

FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE

An Illustrative Account of
Malaysia's Efforts towards
Peace in Bosnia

Mohd Najib Tun Razak

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Malaysia feels extremely concerned,
not merely because Bosnia-Herzegovina
has something to do with Islam and Muslims.
We feel strongly whenever and wherever
injustice and oppression are perpetrated.
Malaysia has been equally vehement about
South Africa, about Cambodia
and other non-Muslim communities
which have faced similar problems.

*Dr Mahathir Mohamad
Prime Minister of Malaysia*





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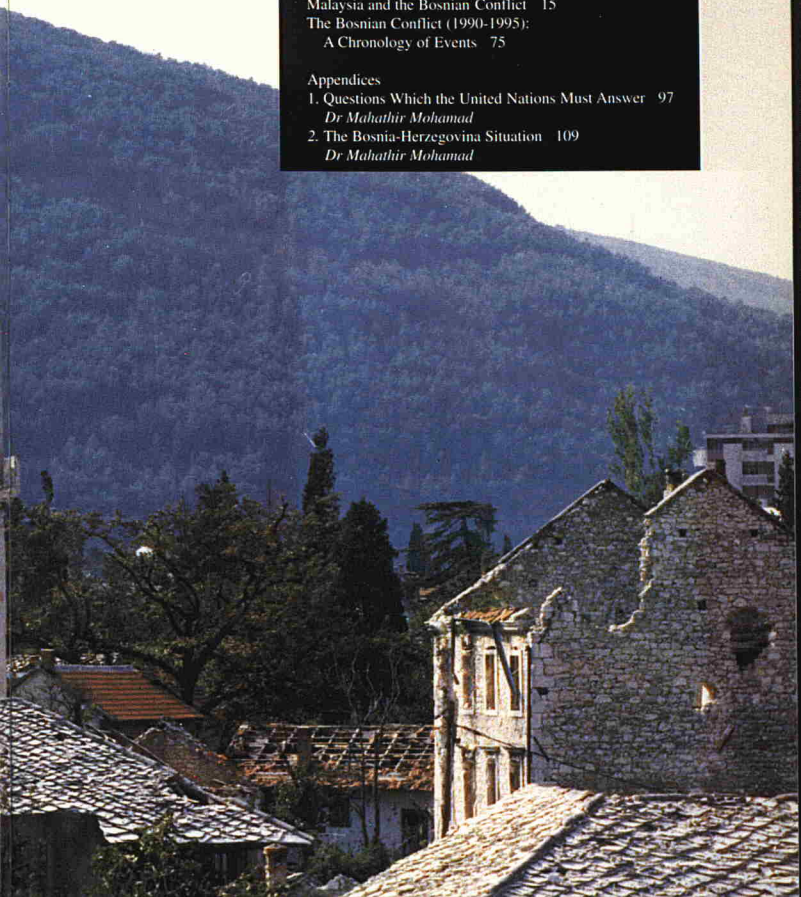
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To all Malaysians who have sacrificed
their lives in the line of duty



Preface

This book actually originated upon my return from my second trip to Bosnia, after spending my Hari Raya there in March 1995, when I was the Minister of Defence. During the trip I took many photographs, and it was suggested to me that these photographs together with others should not merely be kept in photo albums, but be published into a book, which could provide a pictorial record of not only the carnage that have come to symbolise the Bosnian tragedy, but also Malaysia's effort in trying to assist the Bosnians, especially in making their lives tolerable in what must be an intolerable situation.

Unfortunately, due to some unavoidable circumstances, this book could only be published after many months have lapsed. To some degree, this book has come at a right time, as the Dayton Agreement, signed by the warring factions, is somehow bringing much hope for the future of the Bosnians. Things certainly look much brighter today compared to when I was there last. There is some glimmer of hope as some semblance of peace and normalcy is slowly being restored. It could be said that one chapter of the Bosnian story has closed while another has opened. The future is not going to be easy, and this process is only the beginning. The involvement of the international community is also changing, as UNPROFOR has changed to IFOR. The nature of assistance will also have to change from one essentially military and humanitarian to one that should be much more reconstruction-driven. Even here, Malaysia is in a good position to contribute in order to help rebuild this war-torn country.

This book is a pictorial account of Malaysia's contribution to Bosnia. Never before has Malaysia taken up such an international issue so vehemently. Malaysia believes that Bosnia is a victim of

the changing world scenario, *inter alia*, where age-old fears of the rise of a Muslim state in Europe, have surfaced.

The Bosnian conflict is a tragedy, a human tragedy. The countless deaths, destruction and misery could all have been avoided had the international community, either the United Nations or NATO as it is a European conflict, had intervened decisively, speedily and timely. Had these organisations been willing to step in and had the courage to use force to prevent the escalation of the conflict, just imagine the number of lives that could have been saved. We, though living far away from the area, feel frustrated, while at the same time, angry for the inertia and lack of action demonstrated by those who talk of human rights and democracy the loudest. Their unwillingness to decisively intervene had caused the carnage in Bosnia. The UN has failed miserably in this regard and the double standards of the Western powers is so glaring here, especially when we compare with the swift action taken during the Gulf War. It is our hope that such a tragedy never recur.

In our own way, we have contributed in a variety of ways, ranging from political and diplomatic initiatives and actions, to peacekeeping operations, humanitarian and other non-military assistance. Malaysia and Malaysians could look back and see our actions with pride, despite our relatively-small size.

In many respects, Malaysia, under the most able leadership of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, has kept this issue alive in many international forums. He has personally taken up this issue and to a certain extent his bold and brave efforts have encouraged the peace process in Bosnia. There is no doubt that the Malaysian Prime Minister's involvement, intervention and resolve have been the guiding light behind Malaysia's courageous stand on Bosnia, which is based on the principle of equality, international justice and humanitarianism. This book, in its own small way, also pays tribute to the Malaysian Prime Minister.

This book would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of individuals as well as organisations, in particular the Bosnian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, the Ministry of Defence,

Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), Utusan Malaysia, Bernama, Reuters, and also Rusdi Mustapha and Syed Agil Syed Jaafar. I would like to specially mention Datuk Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali for her advice and kind contribution. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Mr Abdul Razak Abdullah Baginda and the staff at the Malaysian Strategic Research Centre for all their assistance. My thanks also to Mr Ng Tieh Chuan of Pelanduk Publications for agreeing to publish this book. Needless to say, any shortcomings in this book are entirely mine.

It is my hope that this book will be one of many others that would record Malaysia's distinct contributions towards humanitarianism in the tragedy called Bosnia.

June 1996

Mohd Najib Tun Razak



The Author

Mohd Najib Tun Razak is the Malaysian Minister of Education. He has held a number of other ministerial appointments, including Minister of Defence and Chief Minister of Pahang. In his current portfolio, he has been instrumental in undertaking a major reform of the country's education system, which would ensure Malaysia's continued socio-economic growth and development.

He has been in politics for over twenty years and is currently a vice-president of UMNO, the ruling party since independence. He was previously the head of UMNO Youth.

He received his early education at St John's Institution in Kuala Lumpur and Malvern College in Worcestershire, England. He holds a B.A. (Hons) in Industrial Economics from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. He is the founder and Chairman of the Malaysian Strategic Research Centre, a private think-tank with the objective of enhancing knowledge in the areas of politics, economics and society. He is the author of *Asia-Pacific's Strategic Outlook: The Shifting of Paradigms and Leadership Models of Asia in the 21st Century*.



Malaysia and the Bosnian Conflict

The Bosnian conflict has finally ended. The Paris Agreement which saw the tripartite signing of the Peace document has brought at least one chapter of this seemingly internecine conflict to an end. However, there are still doubts and questions raised as to the durability of this agreement. With the involvement of some 60,000 international troops, under the auspices of NATO, it is hoped that this new military intervention, with awesome firepower, will be adequate for the tasks ahead. Naturally, what is required today is much more than firepower, as what is needed is the reconstruction of this country, and the rebuilding of the political, economic and social institutions, prerequisites for a modern independent state.

When the world learnt about the proposed peace agreement, many thought that it was certainly an unfair document, as it would mean that the Bosnian Muslims would lose the land that was robbed by the Bosnian Serbs. The Serbs appear to be rewarded despite the crimes committed by them against humanity. Nevertheless, although disgruntled, the Bosnian Muslims and the world at large have to accept this as this is a reflection of the situation on the ground, in terms of controlling the territories. This acceptance must be attributed to the leaders of the Bosnian Muslims, who despite losing territory, would want peace. As it has been said many times at peace agreements, "it is not that we don't love our land, it is that we love peace more". Thus, ends, at least for the time being, the Bosnian conflict, which at one point in time seemed endless. Unfortunately, wars and conflicts are human activity that are most deplored and condemned, yet they continue

to surface. However, for the sake of our future, it is our hope that every time a conflict ends, man learns the lessons of the futility of war and that we should reach a stage where we should no longer resort to the use of force in order to solve our differences.

Right from the beginning, Malaysia stood firm, on the side of the oppressed, and against the aggressors, in the conflict of the former Yugoslavia. For Malaysia, the conflict in Bosnia is clearly unjust. It is unjust because it is a war waged against a small independent nation that cannot defend itself and its people. The aggressors, on the other hand, are not only militarily more powerful but they seem to be able to get away with unjustified acts of aggression.

Malaysia's policy towards Bosnia is a policy based on the principle of the right of sovereign nations to exist and survive no matter how small the nation is. Once the sovereignty of a nation is recognised, its right to exist must and should be respected by all others. It is on this principle that Malaysia's proactive policy, support and commitment are founded on. It is also based on this principle that Malaysia will contribute to the peace process in whatever way it can.

Malaysia, as a member of the United Nations, is fully and completely committed to upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which includes the upholding of the international law and the principles of human rights. It is in this respect that Malaysia has cooperated with the international community in providing Bosnia-Herzegovina with the means of self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter. The acquisition of land by force must be rejected by the international community. The policy of genocide and ethnic cleansing must no longer be acceptable in this day and age.

Malaysia is a relatively small developing state yet it has in the past stood firm and spoken up for the rights of small nations against aggression by major powers or by such military powers. Since gaining its independence in 1957, Malaysia has always felt

that states no matter how big or small have the right to exist and exist peacefully with its neighbours, regardless of differences in ideology, economic systems, race, creed, culture or religion. The Malaysian Premier, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in one of his major speeches on Bosnia categorically pointed out that "Aggression, occupation and the redrawing of territorial boundaries by force is unacceptable in this day and age. But when aggression is accompanied by the abominable practice of ethnic cleansing, it is not just unacceptable but despicable by any standard of international behaviour".

There is so much that a country can do in the case of Bosnia but Malaysia's role has been constrained by the nature of the conflict. However, that has not prevented Malaysia from playing a proactive role in seeking a solution to the conflict. Malaysia has contributed in a number of significant ways, namely in the areas of politics and diplomacy, humanitarian as well as military, as part of UNPROFOR.

Right from the start, Malaysia has come out strongly in condemnation of the atrocities committed by the Serbs. Such condemnation were expressed either at the United Nations or other international meetings. Malaysia's stand has been most consistent in this regard.

Malaysia recognised Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia on May 4, 1992. With such diplomatic recognition, the Bosnian Embassy was established in Kuala Lumpur in March 1994, thereby ensuring that a direct link was established. There have been many exchange visits amongst Malaysian and Bosnian leaders, mainly for consultation. The Malaysian Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, himself had visited Bosnia a number of times throughout the duration of the conflict.

Perhaps one of the most significant political and diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Malaysia was its initiative to call for an OIC meeting, which saw the gathering of prominent members of OIC in Kuala Lumpur in 1995. OIC members were represented by

Ministers of Defence and Chiefs of Defence Forces. This is perhaps the first time the OIC took a firm stand, by trying to coordinate OIC activities in assisting the Bosnians. Although, events had overtaken the OIC initiative, it is often believed that it was this OIC initiative that to some extent got the Western countries to come together to pressure the warring factions to pursue peace. Indirectly, Malaysia has contributed significantly to the peace process, sometimes more than most would recognise. On the whole, in political and diplomatic terms, Malaysia has consistently been voicing its views, without fear or favour.

○ Malaysia believes that force alone is not enough in solving the problems in Bosnia, although it believes that the Bosnian Muslims must be given every assistance so that they could defend themselves.

