most are run by women and provide a source of talent and experience and leadership. They have taken responsibility for their community in a country which had virtually no history of non-government associations.

IV. Specific Program Recommendations

1. Support to a greater extent than is now being done locally run Women's NGOs

Do not cut off in May 1996, as the US Government currently plans to do, the group of women-run NGOs operating in Sarajevo (the Umbrella Grant project). Sometimes it appears that US policy is working against its own stated intentions. While parts of the US government state that an important goal is to help people emerging from authoritarian regimes learn the techniques of democracy and pluralism, at the same time, in a very fragile point in the recovery process, this group of US AID women's locally run programs for Bosnia will be cut off because of a bureaucratic decision which allows the Croatian AID office to keep that pocket of money in Croatia, while the US AID office in Sarajevo feels no "ownership" or identity with the project, and is more focused on large scale reconstruction.

We visited many of these Umbrella Grant projects and believe that they offer an excellent source of trained, motivated and experienced staff who have sufficient outreach and interest in dealing with the next group of issues confronting Sarajevo -- opportunities to bring refugee returnees together with those who have remained, opportunities to inform people about the election (they have a radio and television operation), opportunities to provide support for people dealing with re-integrating soldiers into families (hot lines, therapy programs) and projects. Once a program is closed the effort to restart it is much more difficult than providing a bridge for another year. They should be nurtured for this coming year in which Sarajevo and others will deal with the problems of peace.

So many women, of all backgrounds told us that now, in some ways, it was harder than during the war. Then it was day-to-day survival and everything was focused on that. Now the task of rebuilding and the enormity of getting back to "normal" life is setting in ... and it is now that the tears are coming. The women also told us they are very different than they were before the war. They have kept the city and the home front running for four years. They have found strength and talent in themselves and they do not want to be marginalized by the government.

2. The UN agencies, US officials and the High Representative's office involved with reconstruction need to do a much more pro-active job of doing outreach to the women's community.

At this point, "women" tend to be seen as grouped into the vulnerable group section, or seen in task forces set up by low level UN and international personnel. One senior official of the High Representative's office said, "Can you give us some names?" Names of women of substance in the community, doctors, lawyers, judges, therapists, business women and writers -- as well as people who can speak for those without homes, are not hard to find. If we met with many of them in a short visit, the UN, the High Representative and senior US officials should have identified them by now. There must be much more serious outreach to the women's community in Sarajevo and elsewhere. They should be in task forces meeting regularly with UN, governmental and international donor officials.

With regard to refugee and displaced persons resettlement, the UNHCR should undertake a more aggressive "look-see" program to enable voluntary repatriation. Fear is delaying this process and UNHCR is assumed to be the appropriate facilitator.

3. Set Aside a Portion of the US AID 45 Million Dollar or More Loan Program For Women-Run Businesses

We asked the US AID staff in Sarajevo if they had decided to allocate a portion of this substantial loan program to businesses headed by widows and women. The answer: "No." Hillary Rodham Clinton has continually expressed the support of the US Government for loans targeted to allow women to integrate into the economic fabric of society.

This is a classic case where a program should not be developed without this being an integral part of the operation. The US Government should not talk about this as a priority at international UN conferences at Beijing and elsewhere and then put a program on the ground when, at the outset, this is not included. While vulnerable widows and young women of promise and initiative should be included, women of all educational backgrounds and economic levels should be given opportunities. Data should be kept as to how much of those US loans were allocated toward women-owned and -run operations, so there is accountability.

Crafts are the easy answer, and indeed, one of the more successful program throughout the former Yugoslavia have been knitting projects. Women have gathered in refugee and community centers to knit with wool donated from the US and other countries (15 tons of it from the Women's Commission). Some women knit just to pass the time and clothe themselves and their children. But others have made sweaters, etc, to sell, through local NGOs, such as BOSFAM. Women are also weaving rugs, embroidering lace, and making traditional handicrafts for sale.

But to move into the 21st century and a new post-war, free market economy, the skills of women must be upgraded. Time and time again, women stressed that education for all women was essential. Women

helping each other -- Mira in Banja Luka has a policy of employing ONLY women - 20 female workers in her accounting and bookkeeping business. Banja Luka has textile and shoe factories - could employ women. Organizations like the local NGO Duga and other women's NGOs in other cities are creatively trying to come up with income generating projects that women with children can do at home.

Women who will be returning to agricultural communities need to learn new avenues of support - whether it is raising chickens or sheep or learning how to use a tractor or starting an herb garden or women need training.

4. Shelter Projects for Reconstruction Have to do a Better Job of Benefitting, and Involving Women.

While there are programs, some underway, (USAID and UNHCR among others) for reconstructing homes in the damaged areas of the countryside, again it is a very "top down "operation," with the underlying assumption that women will benefit, but no specific requirements to insure that women-headed households receive any adequate percentage.

Some shelter projects (UNHCR) are self-build projects done with sweat equity. This is an excellent way to use people's energy, but there seemed to be no data at all being kept on whether this 30 million dollar plus project would specifically allocate a portion of benefits to women who were now single heads of households. With the US AID shelter project, (\$40 million plus) there is a similar lack of consciousness of insuring that women headed households benefit. Once more, the talk sounds good ... but in reality, programs are starting without the critical goals of insuring that the war widows are involved.