Apart from the initiatives of the government, Malaysian non-governmental organisations have been very active in trying to assist and lend a helping hand to the needy Bosnians. One such organisation that has been at the forefront in helping the Bosnians is ABIM (Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia).

To help the war victims, ABIM has set up a Malaysian Relief Centre in Zagreb in neighbouring Croatia. It has also started a special fund, Tabung Bosnia-ABIM, and has, since 1992, launched an adoption programme for children orphaned by the war. ABIM has established many institutions dealing with education, economy, social work, printing and information dissemination to develop all aspects of the needs of Muslims in facing the era of global Islamic revival. Among other things, the move is to ensure that school-going Bosnian-Muslim children are not deprived of an education due to the protracted conflict in their homeland. ABIM realises that once the war is over, a new generation of Muslims would be required to rebuild the entire fabric of society in the war zone.

Within Malaysia, numerous on-going voluntary efforts have been initiated by non-governmental organisations to raise funds for

the Bosnians. The total amount of voluntary contributions raised by Malaysians is more than US\$2 million. In addition, the government of Malaysia has been actively assisting in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country. Various fiscal and non-fiscal efforts have been undertaken.

Besides Malaysia's involvement at the various international forums, the country has been actively promoting bilateral ties, especially in the economic area. Although not much can be achieved currently, Malaysia has begun to pave the way for economic cooperation. An investment guarantee agreement was signed with both Bosnia and Croatia, the abolition of visa requirement between Malaysia and the two countries is indicative of Malaysia's commitment to the long-term development of the region. Many other discussions of economic cooperation are currently being undertaken.

Malaysia is one of the very few nations which has had wide experience in UN peacekeeping operations (PKO), ever since the early 1960s. The Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) first participated in UN PKO in the Congo in 1960. The MAF was involved again in UN operations in 1988 in Iran, as part of UNIIMOG (UN Iraq-Iran Military Observer Group). Since then, the MAF has been consistently involved in most of UN peacekeeping operations, by sending not only observers and staff attached to UN headquarters, but also battalions, namely, in Namibia (UNTAG), Cambodia (UNTAC), Somalia (UNOSOM), and currently in Bosnia (UNPROFOR/IFOR). The recognition of Malaysia's contributions have been manifested by, *inter alia*, the appointment of a Malaysian four-star general as the Commander of UN forces in Somalia, as well as a one-star general in the UN Headquarters in New York. Today, apart from MAF observers in UN operations, the only still operational Malaysian battalion under the UN banner is in Bosnia. The MAF involvement under UNPROFOR could be divided into a number of phases, namely, initially, the

establishment and deployment phase, and finally, the consolidation phase.

In accordance with UN common practice, the United Nations first appealed to members of the UN to indicate their interests in contributing to UNPROFOR. The Malaysian delegation in New York had subsequently expressed the government of Malaysia's interests in participating in UNPROFOR. The United Nations' formal request to Malaysia to contribute to UNPROFOR came in February 1993. The Malaysian government subsequently agreed to send a military contingent to Bosnia as part of UNPROFOR. UNPROFOR was divided into three Commands – BH Command, with covers Bosnia-Herzegovina; Croatia Command, which is responsible for Croatia; and Macedonia Command, in charge of Macedonia.

Malaysia's involvement began with the deployment of a reconnaissance team made up of twelve officers in July 1993, headed by the Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations) of the HQ of MAF. The main task of this Recce party was to conduct an initial study of requirements and conditions for deployment. The team visited the HQ of UNPROFOR in Zagreb, where they were briefed on the situation in the former Yugoslavia. The MAF gave its own briefing regarding its proposed plans for deployment, namely of a battalion (MALBATT), with a Brigadier-General commanding MALBATT. However, UNPROFOR thought that the Malaysian proposal was too big and requested the MAF to restructure, with a reduction in numbers and structure. The MAF recce team also discussed Malaysia's requirement for deployment, which included questions of logistical support.

According to UNPROFOR, the MAF was required initially to be self-sufficient for at least 60 days supply. This included things like spare parts and rations. After which the Malaysian force would be under the logistical command of UNPROFOR. Medical requirements was also discussed. Initially, they requested that the MAF provide its own medical support, with up to level two, which

in UN parlance means having the capability to handle minor surgery.

Malaysia had also requested, apart from the deployment of a battalion, the dispatch of observers, as well as staff at UNPROFOR HQ. These were all accepted. UNPROFOR gave the Malaysian Armed Forces its general guidelines for deployment. Among them was the deployment of a mechanised battalion with a strength not exceeding 1,500 men.

Upon the return of the recce team to Malaysia, the MAF began to work out its structure, based on the guidelines provided by UNPROFOR. The total number of the force earmarked for deployment to Bosnia was 1,489, and commanded by a Colonel. Although there was a requirement for the battalion to be deployed as soon as possible, there was, however, concerns as to the weather condition in Bosnia. As a result, the MAF decided to first deploy 20 observers in August. In the meantime, preparations were underway to get the Malaysian battalion ready for deployment. These included training, as well as the necessary procurement and preparations.

There were a number of stages of preparation. The first was the actual selection of the various components of MALBATT. The Malaysian Battalion was made up of combat and support elements. The first major combat element was a mechanised infantry battalion, the 23rd Royal Malay Regiment, while the second was a regiment of armour, 3 Armour. The support combat elements were made up of units such as signals, and the logistics support elements, which were later called National Support Elements (NSE).

All these components were gathered at Sungei Petani, Kedah, where training began. At the Department of Army level, the process of procurement started, namely, by the acquisition of armoured vehicles. The existing weapon systems that have already been earmarked for deployment needed also to be prepared in order for them to be operationalised.

In November 1993, Malaysia sent the first advance group to Bosnia. However, prior to this, a small team went to the UN HQ, in New York, together with other contributing countries, to finalise the logistical details for deployment. This advanced party was not operational as their task was to establish the groundwork for a later larger deployment. The whole MALBATT was deployed in five batches, with deployment having completed by late December 1993. On arrival, they were not yet classified as operational as they were on familiarisation training. Some of the equipment procured were brand new, and were sent straight to Bosnia. Therefore, the troops had to familiarise themselves with these nascent equipment, especially the armoured vehicles. The troops needed also to acclimatize themselves to the surrounding. This deployment was the first MAF deployment in a temperate country.

MALBATT was given operational status on 17 February 1994, with an area of operation around Konjic. The MALBATT HQ is based in Konjic. A number of detachments were deployed in Pazaric and Visoko. These are MALBATT's areas of operations. To date, there have been three Malaysian contingents - with each Malaysian contingent staying between six and nine months, with an average rotation every six months. MALBATT I was in Bosnia between November 1993 and July 1994, while MALBATT II operated from August 1994 to March 1995. MALBATT III began operations from March 1995 onwards, and was replaced in September 1995.

Having arrived in Bosnia, MALBATT had to begin the process of consolidating its position in that war-torn territory.

The main problems faced by MALBATT were familiarisation and to get itself established. As this was the first experience of being deployed in Europe and that the environment was seen to be entirely alien, the problems of adjustment and acclimatization were faced. Before MALBATT could be established, intense recce had to be done to the surrounding camps before they could be actually deployed and settled. For example, the search for suitable sites for MALBATT's cantonments. MALBATT's presence had to be

acceptable to the Bosnian people. This required delicate approach and sensitivity. In essence, they had to get the confidence of the Bosnians. MALBATT had to show and demonstrate that it was a neutral body, representing the United Nations, siding with no one party. As the main areas of operations for MALBATT were Muslim areas, MALBATT was accepted with relative ease. However, the Serbs did not readily accept the Malaysian presence, and this became a constant threat faced by the Malaysian contingent.

In essence, MALBATT's main mission was to provide protection to Bosnians living within its area of operations. This was done by a number of means. Firstly, to provide physical cover for aid to arrive to the Bosnians, provided by international aid agencies. Secondly, to assist Bosnians in getting on with their daily lives as best as possible. Thirdly, to be engaged in civic actions, such as the building of schools, bridges, etc, so as to improve the life of Bosnians.

During the winter, MALBATT had to assist the general movement of the population, as well as the aid agencies. Clearing the roads and making the roads operational were constant jobs of MALBATT in its area of operations.

MALBATT was engaged in many civic actions, such as providing medical supplies, food, as well as building some basic infrastructure, such as the construction and repair of roads, rebuilding houses and schools. MALBATT also provided equipment and materials for schoolchildren. Most of these supplies were donated by a number of Malaysian companies as well as individuals. By adopting such methods and approaches, MALBATT was successful in gaining the confidence of the Bosnian people.

It must be noted that the Malaysian Armed Forces have had vast experience in conducting such civic actions, not only in previous UN peacekeeping operations, but also in Malaysia itself. One of the major contributions of the MAF in nation building is

the assistance rendered in constructing roads and schools in areas deep in the jungles of Malaysia. Such civic actions have already been a hallmark of MAF's achievements.

In Bosnia, MALBATT tried to remain neutral, even in providing assistance. There are essentially three ethnic groups in Bosnia – the Muslims, the Croats and the Serbs. MALBATT played the role of a neutral body, and therefore it was fair to all the three groups. One of the biggest challenges for MALBATT was not so much of being neutral, which it was, but to convince the Serbs that it has been so.

Throughout MALBATT's existence, it was under threat as it was caught in the crossfire between the warring factions. As MALBATT was deployed in a war zone, it naturally had to contend with the dangers associated with it. For example, on many occasions, shells had landed close to MALBATT's camps. Although, there were no direct hits, MALBATT had to take necessary precautionary steps and actions when confronted with such threats.

Fighting was intense amongst the three warring factions, although after an agreement between the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats, skirmishes between these two groups were considerably reduced. However, despite this agreement, relations remained tense although as time went on, ties between them improved. Fighting remained intense and concentrated with the Serbs.

During MALBATT's stay in Bosnia, it conducted a number of duties. Apart from reporting the various skirmishes it had witnessed in its area of operations, it had, at times, acted as arbiters to problems that arose within the communities living in the Konjic area.

One additional problem faced was the size of coverage. The area given to MALBATT to cover was wide and as a result, there was the problem of control and being effective over a wide area. Road conditions were poor and the area mountainous, and as a result access was a big problem faced by MALBATT. During

winter time, when it snows, the problems are compounded. Therefore, the usage of MALBATT's armoured vehicles was stretched to its maximum. One of the causes of this was the time factor. The preparation to conduct MALBATT's operations required considerable time. Due to vast distances and territories, the time to reach its destination, at any one operation, was long and arduous. However, despite such constraints, over time, MALBATT became much more familiar with its operations and got used to the routine, by coping, improving, and finally overcoming the problems.

Although MALBATT HQ was located in Konjic, there were five other areas where various elements of MALBATT were based. For example, the logistics unit was based in Split, Jablanica, Konjic, Pazaric, and in Dobrinje, where a small MALBATT unit was placed with the Canadians. As the road system is basic as well as hazardous, any venture to resupply MALBATT HQ as well as other cantonments required considerable time and energy.

The other problem faced was communications. Due to the nature of terrain and vast distances, difficulty arose over lines of communications. During winter time, the problem of communication was the worst.

Throughout MALBATT operations, much contact was established with other UN peacekeepers. Constant exchange of information and free flow of information took place all the time within and between all the peacekeepers. Cooperation amongst the peacekeepers was well established. The performance of the Malaysian troops had been well received and their professionalism was often seen to be of the highest order.

Besides direct peacekeeping involvement, Malaysia also fully supports the efforts of the Special Coordinator for Sarajevo with regards to Security Council Resolution 900. The government of Malaysia has contributed to date a sum of more than a million US dollars to the United Nations Trust Fund for the restoration of essential services in Sarajevo. The government also participated in

the First Conference of Donors to the Action Plan held in Vienna, Austria, in 1994.

With the peace process bearing fruits in Bosnia, Malaysia's role in this country will have to undergo changes, from one essentially active in the political arena to one that hinges on the establishment of business, trade and economic linkages, where Malaysia could assist Bosnia in its reconstruction. Over the last few years, with Malaysia's strong support for Bosnia, it is in a good position to assist Bosnia. Given Malaysia's long history in dealing with multi-racial and religious groups, it seems obvious that Malaysia could help Bosnia in a variety of ways.

Malaysia's role throughout the Bosnian conflict has certainly outweighed its size. Malaysia and Malaysians have contributed in one way or another towards the well-being of Bosnians. It was the feeling of helplessness that had generated so much support amongst Malaysians. As Malaysia too is a multi-racial and multi-religious country, perhaps Malaysia knows the importance of being tolerant and the need for understanding. There is no doubt that there is much more that needs to be done in Bosnia, towards its reconstruction. In retrospect, Malaysia's stand and assistance is something which we could all be proud of and we could say that we have done our bit to help those who needed assistance at a time when everything seemed so hopeless. We hope and pray that this tragedy will never be experienced by man again but if it is destined to repeat itself, then many should come forth swiftly to put an end to the untold misery and destruction that unfortunately have become part of the ugly side of *Homo sapiens*.



A Bosnian government soldier shows the blanket-covered bodies of the twelve Bosnian Muslim civilians that were allegedly found shot dead at an "unused factory" in Sanski Most, North West Bosnia. (Top)

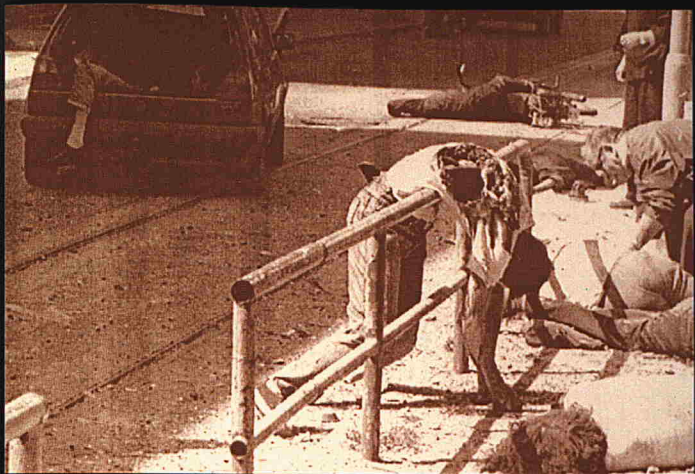
Serbian aggression.
(Bottom, left)



Dead and wounded people lie outside Sarajevo's city indoor market. *(Top)*

An artillery shell hit Sarajevo city centre's street packed with people, killing at least thirty and wounding many, August 28, 1995.

(Top, right)



"Might will always be right.
Is this the message of Bosnia?
Where are the Champions of freedom,
of human rights, of justice?
Where have they gone?"

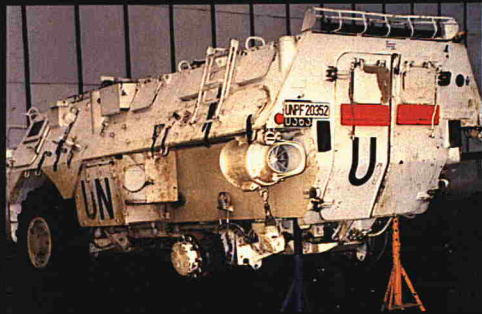
*Dr Mahathir Mohamad
Prime Minister of Malaysia*





A Bosnian special forces soldier returns fire as he and civilians are shot by Serbian snipers in downtown Sarajevo. *(Top)*

An elderly woman screams with pain after being hit by sniper fire in the centre of Sarajevo, being attended to by doctors. *(Left)*





"We support the United Nations
but we cannot just support without
showing our commitment.
So far our peacekeepers have performed
an excellent job and have earned the
recognition and praise of the United Nations."

*Dr Mahathir Mohamad
Prime Minister of Malaysia*





Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad seeing MALBATT off at Sungei Petani, Kedah, Malaysia. (Top, left)

MALBATT's arrival in Bosnia. (Bottom left)

Dr Mahathir Mohamad meeting and talking to Malaysian troops in Bosnia. (Top & bottom left)





The Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir Mohamad signing MALBATT's visitors' book in Bosnia, while his wife, Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali looks on.



Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali presenting food parcels to injured Malaysian soldiers.



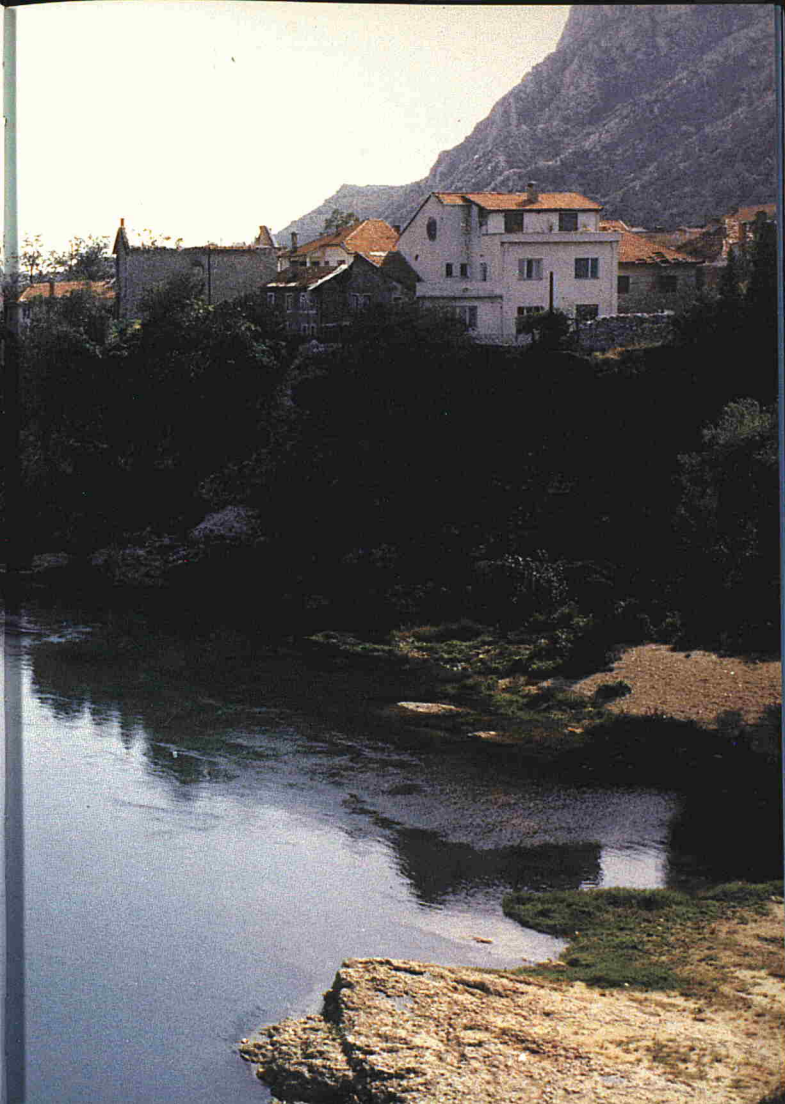
The Prime Minister's wife, Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, joining Malaysian troops for prayers in Bosnia.













Anwar Ibrahim at a rally in support
of the Bosnian people,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



The Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia
Anwar Ibrahim with the
Bosnian President Alia Izetbegovic. *(Top)*

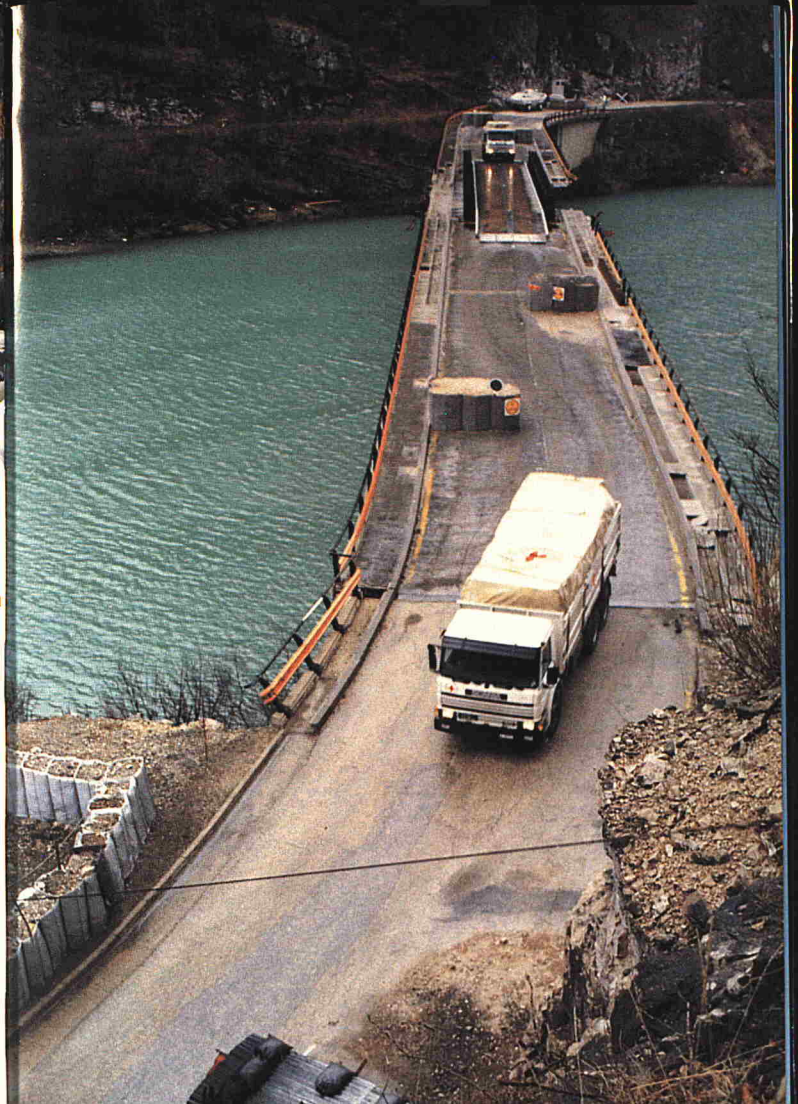
Anwar Ibrahim at a rally in support
of the Bosnian people,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. *(Left)*

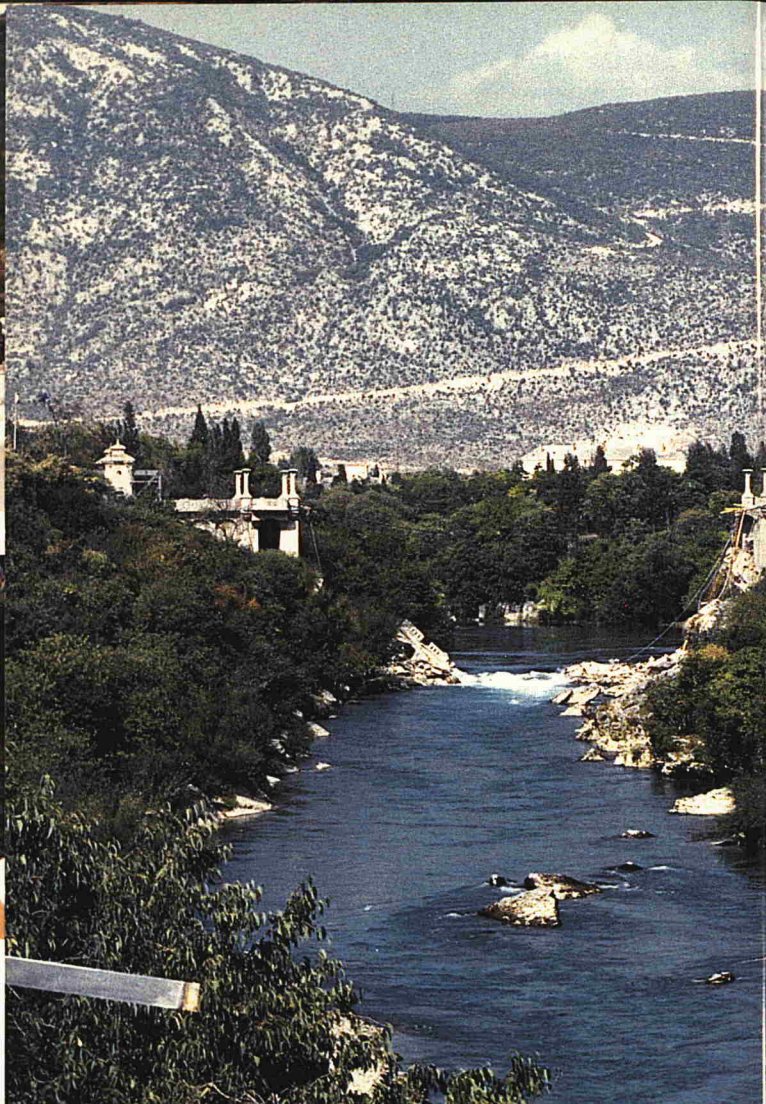


The armour became a symbol of MALBATT's presence in Bosnia. (Top)