Additionally, there appears to have been no thought given to insure that in rebuilding projects, those women who are interested in learning skills associated with reconstruction (which will be going on for a long time in the region, and will provide significant employment for years to come) are integrated from the outset. The US and UN funding agencies should require that all subcontracting agencies provide data to meet requirements concerning these issues if there is any seriousness about involving women in the economy. This entire area provides another opportunity to liaise with women's organizations in the community ... An opportunity not yet taken.

5. Returning Home - The Widows of Srebrenica and Others Abandoned by the UN and the International Community -- No Training, No Homes

If the US and the international community are serious about wanting to help families to return to areas from which they were forcibly ejected, they have to give it more than lip service. There is genuine fear about what will happen on return, even from families who say they would go back ... if only they felt safe. The level of fear was best demonstrated to us when, on two occasions, drivers in UNHCR vehicles told us they were afraid to go through areas that are now in the Serbska Republika. In both cases we were required to wait on the road during snowstorms for some time -once so a driver could go in a convoy of two vehicles, and again so that there would be a transfer to a driver from Banja Luka. If UNHCR drivers still have genuine fear, then clearly people who saw homes burned, loved ones killed, young women raped should not be expected to return home without some serious, international security. They believe they should not be sent back alone to face the local police forces whom they see as associated with their evictors and murderers of their family members. IFOR is clear in that this is not its responsibility. And the international police are there to observe the local police, train them in what is right ... but are not equipped or mandated to protect the returning populations.

If the international community is not prepared to face their responsibility in this return, then alternative

housing situations, **agreed to by refugee families**, need to be given a higher priority. We spoke to two men who had been in the forest in Srebrenica and had seen the killings, who told us they knew who killed, and who had been killed, but that no one was showing interest in their story. One emerged in late August and the other had been part of the Faca prisoner exchange program. They were furious at the authorities in Tuzla who wanted to send them and their families back to a "front line" village. They refused to go because they thought that if hostilities broke out again, they would be the first hit. They did not accept the government's offer to repopulate what the government might consider a strategic area and consequently they are in a miserable collective center in Tuzla, with no word on when they will be offered anything different. Much greater pressure to insure that refugees are making the choice about where their lives should be lived should be made by the international community if we are to protect existing international human rights standards as well as the "freedom to remain" inscribed in the Dayton Accords.

There is something particularly reprehensible about taking this traumatized abandoned population from Srebrenica and once more asking them to be in what could be unsafe surroundings against their wishes, while once more the international community ignores the situation, or even goes so far as to provide money to rehabilitate houses which are there for strategic and not humanitarian purposes.

6. Economic Reintegration of the Srebrenica Widows and Other Widows and Single Women-Headed Households (women with older mothers - and in some cases younger siblings)

Other than weaving and sewing projects, there does not seem to be an international effort to upgrade the skills level of women who will be providing for their families for the rest of their lives, nor even an attempt to establish who are likely candidates for high level skills training (primary school teachers, health workers, computer programs, bookkeeping etc.). Some of the widows are very young girls. We met 17- and 24-year old widows.

This poses an opportunity to bring the displaced together with the established women's NGOs, which include women of varying professions, and have them work in overseeing training for the war widows. Because local groups do not have resources, this would have to be funded through the international community. This is a priority that is not being met. All local women's groups told us that they feared that all the economic focus would be on the demobilized soldiers, and that women who needed to support their families would be last on line. At the moment they are right. This should change and the international dollars should be used as leverage to insure equity.

7. Giving Women a Role in Finding the Missing

The women of Srebrenica do not believe their own government cares enough about finding out what happened to any possible survivors. (An estimated 8,000 men and boys are missing - with 22,000 still war missing). They want to do a survey of their own population and wish that they could be given a computer and a vehicle so that they could interview their population to get data on who saw what happening where. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reporting requirements on missing people are considered too strict to fully input all the information that people have about what has happened. There is also the problem that some believe the local government is receiving money for the victims of Srebrenica -- not allocating it for what they believe to be priorities. In fact, the women have not been consulted at all about their priorities. They should receive support in this self-initiated activity. In relief situations, hundreds of vehicles are available to the expatriate community who are part of the international relief and rehabilitation effort, the most affected local population are essentially "grounded" in their effort to do work they consider important.

8. Support Women in the Political Process

We spoke to women who were thinking of running for political office, women who were thinking of forming a women's party, and women who are meeting -- from Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Banja Luka -- to get together to talk about healing their country. They are planning for this spring both small and large conferences. They can be the source of the beginning of the rebuilding of trust. Once more these positive developments have not been given adequate support. They have trouble funding the most rudimentary equipment (phone lines, fax machines, computers, transport). If we expect the country to be a place where people live in harmony, local women activists who have begun the process of healing should receive a higher priority and outreach from donors.

9. Remove Landmines Immediately

The United States clearly has the expertise to train local engineers and others in mine removal techniques. We strongly urge that the best use be made of our troops now stationed in former Yugoslavia and demining experts be deployed to help the local populace.