Parcels from home to be distributed to the Malaysian troops. (Bottom)

"A bridge of Hope"
(Right)





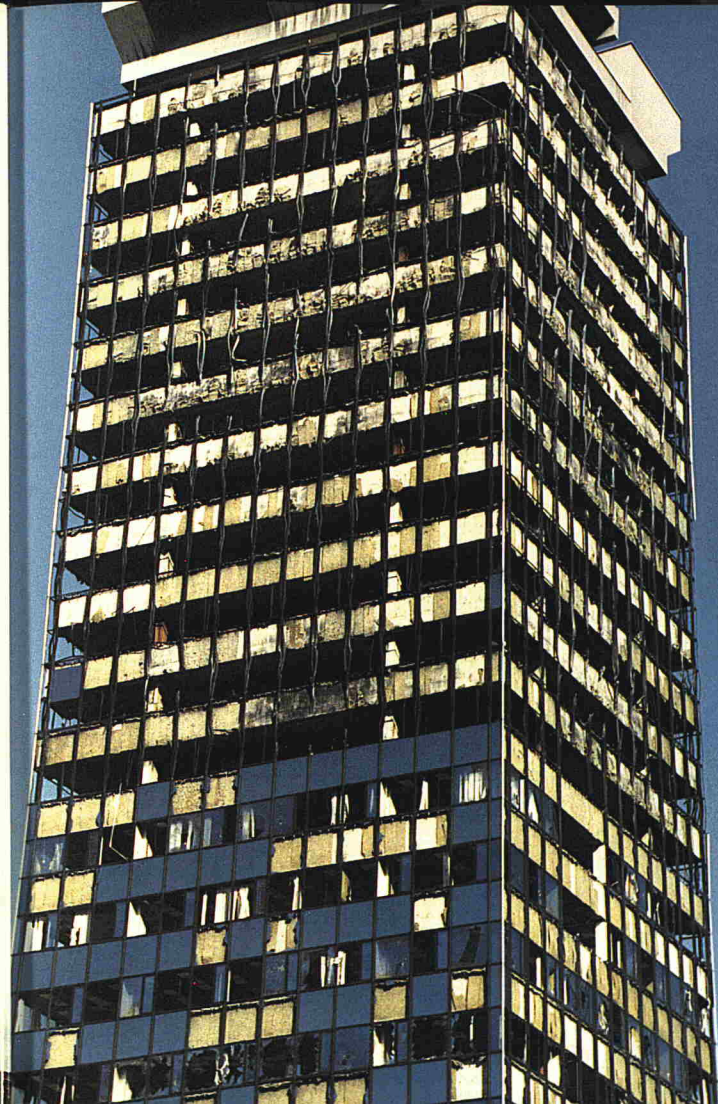


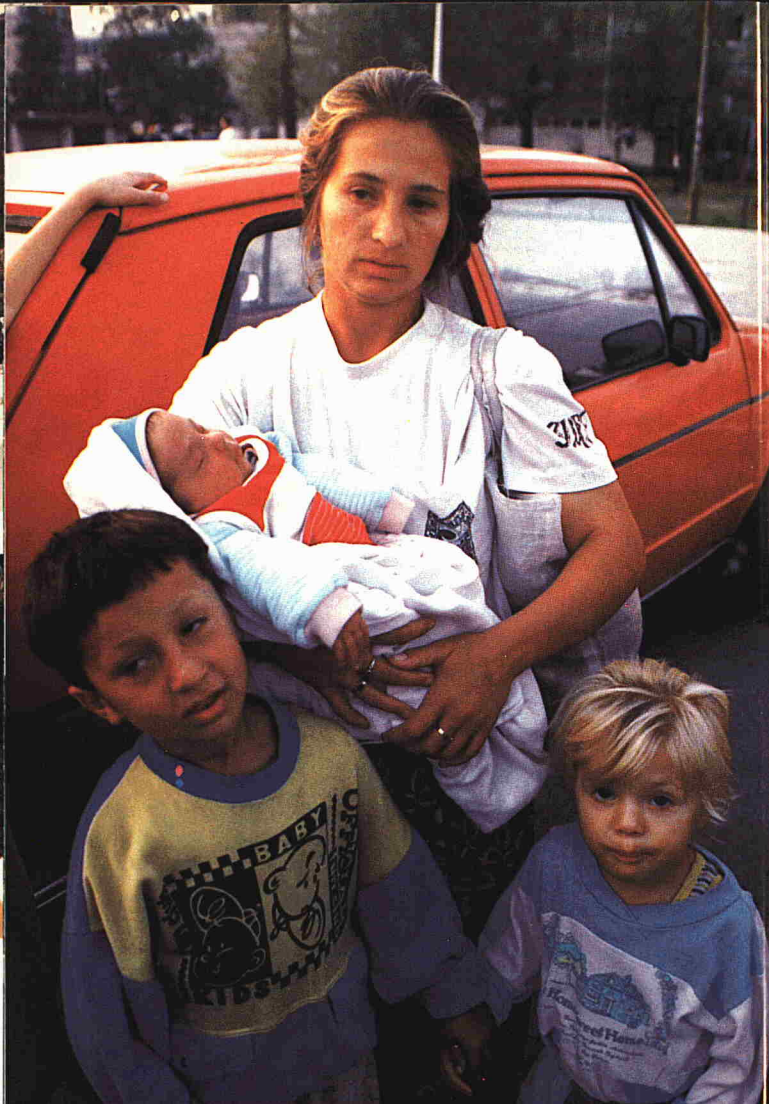


Damaged buildings.

The damaged Parliament building.
(Right)

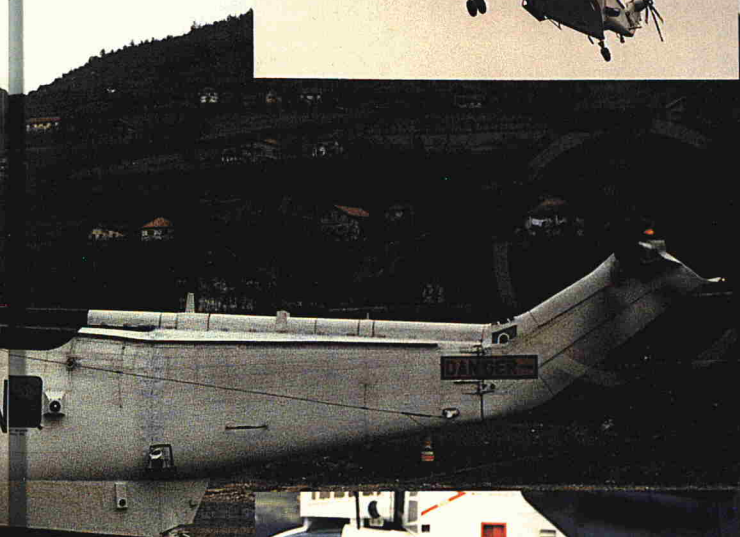


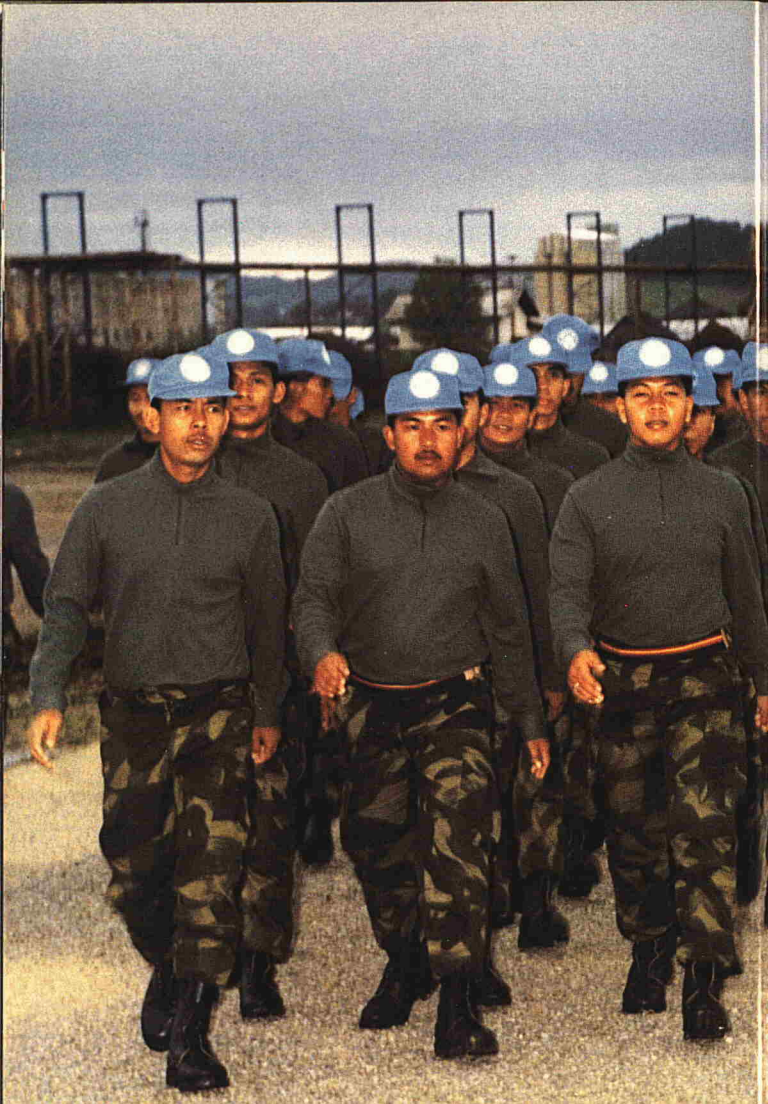
















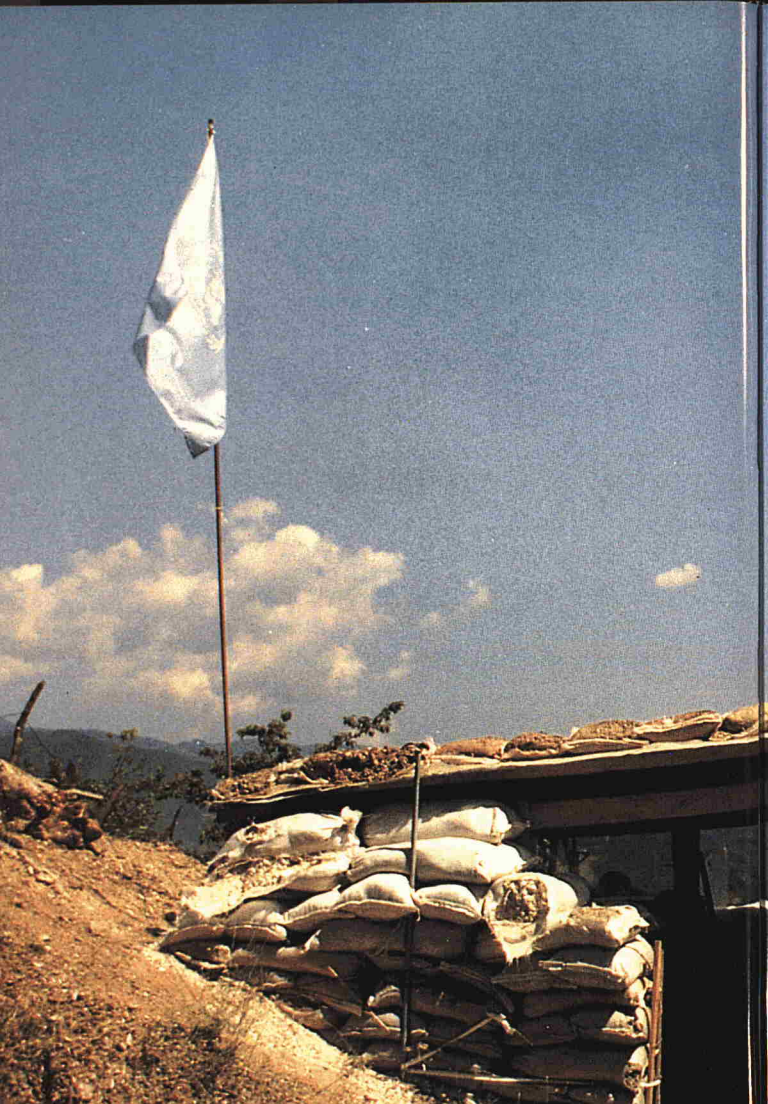
Malaysia remains committed to the preservation and maintenance of peace everywhere in the world.