10. Involve Women and Children in Media Projects

The lack of independent media continues to be a problem throughout the area. Independent newspapers should be supported. They do stories that poke holes in the official statements of the other press (e.g., the major Zagreb paper actually led a front page story with Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown about his hopes and plans for the Croatian economy after his death. *Feral Tribune* reprinted it with a big picture of Mr. Brown, alive and well, headlined "Conversation with a Ghost.") Clearly, like many controlled news items, the Zagreb paper's story was written before, published just after the crash, to say what they want the people to think.

This is true of the airwaves too. Although supposedly uncensored, the control is political. Marie Stopes and others have created radio programs, including interactive shows and call-in discussions. These efforts to bring people in different areas together are critical. Individuals who are cut off from their friends, family members, and information sources in the homes they left are afraid to return; such radio programs could greatly lessen their fear of repatriation, make resettling a more informed operation. TV is too expensive and much TV equipment has been destroyed, but a program to distribute small radios and have a variety of well-chosen issues of local interest to listen to - lured in perhaps by music, by women's problems, by children's voices, all apolitical - would go a long way to lessen the traumas of isolation.

Youth needs a boost. One member discussed with Peggy Charren of Children's TV in Boston that a way for children to learn English (which many mothers feel is important) and other basics would be to try Sesame Street, etc., on the central TV that still exists.

11. Support Initiatives for Children and Youth

In Bosnia, many youngsters are traumatized, withdrawn, confused or with little hope for the future (after seeing their mothers raped, their fathers taken away and disappeared, or returned from forced labor missing limbs from the ever-exploding mines - or injured themselves, orphaned, displaced). Marie Stopes, Project Selina, Corridor, and others are implementing high quality programs and have good ideas for additional programs. They all desperately need funding.

Delegation Members

Jurate Kazickas, a member of the advisory council of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, was a refugee herself, fleeing Lithuania from the Soviet invasion in 1943. a former Associated Press writer, she has covered wars in Vietnam and the Middle East. She has written extensively on women's issues, and is a contributing editor for *Good Housekeeping* magazine.

Catherine O'Neill is an award winning editorial writer, whose work has appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, and on ABC Nightline, CNN, National Public Radio and elsewhere. She is a member of the boards of directors of the International Rescue Committee, the League of Women Voters and is a co-founder of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

Nancy Rubin has worked in the field of international economic development for over ten years. She has served in the Carter and Clinton White House. She has represented the NGO community at the Economic and Social Council of the UN and other official bodies. She is a member of the Bretton Woods Committee, the Women's Foreign Policy Group, the Overseas Development Council Board, the Red Cross and also serves on a number of human rights and national women's organization boards. She is past chair of the National Coalition for Women in International Development and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Rose Styron is a writer, poet and human rights activist. she has been a board member of Amnesty International USA and the P.E.N. American Center and currently is on the boards of Human Rights Watch, the Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights, Equality Now, the Reebok Human Rights Foundation and the RFK Memorial/Chair Human Rights Awards. She has spent many years investigating human rights violations. She is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an overseer for New York University. She has written articles for The New York Review of Books, The Nation, New Republic, Chicago Sun-Times, Ms. magazine and The New York Times. She has participated in investigative missions for various human rights organizations around the world.

Meetings

The delegation met with staff from the following organizations:

UNHCR	Marie Stopes International
US Ambassadors/Embassy staff, Zagreb and Sarajevo	PEN Sarajevo
US State Department	Unija Zar
USAID	Puppet Theater
Croatian Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees	UNICEF
IRC Umbrella Subgrantees: Corridor, Project Sanya	Bosfam
Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe	Bospo
International Crisis Group	Women's Association of Podrinje
Office of Carl Bildt	Norwegian People's Association
World Bank	SIDA
Office for Refugees, Bosnia	Women of the Warm Hand
TV- Bosnia-Herzegovina	Wool Project
CARE	IRC
	ICRC
	START Project
	Representatives of local NGOs in Zagreb

Special thanks to:

Elizabeth Walker, delegation coordinator, New York
Viet Lazarus, delegation coordinator, Croatia/Bosnia
Anne Willem Bijleveld, UNHCR Washington Liaison
Vesna Vlastelica, UNHCR Zagreb
International Rescue Committee staff in Zagreb and Sarajevo, Tuzla and Banja Luka
UNHCR for ground transportation and IFOR for air transportation.
Ambassador Brunson McKinley, Bosnia Humanitarian Coordinator, State Department, Washington, DC

Acronyms

BOSFAM - Bosnian women-run NGO, founded under the auspices of Oxfam
ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross
IFOR - NATO-led Implementation Force
NGO - Nongovernmental Organization
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
US AID - United States Agency for International Development

**For more information on the Women's Commission,
please contact:**

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children
122 East 42nd Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10168-1289
Tel: (212) 551 3086 Fax: (212) 551 3186
e-mail: wcrwc@intrescom.org

file Bosnia

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Prime Minister of Pakistan

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Former Italian Foreign Minister

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Wife of human rights activist
Harry Wu

Marina Malysheva
Moscow Center for Gender Studies

Nezha Zarrouk
Tunisian Minister for
Women and the Family

Helga Konrad
Austrian Minister for Women's Affairs

Maria Rosa Martini
President of Conciencia

Katja Boh
Slovenian Ambassador to Austria

Zdenka Geat
President and CEO of Conweld

Waltraud Kleinic
Governor of Styria, Austria

Send Contributions to:
BOSFAM
Darda Mihajlovica 2
75101 Tuzla, Republic Bosnia-Herzegovina

International Rescue
Committee
Hvalinskikh rudara bb
76000 Tuzla, Republic Bosnia-Herzegovina

Women of Srebrenica Project

Fax (43-1) 31339 2908
or (43-1) 877-7304

Telefax

Date: July 6, 1996
To: Melanne Vermeer
From: Ambassador Swanee Hunt and Valerie Gillen
Subject: Women of Srebrenica Project

Please see attached.