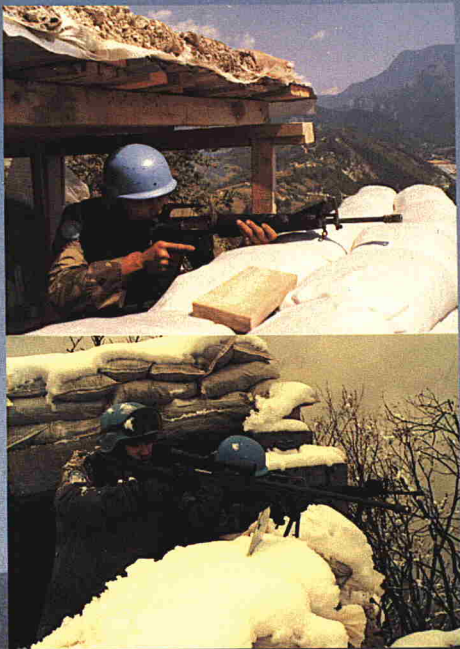


Throughout MALBATT's presence in Bosnia, it has been engaged in a variety of activities.

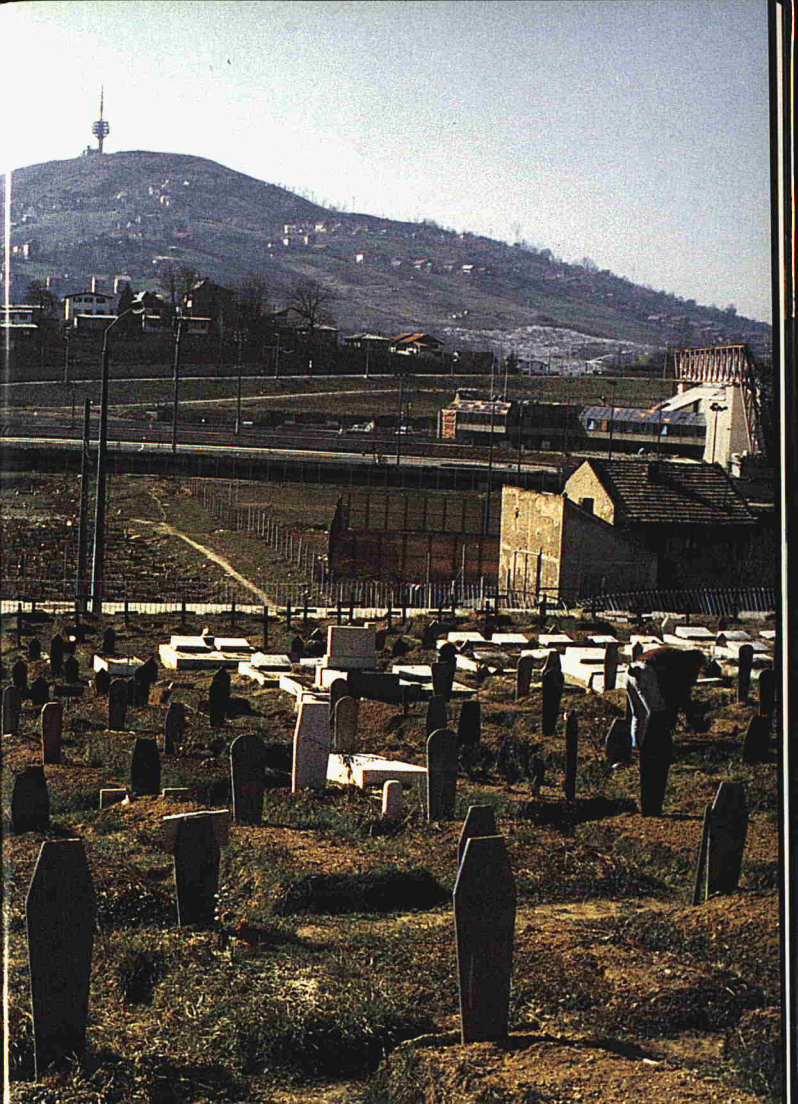




In Summer or Winter,
keeping vigilant is amongst
MALBATT's main duties.











Markers of babies killed even before they were named. *(Top)*

A graveyard in the middle of town. *(Left)*



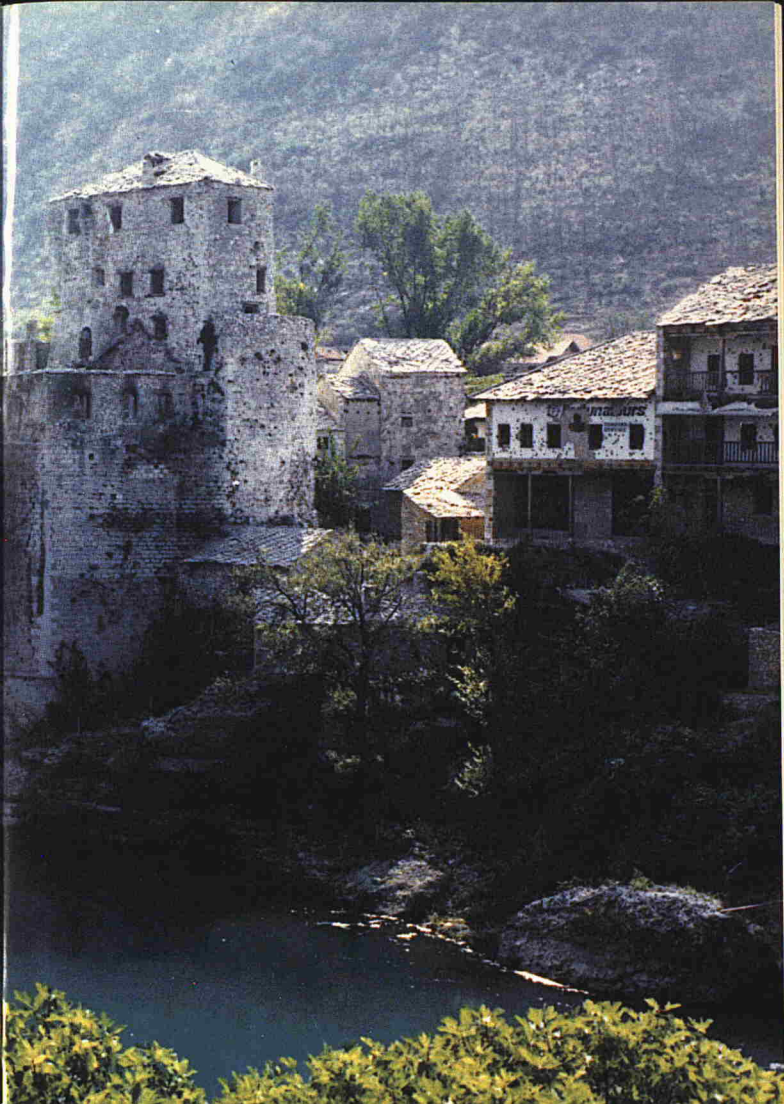




The forest in the background was once infested with Serb snipers.









The Bosnian Conflict (1990–1995): A Chronology of Events

1990

First multiparty elections in the six republics of former Yugoslavia.

25 June 1991

Slovenia and Croatia declare independence from Yugoslavia. The outside world, including the United States and European governments, refuse to recognise the moves. Fighting erupts 36 hours later, triggering the start of a civil war.

10 September 1991

Bosnia appeals to EC to send observers.

25 September 1991

Resolution 713 of the UN Security Council, calling for a complete arms embargo on all of Yugoslavia, is adopted.

15 October 1991

The parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina declares the republic's sovereignty. Ethnic Serbian deputies walk out of the session.

27 November 1991

Resolution 721 of the UN Security Council, approves the possible establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation in Yugoslavia and urges the Yugoslav parties to comply fully with the agreement signed in Geneva on 23 November

15 December 1991

Resolution 724 of the UN Security Council, supports the Secretary-General's offer to send a small group of personnel to prepare for the possible deployment of a peacekeeping operation, and decides to establish a Committee to ensure that the general and complete embargo imposed by resolution 713 is effectively applied.

8 January 1992

Resolution 727 of the UN Security Council, welcomes the signing of Implementing Accord at Sarajevo and supports the Secretary-General's intention to send a group of military liaison officers (up to 50) to promote the maintenance of the cease-fire.

15 January 1992

More than 20 countries, including EC members and excluding the US, recognise Croatia's and Slovenia's independence. Bosnia and Macedonia are not recognised.

7 February 1992

Resolution 740 of the UN Security Council, reaffirms its approval of the UN peacekeeping plan.

21 February 1992

The UN Security Council votes unanimously to establish a 14,000-man peacekeeping force in Croatia, calling it the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

29 February 1992

A referendum for independence is passed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ethnic Serbs' opposition to the referendum spurred violent clashes and bombings.

3 March 1992

Following the referendum held in Bosnia-Herzegovina revealing a majority vote for independence, President Alija Izetbegovic proclaims the republic's independence.

18 March 1992

An EC negotiated agreement is signed by leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina's three main ethnic groups, providing for the division of the republic into three autonomous units along ethnic lines.

Differences in interpretation emerge within days of the Sarajevo agreement as ethnic violence continues to escalate.

27 March 1992

Serb leaders proclaim the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina" and declare its loyalty to the "all-Serb state of Yugoslavia".

Violence increases sharply towards the end of the month.

6 April 1992

Serbian gunmen open fire on peace demonstrators in downtown Sarajevo and the United Nations recognise the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This triggers the beginning of the Bosnian war.

7 April 1992

The EC and the US recognise Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence. The US also recognises Slovenia and Croatia as independent states.

Yugoslav warplanes bomb towns in the south-west of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Its capital, Sarajevo, is surrounded by army troops.

Thousands of people flee from the republic.

Resolution 749 of the UN Security Council, to authorise the earliest possible full deployment of UNPROFOR, and appeals to all parties concerned to cooperate with all efforts to the cease-fire and negotiate a political solution.

27 April 1992

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), comprising Serbia and Montenegro, is formed. The state is not recognised by other world bodies.

28 April 1992

The UN agree in principal to extend its involvement in Yugoslavia to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

4 May 1992

The FRY orders its citizen in the Yugoslav National Army (YNA) to withdraw from Bosnia-Herzegovina within 15 days. Since only one-fifth of the estimated 100,000 YNA troops in Bosnia are FRY citizens, the remainder being Bosnian Serbs, the FRY disclaim responsibility for the fighting.

15 May 1992

Resolution 752 of the Security Council, demands that all parties concerned in Bosnia-Herzegovina stop fighting immediately.

18 May 1992

Resolutions 753 and 754 of the UN Security Council, recommend to the General Assembly that the Republic of Croatia and Republic of Slovenia be admitted to membership in the UN.

20 May 1992

Resolution 755 of the UN Security Council, recommends to the General Assembly that the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina be admitted to membership in the UN.

22 May 1992

The UN accepts Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina state as members.

27 May 1992

The EC imposes a trade embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

30 May 1992

Resolution 757 of the UN Security Council, condemns the failure of the authorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to take effective measure to fulfill the requirements of resolution 752, and decides to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions against that country including the severing of trade and air links, the freezing of government assets, an oil embargo and sporting and cultural ban.

8 June 1992

Resolution 758 of the UN Security Council, notes the agreement of all parties to the reopening of the Sarajevo airport for humanitarian purposes under the exclusive authority of UN, decides to enlarge the mandate and strength of UNPROFOR, condemns those responsible for violations of the cease-fire, and demands all parties concerned to immediately provide the necessary conditions for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies.

20 June 1992

The Bosnian Presidency declares a state of war, a general mobilisation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where there were approximately 7,200 people killed since the start of fighting, more than 30,000 missing presumed dead and 1,303,469 refugees.

29 June 1992

Resolution 761 of the UN Security Council, authorises the Secretary-General to deploy immediately additional elements of UNPROFOR to ensure the security and functioning of Sarajevo airport and the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and calls upon all States to contribute to the international humanitarian efforts in Sarajevo and its environs.

30 June 1992

Resolution 762 of the UN Security Council, recommends the establishment of the Joint Commission under the chairmanship of UNPROFOR, and authorises the strengthening of the Force to perform additional functions in certain areas ("pink zones") in Croatia.

13 July 1992

Resolution 764 of the UN Security Council, reaffirms that all parties are bound to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law. Serb forces launched major offensive, marking the 100th day of the siege of Sarajevo.

6 August 1992

U.S. President Bush backs limited use of United Nations force in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

7 August 1992

Resolution 769 of the UN Security Council, authorises the enlargement of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength to enable it to perform immigration and customs functions on the international borders in Croatia, and resolutely condemns the abuses committed against the civilian population, particularly on ethnic grounds.

12 August 1992

Malaysia severs diplomatic ties with Belgrade, being the first country to do so.

13 August 1992

Resolution 770 of the UN Security Council, calls upon States to "take nationally or through regional agencies or arrangements all measures necessary" to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Sarajevo and whenever needed in other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Resolution 771 of the UN Security Council, strongly condemns any violations of international humanitarian law, including those involved in the practice of "ethnic cleansing", demands that relevant international humanitarian organisations, in particular ICRC, be granted immediate, unimpeded and continued access to camps, prisons and detention centres within the territory of former Yugoslavia, and calls upon States, and, as appropriate, international humanitarian organisations, to collate substantial information in their possession or submitted to them relating the violations of humanitarian law committed in the former Yugoslavia and to make this information available to the Council. The Council decides, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN, that all parties and others concerned in the former Yugoslavia, and all military forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, shall comply with the provisions of the present resolution.

27 August 1992

Serbs successfully besiege Sarajevo and declare a "Serbian Republic" in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

3 September 1992

The UN agree to send 6,000 more troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina, in addition to the UNPROFOR troops already deployed in Croatia. On the same day, an Italian relief plane is shot down, crashing into Bosnian mountains.

9 September 1992

Humanitarian aid channels are shut down. Muslims are suspected to be responsible for the attacks on the airplanes and land convoys bringing aid supplies to Sarajevo.

14 September 1992

The Council authorises the enlargement of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength in Bosnia-Herzegovina to provide protection to UNHCR-

organised humanitarian convoys, as well as to convoys of released detainees if requested by the ICRC.

19 September 1992

Resolution 777 of the UN Security Council, considers that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) cannot continue automatically the membership of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the UN, and recommends to the General Assembly that it decides that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should apply for the membership in the UN and that it shall not participate in the work of the General Assembly.

22 September 1992

The UN expels the rump Yugoslav state from its General Assembly seat.

6 October 1992

Resolution 779 of the UN Security Council, authorises UNPROFOR to assume responsibility for monitoring the arrangements agreed for the complete withdrawal of the Yugoslav Army from Croatia, demilitarization of the Prevlaka Peninsula and the removal of heavy weapons from neighbouring areas of Croatia and Montenegro.

Resolution 780 of the UN Security Council requests the Secretary-General to establish an impartial Commission of Experts with a view to providing him with its conclusions on the evidence of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

9 October 1992

Resolution 781 of the UN Security Council, votes to ban all flights by military aircraft over Bosnia-Herzegovina, creating a Bosnian "no-fly zone". Serb warplanes violate the ban the following day, attacking the Muslim town of Gradacac and killing at least 19 people and wounding 30 others.

30 October 1992

Resolution 786 of the UN Security Council, reaffirms its ban on military flights in the airspace of Bosnia-Herzegovina, endorses the Secretary-General concept of operations and approves his recommendation to increase the strength of UNPROFOR in line with the concept operations.

11 December 1992

Resolution 795 of the UN Security Council, authorises the Secretary-General to establish a presence of UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

18 December 1992

Resolution 798 of the UN Security Council, strongly condemns acts of "unspeakable brutality" on Muslim women in particular, and requests the Secretary-General to provide necessary support to facilitate the European Community's investigative mission to have free and secure access to places of detention.

25 January 1993

Resolution 802 of UN Security Council, demands immediate cessation of hostile activities by Croatian armed forces and their withdrawal from the UNPAs areas and all parties concerned must comply strictly with the cease-fire arrangements already agreed and cooperate fully in implementing the UN peacekeeping plan, including the disbanding and demobilisation of Serb Territorial Defence units.

19 February 1993

Resolution 807 of UN Security Council, demands all parties concerned to comply fully with UN peacekeeping plans and full and strict observance of all Council resolutions to the mandate and operations of UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina and to extend UNPROFOR's mandate for an interim period terminating on 31 March 1993.

22 February 1993

The UN Security Council authorises military intervention for the first time in the former Yugoslavia, approving the use of force to shoot down planes violating the no-fly ban over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

NATO later affirms its role as the enforcer of the resolution.

Resolution 808 of the UN Security Council, to establish an international tribunal for the prosecution of the person responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The International Court of Justice begins hearing Bosnia's case accusing Serbia of genocide and other war crimes. A week later, the Court orders Serbia to prevent acts of genocide in Bosnia.

30 March 1993

Resolution 815 of the UN Security Council, extends the UNPROFOR's mandate for an additional interim period until 30 June 1993.

31 March 1993

Resolution 816 of the UN Security Council, authorises Member States to act nationally or through regional arrangements, to take, subject to close coordination with Secretary-General and UNPROFOR, all necessary measures in the air-space of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the event of further violations.

16 April 1993

Resolution 819 of the UN Security Council, demands that all parties treat Srebrenica and its surrounding as a safe area and immediate withdrawal of Bosnian Serb paramilitary units from it.

17 April 1993

Resolution 820 of the UN Security Council, commends the peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina which has been accepted by two of the Bosnian parties. It decides to strengthen the sanctions imposed against the Republic of Yugoslavia, effective nine days after the date of adoption of resolution, unless the Bosnian Serb party signs the peace plan and ceases to attack Bosnia-Herzegovina.

28 April 1993

Resolution 821 of the UN Security Council, reaffirms that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cannot continue automatically the membership of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the UN.

6 May 1993

The Bosnian Serb self-proclaimed parliament meeting rejects a United Nations-backed peace plan and instead votes to put its proposal to a referendum.

8 May 1993

Resolution 824 of the UN Security Council, declares that Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde and Bihać should be treated as safe areas.

30 June 1993

A US-backed resolution to lift the arms embargo over Muslim-led Bosnia fails to win adoption by the UN Security Council following the abstention of European and other members.

5 August 1993

NATO-UN in Zagreb are working on plans to bomb Serb forces following Serb advances on strategic mountain overlooking Sarajevo. NATO agreed to a US proposal to launch an airstrike against Bosnian Serbs if they do not lift their siege on Sarajevo.

11 January 1994

NATO leaders reaffirm that airstrikes will be carried out to prevent further siege of Sarajevo and other safe areas. Croatian President Franjo Tjudman removes Mate Boban, nationalist leader of Bosnian Croats, from peace negotiations.

13 January 1994

Croatian Army jets and helicopters attack Muslim positions in central Bosnia.

19 January 1994

Talk between Bosnia's three warring factions collapse as Serbs are still attacking the Bosnian people. Croatia and Yugoslavia agree to normalise relations, but do not agree on sovereignty of Serb-held territory in Croatia.

24 January 1994

Lt-Gen Sir Michael Rose replaces Lt-Gen Briquemont as Commander of UN forces in Bosnia.

Early 1994

End of hostilities between the Bosnian Muslims and Serbian Croats and the cease-fire agreement signed by Krajina Serbs and Croat authorities.

February 1994

The establishment of a heavy-weapon exclusion zone around Sarajevo and agreement reached between the Bosnian Government Army (BiH) and Bosnian Croat Army (HVO) on a general cease-fire.

5 February 1994

A single mortar shell explodes in a crowded market square in Sarajevo killing more than 60 and injuring nearly 200 bystanders.

6 February 1994

UN Secretary-General requests that NATO be prepared to launch air strikes when asked to do so against artillery positions in or around Sarajevo responsible for attacks on civilian targets.

7 February 1994

UK Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd states that the European Union must now seek to "bring about the immediate lifting of the siege of Sarajevo by all means necessary, including air power".

8 February 1994

Bosnia Croat leader, Mate Boban, resigns.

9 February 1994

NATO issues a ten-day ultimatum calling on Serbs to remove, or place under UN control, all heavy weapons within a 20km exclusion zone around Sarajevo; failure to do so would lead to airstrikes.

15 February 1994

President Yeltsin warns against excluding Russia from resolution of Bosnian crisis and reiterates opposition to airstrikes.

17 February 1994

Bosnian Serb Army begins to move out of the exclusion zone around Sarajevo after the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, has come into an agreement with Russia's special envoy, Vitaly Churkin. Churkin agrees to replace the Serbs in the exclusion zone with some 800 Russian peacekeepers.

23 February 1994

Bosnian Muslims and Croats agree to cease-fire.

24 February 1994

Croatian President Tudjman backs Croat-Muslim federation.

27 February 1994

Croat and Muslim representatives meet in Washington.

28 February 1994

Serb aircraft are shot down by NATO planes near Banja Luka, after violating the no-fly zone.

1 March 1994

Governments of Bosnia and Croatia agree on confederation. After talks with Russian Foreign Minister Kocyr, Bosnia Serb leader Karadzic agrees to open Tuzla airport.

7 March 1994

Bosnian Croat and Muslim forces begin handing in heavy weapons to UN collection points and Muslim and Croat leaders sign cease-fire maps in Croatia.

12 March 1994

Bosnian Army and Croatian commanders in Split sign agreement to forge a joint army.

13 March 1994

Bosnian government and Bosnia Croat officials agree on draft constitution.

18 March 1994

Bosnian and Croatian governments sign agreement forming loose confederation between Croatia and new bi-national Bosnian government.

20 March 1994

Canadian UN troops find large cache of Serbian heavy weapons inside Sarajevo exclusion zone.

23 March 1994

The UN Secretary-General approves plans to deploy Turkish peacekeepers in Bosnia.

28-31 March 1994

Serb forces surrounding the enclave of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia step up their bombardment of the city.

30 March 1994

Croatia and Krajina Serbs sign cease-fire.

31 March 1994

The US vetoes plan to send 8,500 extra UN peacekeepers to Bosnia.

5 April 1994

Serb forces break through Gorazde's line of defence.

10 April 1994

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose decides to call for NATO air-strikes against Serbian ground targets. Two NATO aircraft attack Serb forces around Gorazde.

17 April 1994

Cease-fire announced in Belgrade.

18 April 1994

Serbs continue the assault.

22 April 1994

NATO issues another "Sarajevo-style" ultimatum to the Serbs which call for immediate cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of all forces from the town centre and the removal of heavy weapons from a 20km exclusion zone around the city.

23-24 April 1994

Gorazde being shelled.

24 April 1994

Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev approves the use of force against Serbs who begin withdrawal.

26 April 1994

The Contact Group (France, Russia, the UK, Germany and the US) is formed in an attempt to inject new momentum into the peace process as well as to coordinate international effort.

The UN approves deployment of 6,500 troops to reinforce UNPROFOR.

3 May 1994

Bosnian Serbs agree to the posting of 16 UN military observers in Breko.

13 May 1994

Foreign Minister of Russia, US and five EU members call for new Bosnian federation to be given 51% Bosnian territory.

23 May 1994

Haris Silajdzic is elected as Prime Minister of twin parliaments of Bosnia Republic and Muslim-Croat Federation.

29 May 1994

The Contact Group agrees on map for division of Bosnia.

30 May 1994

The new Bosnian federation elects Kresimir Zubak as interim President.

1 June 1994

In Geneva, warring parties in Bosnia agree on limited truce.

16 June 1994

Talks between Croatian government and Krajina Serbs called off.