Women of Srebrenica Project Update, July 5, 1996

Swanee Hunt and Valerie Gillen

This is the final update prior to our event on July 11th, in Tuzla.

Plans have moved along extremely well, and spirits are high. Four members of our steering committee just returned from Tuzla. Another, Farija Ganic, is in Sarajevo permanently. Monday, July 8th, our advance team of four (including Queen Noor's advance) will arrive in Bosnia.

The Event

The sports center in Tuzla where refugees once slept is the site for the commemoration. The women are embroidering squares of cloth with the names of their missing boys and men. These will be tied together in a huge banner. The event will begin at 1 p.m., which the women say was the time on July 11th, one year ago, they were told they had 5 minutes to board the buses in Srebrenica.

We have warded off an attempt to politicize this event, insisting that in an election season Amb. Hunt could not appear alongside current political leaders because a major goal of the event was building trust and cooperation *across* political and ethnic divisions. After lively negotiations, the Bosnian government abandoned their plan to host another event at the same time in Tuzla. They have gone so far as to change their national memorial day to July 12 so it does not conflict with this event.

Speakers will include Queen Noor of Jordan, E.U. Commissioner Emma Bonino, U.S. Amb. Swanee Hunt, as well as several women from Srebrenica. There will be simultaneous translation into English (for the 200 or so international guests, which includes one of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo), and consecutive translation into Bosnian.

We are also working with the OSCE to distribute at the event information about the upcoming elections. We are looking into making buttons for participants that will read, "We are not alone," in Bosnian.

We are expecting several thousand women to attend. The organizers have held press conferences and press briefings, and will have a final press conference on July 10th (for local and national media) to advertise the event. Twenty buses will bring in women from the countryside.

Fliers have been distributed through 14 activity centers, as well as through all NGO's serving these women. In addition to straight-forward information, they implore: "How can a human being disappear? ... Our children are not water to evaporate and turn into clouds; our children are not birds to fly to who knows where.... We are inviting all other women... Do it today because of us. Do it so that some new Srebrenica does not happen to you or to somebody else."

Meetings with the Women of Srebrenica

Amb. Hunt met with leaders of the women of Srebrenica in Tuzla and Sarajevo. They agreed on the critical importance of non-violence at the event. The women were pleased at reports of financial help, but they were most deeply moved by the assertion, "you are not alone."

They told many stories of terror and hardship. When Amb. Hunt asked if they could psychologically bring themselves to invite the Serb women of Banja Luka to attend, they responded, "We are all mothers." Subsequently, at the women's conference in Sarajevo, they issued that invitation to women from West Mostar, Republika Srpska, and Belgrade.

U.S. Military/IFOR Support

General Joulwan's letter of support for this effort reinforced what was already a positive relationship with General Nash's forces based in Tuzla. Our point of contact is Lt. Col. Tom York.

Colonel John Brown accompanied Amb. Hunt on her planning trip in June, including visits with the women at their Tuzla headquarters and the sports center, assisting with many and various needs. IFOR will also support the advance team July 8-11.

On July 11th, Eagle Base will be assisting the delegation in security, communications, and transportation. General Nash plans to greet the delegation and send them off as well.

At the Amb.'s invitation, 100 IFOR women from all over Bosnia will attend the event. They will be briefed that morning by Project Manager Valerie Gillen.

Coordination with U.S. Embassy, Sarajevo

Amb. Hunt met with Amb. Menzies, who said he enthusiastically supports the event, although he is concerned about security (not related to the women, but to "outside political forces"). That having been said, we do not anticipate drawing from the embassy's already stretched resources for event support, including security. We have been told the PAO is planning to attend. The embassy is receiving updates almost daily.

The Host Committee

The extraordinary women who have banded together to create this committee are listed on the letterhead. Several others are pending.

Concrete Help

After extensive discussions with the State Department's legal advisor and authorization from the acting Under-Secretary of State for Management, we have gathered support from a variety of sources. Contributions include: a micro-enterprise loan fund, a computer training center, antibiotics, newspaper space for our open letter, and funding. The current value exceeds \$3,000,000, plus 2.5 tons of medicine. (This does not include the \$5,000,000 President Clinton announced for a Bosnian Women's Initiative, part of which will likely be used for this population.)

The Open Letter

Beginning July 1, the open letter of support (enclosed, cleared by State Department, EUR/P) was faxed to approximately 1000 women leaders worldwide. Responses are flowing in as we write; several hundred have been received, including Liv Ullman, Susan Molinari, Geraldine Ferraro, Eartha Kitt, scores of women parliamentarians from every continent, government ministers, NGO presidents, CEO's, etc. The Moscow Center for Gender Studies is circulating the open letter at a conference of 100 Russian women's rights activists next week.

A one-page advertisement with the signed open letter will be published on July 11th in the International Herald Tribune and several regional papers. It will include information on how to send help through the International Rescue Committee, a New York-based NGO operating in Bosnia, which is sponsoring the ad. Barbara Smith, program director at the IRC, believes the ads might spur efforts in the field for years to come.

The Salzburger Nachrichten (distribution over 100,000) has agreed to run the one-page ad free. Barbara Smith is contacting Roy Gutman of Newsday. Vienna PAO Helena Finn is contacting numerous other European papers, including Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian publications.

Public Affairs

While media people cannot fully commit in advance, we have received reports of strong interest from the following: CNN (Ammanpour), Post (Pomfret), Newsday (Gutman), ORF (Austrian television), RAI (Italian television, who will provide a European feed), Austrian wireservice, two Austrian radio stations, two Austrian newspapers, Reuters, ABC Radio, Associated Press, and Canadian T.V.

Susan Hovanec, former PAO/Zagreb who speaks Bosnian, was borrowed from Madeleine Albright, and has joined the team to handle local press for this event.

On the evening of the 11th, following the return of the delegation to Vienna, a live broadcast of the Charlie Rose show is being considered.

Schedule for the Day

10:00	Advance team briefs 100 IFOR female soldiers participating in the event
10:00	VIP delegation departs Vienna
11:30	VIP delegation Austrian Air plane arrives at Tuzla and met by General Nash Delegation will include international news media representatives
11:45	Queen Noor's plane arrives at Tuzla from Amman Ground transportation from airport to downtown location (location to be determined)
12:00	Welcoming reception by local government officials including the Mayor and Governor (and possibly Ganic)
12:30	Ground transportation to Tuzla sport center
13:00	Women of Srebrenica commemorative event at the Tuzla sports center. Expected crowd of several thousand.
15:00	VIP delegation meets with Women of Srebrenica leaders and press at sports center meeting rooms
15:30	Depart for airport
16:00	Austrian Air plane departs Tuzla for Vienna Queen Noor's plane departs for Vienna
17:30	Planes arrive in Vienna
18:00	Reception at Amb. Hunt's residence begins
20:00	VIP dinner at Amb. Hunt's residence with Queen Noor and Emma Bonino

Related Issues

Sarajevo Women's Conference - Amb. Hunt delivered the keynote speech at the Bosnia-wide women's conference: "Women Transform Themselves and Society". The conference had been planned for 250, but more than 500 women from all over the former Yugoslavia attended. Women's role in the family, society, politics, business and law were some of the workshop and discussion topics. Some of the women were affiliated with government, others represented NGOs, all together a large spectrum of Bosnian society was represented.

The conference was opened by the President of Bosnia, Mr. Itzebegovic, who acknowledged the essential role women must play in maintaining peace and rebuilding Bosnia. The Amb.'s speech "The Power of Women United" was enthusiastically received - she was interrupted with applause on at least six occasions. All of the republics of the former Yugoslavia were represented, and many faced significant personal safety risk on their return home.

President Clinton's G-7 announcement in Lyon - Amb. Hunt was asked by the White House to brief President Clinton on the Bosnian Women's Initiative. She explained the overpowering need of the women to determine the fate of their loved ones, and their courage and generosity of spirit in crossing ethnic divisions to forge a united group for peace.

At the President's press conference immediately following the G-7 summit, he announced the U.S. contribution of \$5 million for the Bosnian Women's Initiative. Those funds, he said "will provide training and loans to help women find jobs and create businesses so they can support their families and get their nation going again." He expressed his personal support for Amb. Hunt's efforts and his hope for the women as peacemakers. Looking up from his prepared text, the President referred to the multi-ethnic cooperative determination of these women saying, "This has real potential to make a difference!"

Steiner: Women as a Political Force - Michael Steiner has twice approached Amb. Hunt about helping the women of Bosnia organize a network to cut across ethnic divisions. Amb. Hunt has cleared this idea with Amb. Menzies, and is taking steps toward that end. A new joint action across ethnic lines is being contemplated. In addition, Amb. Hunt has offered to use Vienna as the third point in a fax triangle to allow the women to communicate, since there is no phone service between Republika Srpska and the Federation.

Steinberg: Commission on the Missing - Mark Steinberg has contacted Amb. Hunt several times with updates on his work, which is so critical to all women of Bosnia. Amb. Hunt agreed to Assistant Secretary John Shattuck's request to raise funds as needed for this effort, which is being chaired by Cy Vance.

Bosnian Women Coordinator - Amb. Menzies has asked Amb. Hunt to help him find a woman who could relocate to Sarajevo to coordinate for the embassy Bosnian women issues and efforts. Amb. Hunt has interviewed a strong candidate and faxed information to Amb. Menzies. She is willing to stay involved in the process of getting this person seconded from the U.S. Army.