Early July 1994

The Contact Group presents a new set of peace proposals: the map assigns 51% of the Republic's territory to the newly formed Bosnian-Croat Federation and 49% to the Bosnian Serbs. It was accompanied by a warning to a self-styled Bosnian Serb government in Pale that failure to accept it would lead to "total isolation" and a tightening of sanctions against its main ally, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

17 July 1994

The Bosnian government approves the plan under pressure even though it was described as "seriously flawed" because it allows the Serbs to hold on to the "ethnically cleansed" territory.

19 July 1994

Authorities in Pale (Bosnian Serbs) effectively rejected the plan by insisting further talks. The objections continue to block progress in negotiations and make eventual agreement doubtful. Their demands are:

1. the enclaves of Gorazde, Zepa and Srebrenica be under Serb control, while Sarajevo should be divided into two ethnic halves;
2. the strategically vital Posovina corridor linking Serbia proper to Serb territories in the north around Breko must be widened; and
3. should be allowed to enter into a confederation with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

22 July 1994

Bosnian Serb troops hit the US and UN planes flying to Sarajevo.

3 August 1994

Bosnian Serbs reject the latest peace plan.

4 August 1994

President Slobodan Milosevic closes the border between Serbia and Bosnia both to increase the pressure on the Bosnian Serbs and to demonstrate his basic acceptance of the Contact Group proposal.

5 August 1994

Fourteen NATO jets attack Bosnian Serb position near Sarajevo after the Serb troops seize tank and heavy guns under the UN control.

11 August 1994

President Clinton laid down a deadline (15 October) for the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Contact Group plan; if not the US would go to the Security Council and ask for the embargo against Bosnia to be lifted. The Contact Group has managed to convince the US not

to press for adherence to its October deadline due to the fact that the ultimatum has complicated their work.

21 August 1994

Rebel Muslim enclave of Bihac overrun by Bosnian government forces.

27-28 August 1994

Bosnian Serbs reject the peace plan in referendum.

8 September 1994

Serb forces from Bosnia and Croatia launch assault against Bosnian government positions in Bihac. The Contact Group offers to suspend sanctions against Yugoslavia if it allows international observers to monitor its blockade of Bosnian Serbs.

10-11 September 1994

EC foreign ministers reject lifting arms embargo against Bosnia.

13 September 1994

Bosnian and Croatian presidents meet in Zagreb and agree on key points for establishing joint federation.

14 September 1994

Yugoslavia agrees to allow observers to monitor its embargo and the mission starts on the next day (15 September 1994).

18 September 1994

Heavy shelling and sniper fire break out in Sarajevo.

21 September 1994

NATO extends air cover beyond Bosnia to part of Croatia near Bihac.

22 September 1994

NATO planes bomb Bosnian Serb tank near Sarajevo.

24 September 1994

The Security Council approves the resolution lifting a limited number of sanctions (those relating to civilian air traffic, cultural and sporting

links) on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in response to Milosevic's decision to allow 135 monitors to be deployed along Serbia's border with Bosnia.

3 October 1994

In Bosnia, the monitors report that Yugoslavia has sealed border with Bosnia and sanctions against Belgrade are relaxed.

6 October 1994

Bosnian government troops attack Serb command post on Mount Igman near Sarajevo.

7 October 1994

UNPROFOR troops drive Muslim forces off Mount Igman.

26 October 1994

UN tanks come under fire from Bosnian Serbs.

27 October 1994

Bosnian government troops capture more Serb-held territory east of Bihac.

28 October 1994

The US introduces UNSC Resolution calling for the lifting of arms embargo against Bosnia.

29 October 1994

Bosnian government forces renew attacks on Serb forces in Mount Igman demilitarised zone.

31 October 1994

Croatian Serbs shell government positions in western Bosnia.

November 1994

There is division among the external powers about the perceived root causes of the conflict. This is shown when the US Senator, Robert Dole, told the UN "to get off NATO's back and let NATO take care of Serbian aggression".

3 November 1994

Bosnian government forces, supported by Bosnian Croat Army, capture Kupres in central Bosnia. The UN General Assembly adopts resolution urging the Security Council to lift embargo on Bosnian government.

4 November 1994

Bosnian Serbs announce general military call-up.

9 November 1994

Bosnian Serbs, supported by troops from Serb-held areas of Croatia, begin counter-attack on Bihac.

13 November 1994

Bosnian government troops fight Serbs on three fronts around Sarajevo.

17 November 1994

Bosnian Serb anti-tank rockets hit Bosnian government headquarters in Sarajevo.

18-19 November 1994

Bosnian Serb aircraft attack Bihac.

19 November 1994

Croatia warns it will enter war in Bosnia if Bihac falls.

21 November 1994

NATO warplanes attack Udbina air-base in Croatia, where Serb aircraft is based.

23 November 1994

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic pressures Serb leaders in Croatia to halt offensive on Bihac and NATO aircraft carry out missions against Serb missile batteries in northern Bosnia.

24 November 1994

Bosnian Serb forces enter town of Bihac and detain up to 400 UN personnel (27 November 1994).

25 November 1994

The Serbs detain 55 Canadian peacekeepers against further airstrikes.
Eventually more than 400 peacekeepers are held.

December 1994

US Former President Jimmy Carter negotiates a four-month cease-fire
and cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

2 December 1994

Croatia signs economic agreements with Krajina Serb officials.

4 December 1994

Serbian President Milosevic backs peace plan but Bosnian leader
Karadzic refuses.

18 December 1994

Carter meets Croatian President Tudjman, Bosnian Prime Minister
Silajdzic and UN officials in Zagreb, while Velika Kladusa in north-
western Bihac pocket falls to Bosnian Serb and rebel Muslim
forces.

19 December 1994

Carter claims they have agreed to immediate cease-fire after the
meeting with Bosnian Serb leadership.

20 December 1994

Carter announces a Bosnian cease-fire.

24 December 1994

Cease-fire agreement enters into force.

28 December 1994

Rebel Muslim leader Fikret Abdic accepts the UN-mediated truce
in Bihac enclave.

Jan 1 1995

A four-month, nationwide truce takes effect, but Bihac is
never quiet.

March 1995

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman decides to allow the presence of a much smaller UN force with a changed mandate.

April 8 1995

A US aid plane is hit by gunfire. All UN aid flights to Sarajevo are cancelled.

May 1 1995

The Bosnian cease-fire expires. Croatia launches a blitz to recapture a chunk of land from rebel Serbs. Serbs retaliate by rocketing Zagreb; six killed, nearly 200 wounded.

May 25 1995

NATO attacks a Serbian ammunition depot for failing to remove heavy weapons around Sarajevo. The Serbs respond by shelling "safe areas" including Tuzla, where 71 people are killed and over 150 wounded.

May 26 1995

NATO warplanes attack more ammunition depots. The Serbs take UN peacekeepers hostage. Eventually more than 370 are seized.

June 2 1995

The Serbs shoot down a US F-16 over northern Bosnia and release 121 UN hostages.

June 8 1995

US Marines rescue the downed pilot of the US F-16. NATO approves a new rapid reaction force.

June 18 1995

The last UN hostages are released.

July 11 1995

The Serbs overrun the Srebrenica "safe area" after a two-week assault.

July 28 1995

Croatia sends thousands of troops across the border into Bosnia.

August 1 1995

NATO extends the threat of airstrikes against the rebel Serbs to protect the remaining "safe areas" in Bosnia.

August 4 1995

Croatia attacks the rebel Serb's self-styled capital of Knin and other parts of Serbian-held territory.

11 October 1995

Holbrooke's peace plan comes into effect for only two hours.

16 October 1995

"Prime Minister" of Bosnian Serbs, Dusan Kozic resigns.

31 October 1995

Initial talks between the Bosnian Muslims, Croat and Serbs.

1 November 1995

The start of US-sponsored peace talk between the leaders of Bosnia's warring parties at a military base in Dayton, Ohio. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke as the chief US mediator and Secretary of State Warren Christopher meeting Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian delegations.

21 November 1995

Peace deal initialled in Dayton, Ohio. The accord calls for a 12-month transitional period. On Bosnia, the NATO will take charge of the military and will not be under a new "high representative" who is to coordinate civilian operations.

24 November 1995

The UN Security Council votes to suspend sanctions on Serbia and gradually to lift the arms embargo imposed on Bosnia as a result of agreeing to a new peace plan.

26 November 1995

Mounting resistance from Serbs in Sarajevo to the accord, which places them under Muslim-Croat authority.

1 December 1995

Sixty thousand NATO peacekeepers (including 20,000 from the United States) start the peacekeeping mission for 12 months in Bosnia.

6 December 1995

NATO ministers back Bosnian peace plan in their first joint meeting in 16 years.

9 December 1995

Richard Holbrooke's 3-day visit to the Balkan (Zagreb, Sarajevo and Belgrade) to prepare for the implementation of the Dayton peace agreement.

14 December 1995

The official signing of the peace plan in Paris between the warring parties to end the 3^{1/2}-year conflict.

Questions Which The UN Must Answer

The Rt Hon Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad
The Prime Minister of Malaysia

Let me congratulate you Mr President on your election to the 50th United Nations General Assembly. I wish you a successful presidency. Appreciations are also due to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr Amara Essy, who provided the leadership during the 49th UN General Assembly.

This General Assembly is meeting amidst hectic schedules of events to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. Some of us have become preoccupied with these celebrations. We should ask whether these activities are merely media events or would they seriously contribute to a better United Nations?

Will the high point of the 50th anniversary be reduced to a special commemorative meeting condensed into a declaration of good intentions which no one seriously cares for, or should we resist the tendency to celebrate, to expend millions on galas and parties and to eulogise through rhetorical speeches the anniversary of the United Nations' establishment?

After all, we cannot even answer the basic questions of where we stand and what the United Nations is, whipping boy or serious enduring player.

Speech by the Rt Hon Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the 50th United Nations General Assembly on 29 September 1995 in New York.

Admittedly, it is easy to raise questions than to find answers. But these questions must be raised and they deserve to be answered. On its 50th year the UN system finds itself under criticism for being unable to handle basic and critical political, economic and social issues.

Despite earlier hopes of a just world order following the end of the Cold War, what we see is still a United Nations which dances to the grating music of the major powers in total disregard for the high principles and objectives pledged at its formation.

We will have to conclude that the narrow national interest of the few is still what the United Nations is all about. Also the principle which largely move the major powers that what they need for themselves must influence their dealing with the needs of others, is fully operative, making nonsense of interdependence, social compassion and justice.

And so we must forget the promise of an international political leadership that can collectively come to grips with the myriads of issues for a shared survival.

Confrontation between states, intra-state conflicts, economic and military threats, the dehumanising effects of poverty; all these are heightened rather than diminished by the ending of the Cold War.

The contradictory impulses of interdependence and isolationism are more evident than ever before. Humanitarianism is not only drying up fast; but what survives is replete with conditionalities.

The United Nations presents a shattered image with a threadbare moral authority, despite the important early successes in decolonisation and the subsequent elimination of apartheid.

The victors of 1945 have clung tenaciously to the levers of power. They control the high ground, exercising influence and power as nakedly as when they were colonial powers. Only the masks have changed.

The multilateral organisations created on the eve of war's end were and still are structured to further their economic interests and the pursuit of their strategic political goals.

The Security Council, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have merely become the instruments of power perpetuation.

Less than six months ago, we were witnesses to the use of the United Nations to push through, draconian-like, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Before the ink was dry, some of the nuclear powers proceeded to test their diabolical weapons. What, may I ask, qualifies some countries for possession of the means of mass destruction in perpetuity?

It is time nuclear weapon states commit themselves to nuclear disarmament through a programmed reduction of their nuclear arsenal within a specific timeframe, beginning with the immediate cessation of all nuclear tests and culminating in their total elimination.

Perversely, the major powers not only continue to compete in developing ever more destructive weapons, but they also compete to sell arms. And when some developing countries buy arms, the Western-controlled media scream about arms races.

We seem to inherit a world in which moral considerations have no real role to play or that acts of realpolitik have no moral consequences. Tears appear to be shed about the human tragedies in Bosnia, Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia and Chechnya. But we have become desensitised to the horrors that flash across our screens.

The Charter incorporating the idealism and dreams of 1945 is more honoured in its violations than its adherence.