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U.S. Senator

Sophia Loren

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Helga Konrad
Austrian Minister for Women's Affairs

Maria Rosa Martini
President of Conscience

Katja Boh
Slovenian Ambassador to Austria

Zdenka Gast
President and CEO of Conweid

Waltraud Klasnic
Governor of Styria, Austria

Send Contributions to:
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Darda Mihajlovica 2
75101 Tuzla, Republic Bosnia-Herzegovina

International Rescue
Committee
Husinkuh rudara bb
75000 Tuzla, Republic Bosnia-Herzegovina

Women of Srebrenica Project

Fax (43-1) 31339 290

or (43-1) 877-730

On July 11, 1995 some 6,000-8,000 men disappeared from Srebrenica, a UN-designated "safe area." Separated from the women and children, many were summarily executed; others were ambushed as they fled. A few survived to bear witness by escaping to the woods, or hiding under the bodies of the dead.

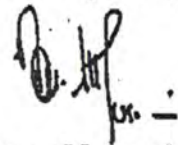
Some 30,000 survivors are now living in extremely difficult circumstances, primarily near Tuzla. They are desperate to know the fate of their men. The mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives are faced with finding homes, feeding and educating their children, and beginning new lives as the breadwinners and leaders of their families and communities. These women must move past survival to economic independence for themselves and their families.

A delegation will travel to Tuzla on July 11th, to speak at an event commemorating the fall of Srebrenica. The delegation includes Queen Noor of Jordan, Emma Bonino, E.U. Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs; and Swanee Hunt, U.S. Ambassador to Austria. A Host Committee is garnering global support on behalf of the Women of Srebrenica. The assistance most urgently needed has been identified, and concrete support will be funneled through the non-governmental organizations directly involved with this population.

Each of us can make a difference -- finding ways to move beyond concern and empathy to solidarity with those who so desperately need a hopeful future.

Will you join us as we send a message to the Women of Srebrenica? The attached open letter, with your name, will be handed to thousands of women on July 11, 1996 and will be published worldwide. Please respond before July 8th, and share this letter with a friend.

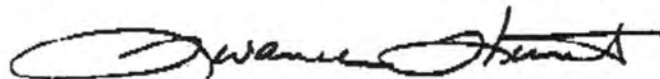
When the women of Srebrenica are handed the open letter, your name will be their assurance that we remember.



Queen Noor of Jordan



EU Commissioner Emma Bonino



U.S. Ambassador Swanee Hunt

Women of Srebrenica: You Are Not Alone

There are countless victims of atrocities from the war in Bosnia. So why do we address this letter to you?

The world promised you that in Srebrenica you would be safe. You weren't.

We, women of the world, join you in remembering the men who died and those still missing following the fall of Srebrenica on July 11, 1995.

We, women of the world, demand that all parties to the Peace Agreement live up to their obligations.

But, you, women of Srebrenica, continue to struggle as exiles with the consequences of war.

We know. We care. And we will:

- provide concrete help;
- insist that indicted war criminals be brought to justice; and
- demand freedom of movement for all citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina — so you can go home.

Name:

Title:

Organization:

signature



Office of the Ambassador
United States Embassy to Austria
Boltzmanngasse 16, A-1091 Vienna, Austria
Tel: (43-1) 31339 2414 Fax: (43-1) 3177826

TELEFAX

DATE: July 3, 1996

TO: Melanne Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the First Lady

Via Fax: 202-456-6244

FROM: Ambassador Swanee Hunt

Dear Melanne,

I wanted you to see this fax just in from Mike McCurry.

He's the one who gets it!! Best,

A handwritten signature, likely of Swanee Hunt, consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

TO: Ambassador Swanee Hunt

FROM: Mike McCurry

FAX: 431 3177826

Swanee-

A magnificiently written piece that captures something important that will last longer than some of the other stuff we talked about in Lyon.

- MMc

"Crossing Halls of Power" - Draft Two

When President Clinton stood before the world press Saturday afternoon at the end of the Lyon G-7 meeting, he described a new force for peace in the Balkans. It's a force growing quietly but dramatically from the grassroots of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where new life usually begins: with women.

The President announced \$5 million to spur economic development among Bosnian women through business loans and training. That infusion of support was designed not to rescue women victims, or even protect their rights, but to magnify the stabilizing voice of Bosnian women by adding to their economic importance. And how are these women stabilizing their society? They have begun by uniting. Before meeting the press, the President had been briefed on the conference taking place in Sarajevo that same day, where over 500 women from all parts of Bosnia -- Serb, Croat, and Muslim -- joined together, determined to transform their country.

There were parallels between the meetings in Lyon and Sarajevo. Even as the delegations from the seven largest industrialized nations had schlepped their complex entourage through airports across the globe, Bosnian women had made a difficult journey from all parts of their country, under arduous post-war conditions crossing not only geographic, but also ethnic lines.

And there was one more comparison. Both gatherings represented an extraordinary collection of power: the more traditional Realpolitik economic might that unites the G-7; and the iconoclastic determination to guarantee peace that unites the intrepid women of Bosnia.

But that's where the similarities ended and contrasts began. For in Lyon safety was a dominant preoccupation. Security was so tight that mid-level White House policy-makers sometimes waited 45 minutes while French gendarmes pored over carefully-compiled lists, to determine who could enter a meeting.

Some of the women who gathered in Sarajevo, on the other hand, would be unprotected as they faced danger from paramilitary bullies when they returned to their communities. These women put themselves at risk just by attending, because the cooperative tone of this conference would infuriate those who idealize "ethnic purity." The values expressed in Sarajevo justified personal sacrifice, for out of this conference might flow a movement that would bring reconciliation to this troubled region.

The day before the Sarajevo gathering, I was a few hours up the road in Tuzla, where 20,000 American soldiers stand guard, keeping apart the fighters who have wreaked unbridled havoc on this bucolic

landscape. The destruction from that violence is pervasive -- much more than simply burned-out houses and caved-in roofs. Long after new concrete is poured, damaged psyches will take years to heal. And the psychological scars are everywhere. Many men look no one in the eye, shamed by the atrocities they have witnessed or committed; others swagger with a bellicose air. Often women cannot speak without crying, longing for any news of their teenage sons, husbands, lovers, brothers... torn out of the fabric of their lives, leaving gaping holes.

Tuzla is, after all, the gathering place of the survivors of Srebrenica, who a year ago endured a reign of horror worthy of fascist Europe. Within a few days, as the world watched, as many as 8,000 unarmed boys and men were separated by Serbs from women and small children in that UN-designated "safe area." Many were summarily executed. Many others were ambushed during a forced march from the town.

Yet in spite of the intense pathos, and in spite of the overwhelming enormity of the obstacles that confront them, the women refugees of Srebrenica have organized into a political force. They are in the last stage of planning a pivotal event on July 11th in the sports center of Tuzla, where some 6,000 of them will commemorate their missing. Now they are occupied, embroidering the names of their boys and men on pieces of cloth that will be tied together, creating a symbol of the bond of grief that unites the women themselves. Once united, they will press their political agenda with new power, to demand that the Dayton peace agreement be honored.

Sitting at the press conference in Lyon, I thought back to a small room in Tuzla with benches covered by brightly-colored weavings. There, instead of heads of state or White House advisors, a diminutive, sweet, grey-haired woman named Fatima sat next to me, describing plans for the Tuzla commemoration. She held in her lap blue banner segments with the names of her 18-year-old son and her husband of 25 years. Every now and then, her natural smile contorted, she wiped away tears.

I felt reluctant to raise the issue, but I needed to know: "Do you think it's possible, Fatima, that the women of Srebrenica could invite the Serbian women of Banja Luka to your commemorative event?"

She looked at me straightforwardly, and said simply, "We're all mothers."



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TELEFAX

DATE: June 17, 1996

TO: Melanne Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the First Lady
(202) 456 6244

FROM: Ambassador Swanee Hunt

Dear Melanne,

This latest Bob Woodward scene defies description. How do you manage to keep coming to work, day after day? Clearly, because you work with such a magnificent boss.

I'm enclosing a concept paper, which will tie together some remarkable developments. I'm so happy about how this has all worked!

Let me ask you to consider two things:

1) For the Women of Srebrenica event, I have a wonderful Host Committee. (See the enclosed letterhead, which changes now, several times a day.) The actual delegation going to Tuzla is Queen Noor, Commissioner Bonino and I. If Hillary wants to join the Host Committee, especially now that the President is announcing the Bosnian Women's Initiative in Lyon, let me know. That would mean just her name.

2) Second, the Sarajevo Women's conference is a huge success already -- over 500 women registered, from all parts of the country. I'll be hopefully in Lyon for the President's announcement, then going on to Sarajevo. Would Hillary like to go with, to speak to the group? (I realize she may not be able to, for security reasons.) The trip could be about six hours total for her, I think.

The conference is the 28th through 30th. This is our greatest hope for peace, in my opinion.

I love to you both. I'll assume if I don't hear back, that neither idea is a go.

file Bosnia

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 11, 1996

To the Women of Srebrenica:

Today you have come together because of a horrible, tragic event that changed your lives forever. There can be no justification for the barbaric terror you and your loved ones endured, or for the losses you continue to suffer.

Over these past four long years, the United States has joined the international community sending humanitarian aid and later 20,000 peacekeepers. We have rebuilt roads and bridges. Now we are creating a commission to help you find your missing boys and men. And we are sending \$5,000,000 to help you start businesses and get back on your feet economically.

These things we can do. But we know that it will take you, from the inside, to repair the fabric of life that has been ripped into shreds by aggression and hate.

And so the thoughts of our nation are with you as you gather in Tuzla not only to remember the past, but to shape your new future. The world is watching with deep admiration as you have invited women across Bosnia-Herzegovina to join you, reaching out across the lines drawn by war, to create a future of compassion and hope.

Hillary and I believe strongly in your mission to reunite your country. We applaud your courage, your strength, and your wisdom. We stand with you today in spirit, to say, "You are not alone."

Bill Clinton

FORCE MANAGEMENT
POLICYOFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

April 2, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR ASD (FMP)

SUBJECT: Trip Report: Baumholder, Germany; Bosnia-Herzegovina; and
Aviano AFB, Italy, March 23-27, 1996

The following is a report on my trip with the First Lady to visit military families in Baumholder, Germany and troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina. After leaving the First Lady's entourage at Aviano AFB, I spent the following day meeting with Aviano AFB officials.

1. On March 24, the First Lady and Chelsea were met at Ramstein AFB by Secretary and Mrs. Togo West, General and Mrs. William Crouch, and General and Mrs. Richard Hawley. Her entourage then traveled to Baumholder to attend church services followed by a luncheon in a mess hall with families, troops about to deploy, and rear detachment personnel. The First Lady's remarks, praising the strength of military families, were very well received. Grammy Award winner Sheryl Crow entertained the crowd with a medley of her songs.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Clinton attended a performance of two plays, one presented by the second grade class of Neubruecke Elementary School and the other by a seventh grade class from Baumholder High School. The seventh grade performance consisted of readings from student journals regarding their feelings about the deployment along with readings from letters received by this class from 7th grade students in Tuzla, Bosnia. The presentation was very moving and received positive press coverage. Sheryl Crow and comedian, Sinbad, entertained the children.

While in Baumholder Mrs. Clinton also met with prominent officials from the local German community.

2. We traveled to Bosnia aboard a C-17 loaded with the following: AT&T phone equipment and 5000 prepaid phone cards for the troops; 500 video tapes for distribution to base camps; school supplies collected by the Baumholder community for their sister school in Tuzla; and, toys donated by FAO Schwartz for the children in Tuzla. Admiral "Snuffy" Smith, MG Bill Nash, and the members of the 7th grade class from the sister school met the plane. Mrs. Clinton proceeded with her itinerary that included briefings on the IFOR mission, meetings with prominent Bosnian leaders and representatives of NGO's, and tours of several base camps. Her day ended with a concert at Tuzla West for approximately 500 people. Sheryl Crow and Sinbad performed along with local entertainment. Mrs. Clinton's remarks to the crowd were very favorably received.



Under the mantle of the USO, with arrangements coordinated by our AFPEO office, Sheryl Crow and Sinbad spent the day traveling to base camps to entertain troops stationed there. I traveled with Ms. Crow to four base camps: Russian Multi-National Battalion (MNB), Kime, Linda and Demi. Russian MNB, Kime and Linda are still in a fairly primitive state. Apart from a portable dining facility at Kime and Linda, the remainder of the camp consists of Army tents. Phone service is not yet available. The troops at Demi, on the other hand, live in air conditioned portables and have MWR facilities and phone banks.

I spoke with commanders and troops at each base camp. Morale appears to be good. Announcements of the R&R policy and news of the impending arrival of phone equipment were positively received. At each camp, except for Russian MNB, contractors were working to upgrade living conditions with showers, dining facilities, board walkways, framing for tents, etc. Surrounding the camps, the ravages of the 4 year war were apparent with heavily damaged villages, demolished churches, and marked mine fields. The local infrastructure (electricity, phone lines) has yet to be restored in parts of the country.

3. We next flew to Aviano AFB where we were met by LTG Mike Ryan, Ambassador Reginald Bartholomew, and Mrs. Lamberto Dini, spouse of the Prime Minister of Italy. Mrs. Clinton addressed an enthusiastic crowd of approximately 1000 military personnel and their families. Following the departure of the First Lady, the USO performers entertained the crowd.

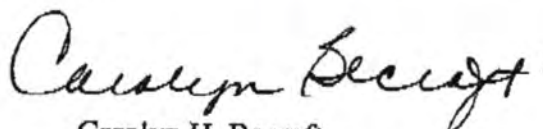
4. On Tuesday, March 26, I met with base officials, received a command mission briefing and a community briefing, toured facilities, had lunch with Marines at the new addition to tent city, received a briefing on JROTC, and met with DoDDS school personnel.

Aviano AFB population has doubled in the past few years and the base is struggling with overcrowded facilities, housing and dormitory shortages, and demanding operational tempo. Family advocacy officials indicated that stress levels on the base were very high as evidenced by increasing caseloads. The number of children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder has risen dramatically in a year, from 4 to 28. Base officials also reported that the caseload for financial assistance, as reported by the Air Force Aid Society, consists primarily of Army personnel assigned to the base. (An explanation could be that the Air Force is the only service that begins training in financial planning during basic training, followed by additional training at the first duty station. Financial training for young servicemembers is currently being addressed by the financial training initiative recently approved by the Executive Committee.)

Aviano has a comprehensive plan, *Aviano 2000*, to build and realign community facilities to meet the needs of their expanded population. The base has recently acquired additional land from the Italian government for the expansion and a significant financial commitment from NATO to implement the plan. There are construction and renovation

projects everywhere, including 2 new dorms, 2 new child development centers, dining facility renovations, and a new teen center. Major projects in the future include a new high school (dependent on NATO funds) and a request for a new commissary/BX complex. The current schools, commissary and BX are seriously undersized for the present population. DoDEA, DeCA and AAFES officials are working with the command to address these needs.

In closing, it is evident that the planning by EUCOM and USAREUR for family support, prior to the deployment, has paid great dividends. Over 90% of families have remained in Europe and camaraderie appears to be high. Morale of servicemembers living in Bosnia was good, with soldiers evidencing great pride in the accomplishments of their mission. At each location I met with leaders who were dedicated to improving conditions for servicemembers and their families.



Carolyn H. Becraft
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Personnel Support, Families and Education)