Tell us how have the principles of the Charter on the non-use of force and the illegality of claiming territory acquired by aggression been of help to the Bosnians?

What protection or solace has the Genocide Convention been to those slaughtered in Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia and Chechnya?

The lessons for the people of these countries is clear; no international order or international ethos will be defended unless the major powers see their vital interests are at risk.

The United Nations have been party to the double-talk in Bosnia, insisting that morality had no place in peacekeeping since the impartiality that peacekeepers had to maintain required them to eschew making any judgment about the rights and wrongs of the situation.

I ask the United Nations whether there can be a middle ground where genocide and ethnic cleansing are concerned?

I ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations whether he is obliged to defend the moral principles in the UN Charter or whether he should console the dying and the bereaved that there are others elsewhere suffering worse fates?

Isn't there, in the context of the larger picture, a special role for the United Nations to provide international leadership?

Clearly, the major powers have failed to provide leadership; choosing only to act in furtherance of their national or domestic political interests. They continue to harp on human rights and the sanctity of human life but they act only when they run no risk.

Admittedly, blame must also be apportioned to many of us in the Third World. Some of us have led our people down the path of despair and misery.

With the demise of colonialism, there was the promise of freedom and development. Yet many succumbed to the temptations of creature comfort, failing to further the rights and welfare of our own people. But then when we were colonies, the only form of government we knew was authoritarian colonialism.

It is too much to expect some of us, as the midnight flag is lowered, to suddenly become democratic and sophisticated.

The threat of a brutalised world is never more evident than in the Serb programme of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the massacres in Rwanda.

For a long time the major powers were opposed to taking strong measures against the Serbs. We are seeing belatedly some sense of purpose in the Nato bombings and efforts in negotiating a solution.

However, we should be cautious about rushing towards solutions that reward aggression and genocide. It is possible that some in the West and in the United Nations had longed for Bosnia's quick defeat. It would save them from making any decision. But the Bosnians refused to oblige.

In Rwanda the European troops withdrew when the massacres began. And in Somalia failure to understand the situation led to the victims fighting their UN saviours.

The United Nations Secretariat must take some of the blame for all these brutalities.

In Rwanda it truly shirked its duty while in Bosnia it sent in a protection force which was instructed not to protect the Bosnians.

Why it should be called UNPROFOR was a mystery until lately. It was there to protect itself. It makes a distinction between peacekeeping and peace-enforcement.

If there is peace to keep, why do you need military forces? Isn't it because of the possibility of breaches of the peace that the forces are put there?

And when there are breaches the forces must stop them, if peacekeeping is to be meaningful. But instead when peace is broken the United Nations threatened to withdraw and leave the victims to their fate.

Fortunately, in Palestine, another historical flashpoint, efforts continue to be made towards durable peace. That peace process must result in a Palestinian homeland, a viable state at peace with its neighbours.

The attempts to weaken the present Palestinian leadership by undermining its credibility will only result in the rise of extremism and a protracted and bloody intra-Palestinian conflict which will spill over into Israel and elsewhere.

The absence of international leadership and commitment is evident in the area of development as well. The rhetoric of development is increasingly devoid of meaningful content.

The North has turned its back on commitments relating to development assistance. Yet such is the concern for the survival of insects and plant life that human development must be stopped if it is suspected it might endanger a few animals or plants.

That there are plenty of the same species elsewhere is considered irrelevant. And so one-fifth of the world's population remain mired in poverty having been denied development assistance by the rich and powerful.

The latter have retreated into their regional clubs and cosy arrangements for perpetuating unconscionable levels of consumption.

Some of the countries of the South have tried to pull themselves up literally by their own bootstraps. But the moment they appear to succeed, the carpet is pulled out from underneath their feet. GSP privileges are withdrawn and their records of human rights, democracy, etc. are scrutinised in order to obstruct their progress.

Some among the more successful South have been enticed to join the rich and the strong, so they may not lend what little strength they have to their compatriots.

Commitment to the environment should not be turned into an occasion for recrimination and pointing of fingers.

Worse, it should not be politically instrumentalised to disadvantage the South. Development can take place without irreparable damage to the environment.

Forcing the developing countries to remain undeveloped in order to preserve the environment for the rich is manifestly unfair. Yet the environmental obstacles placed in the way of the poor South will do just that, begging the poor to enrich the already rich.

Poverty in itself creates an environment that is as damaging to humanity as any other kind of environmental pollution.

Obviously we need to determine our priorities. Do we keep the poor permanently poor so the rich can enjoy the environment or do we sacrifice the environment a little in the interest of relieving poverty?

We, in Malaysia, accept that economic development should not be at the expense of other groups or the future generations.

Environmental sustainability, social equity and a culture of human needs must replace the culture of materialism.

The Western consumer society, which is spreading worldwide requires ever increasing consumption to keep production and profits continuously rising.

For this more fuel is needed and the trend in the consumption of fossil fuel in recent years is alarming. Yet very little is being done to curb such wasteful use of a depleting resource while the development of renewable resources such as hydropower meets with all kinds of objections.

Progressively industrialising Malaysia has the capacity and the resources to design and implement a model of development sensitive to the needs and cultural values of developing countries without imitating the flawed Western model.

We only ask that the misguided crusaders be kept out. These modern-day imitations of the communist agitators would do well to look at their own countries' wasteful consumption and carbon dioxide emission.

Social disintegration is a serious problem as the world's population become more urbanised. This is not helped by the West seeking to impose its moral values.

The institutions which hold society together are now being undermined. At the Beijing Women's Summit, despite a consensus cobbled together to alleviate the sufferings of women, the mad quest for personal freedom took one more tradition-bashing step.

People, it seems, cannot be free unless they have sexual freedom; a freedom which rejects the inhibitions of traditional and religious values, of marriage and family as institutions of society.

Sexual freedom will render fidelity meaningless as much as it renders marriage anachronistic.

The new liberalism extends to a new definition of the family, which is to include homosexual pairs, unmarried women with children by unknown fathers, groups of men and women living together with no fixed partners and many other such combinations.

If the West wants to be liberal and sexually free, this is its right. But what is wrong is the attempt to impose its morality or lack of it on the rest of the world. And in Beijing that was what it tried to do.

The United Nations should not lend itself to this kind of undemocratic disregard for the rights of others.

Of late there has been much talk about reforming the United Nations. Clearly there is a need for this after 50 years of the United Nations carrying the tattered baggage of the last World War.

Surely the results of that war cannot be reflected in the structure and procedures of the United Nations forever. It has to

end some time, and the 50th anniversary is as good a time as any for burying the relics of past follies.

Since democracy seems to have displaced religion as a faith, it is fitting that there must be democratic reforms in the United Nations.

Some of these countries which had vested themselves with infallibility and permanency have now become second-raters.

New players have emerged who should be accorded recognition. A more equitable representation on the Security Council is a must. This means that permanent seats should be given to regions possibly determined by a regional mechanism.

The veto power should be dropped. Under no circumstances must the Security Council be made an instrument of any one country.

Reform must extend also to the financing of the United Nations. It is wholly unacceptable that member states, especially the rich ones, should fall into arrears with impunity and yet exercise special rights and influence.

The membership rules must be applied to one and all. New bases for assessment should be made taking into consideration the wealth or lack of it among members. Various global taxation schemes including modest levies on global air travel, a tax on the exploitation of mankind's common assets on the seabed, and a tax on the trade in weapons of war have been proposed.

Of these the last one, based on the principle that he who profits from the tools of war must contribute to the maintenance of peace, merits urgent attention and adoption.

Reforming the United Nations also requires the cleansing of the bureaucratic Aegean stables in the Secretariat.

The morale of the international civil service is at its lowest ebb. The excesses and the fat must be trimmed but failure to do so must not be used as an excuse for not paying dues or for opting out.

It is heartening to note that UNCTAD and other economic agencies of the United Nations have now acknowledged that linking trade with non-trade issues serves no useful purpose either for the developed or the developing countries.

The reform of global institutions must encompass the Bretton Woods organisations. Their energies and resources must be channelled towards the battle against the pollution caused by poverty worldwide.

The Bretton Woods organisations have to cease acting as debt collectors for the mighty and the rich bankers, who in turn must learn to live within the rules of their own creation, that of taking commercial risks which go hand-in-hand with the pursuit of gain.

A return to their original mandates, that of promoting balanced development in the case of the World Bank, and that of enforcing monetary and fiscal responsibility in all countries, irrespective of their status in the global economy, is a first priority.

Reform must include a reevaluation of the governance arrangements at the Bank and the fund through a realignment and reallocation of quotas and shareholdings that take into account the changed structure of the world economy.

New arrangements for governance must recognise the growing clout of the newly emerging economies that now contribute to a rising share of global output, to trade and capital flows.

The debt millstone weighs heavily on the poor. This burden must be eased, especially for the poorest nations of Africa.

Malaysia hopes that effective actions will be taken forthwith taking into account decisions made at the 49th General Assembly on finding a durable solution to the external debt problem of developing countries.

While bilateral debts extended by donor countries have over the years been restructured and rescheduled—through the humiliating conditions imposed by the Paris Club of Creditors—

multilateral institutions, led by the World Bank, have steadfastly refused consideration of restructuring debt owed to them.

The World Bank continues to increase its profit levels and amass reserves which today stand in excess of US\$16 billion. Why are these reserves, built from payments by developing countries, not used for debt relief?

And why do we allow the intransigence of one or two countries to preclude the issuance of Special Drawing Rights by the International Monetary Fund?

These and other issues must feature in a reform of the Bretton Woods institutions.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the World Trade Organisation offer a glimmer of hope for rule-based trading relationships.

Malaysia applauds and welcomes the underlying principles and we pledge ourselves to play by the mutually agreed undertakings.

Regrettably, powerful trading nations threaten through unilateral actions to undermine the carefully negotiated agreements.

The deliberate creation of regional trading blocs, the introduction of managed trade, the attempts to link human rights, environmental considerations, and labour codes to trade, are major threats, which if implemented would dim the hope of a free environment for trade. We reject such attempts.

The new protectionism will return the world to a bygone era when trade wars led to military confrontations.

And finally the new threats with the advent of the Information Age. The poor countries have long suffered from biased reporting by the world media, controlled by the developed world.

Now the computer network created for the spread of knowledge and information has become polluted by the

irresponsible dissemination of filth through them. Someone is making money from this filth.

The world community must find a way to keep out such filth and to provide for legal action to be taken against them by aggrieved countries even when they broadcast from outside their borders.

They should be allowed to bring these miscreants to trial in the aggrieved countries under their laws. After all, we have already had many instances of extraterritorial application of the laws of some countries without so much as a by your leave.

Freedom of information is fine but even in this age of freedom we cannot allow morals to be completely undermined in order to enrich the merchants of porn and filth.

When all is said and done we still have to admit that the United Nations is the only truly multinational organisation where the voices of small nations can be heard.

We support the United Nations but we must correct the tendency to make it an instrument of the rich and powerful.

The United Nations must stand on the side of the collective needs of people and nations in order to serve all humankind.

The Bosnia-Herzegovina Situation

The Rt Hon Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad
The Prime Minister of Malaysia

I would like, first of all, to welcome all of you to Malaysia. Although many of you will be here for only a few days, I do hope that you will have a pleasant stay in our country.

I would like to congratulate the international group of parliamentarians for their continued and sincere dedication to the cause of human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina. You have made an honest gesture by coming to participate in this conference. And for that, I commend all of you.

The subject matter of our common concern is a grave one. The situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is extremely critical. The human tragedy is massive and continuing. The severe winter is expected to add to the number of deaths because people are being deprived of the basic necessities to stay alive.

It would be your duty, as parliamentarians, to cause your respective Governments to help change the situation in that unfortunate country, and save the valiant people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Let me recount very briefly what has happened to Bosnia-Herzegovina, which began with the first Serbian shelling of

Speech by the Rt Hon Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Bosnia-Herzegovina in Kuala Lumpur on 22 January 1994.

Sarajevo in May 1992. It was the same month that the United Nations accepted the new republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a member state. The significance was clear. Serbs had served notice that they cared nothing for world opinion or the norms of human behaviour.

Everyone knows now that it was all part of the grand plan of Slobodan Milosevic to bring Bosnia-Herzegovina into being Greater Serbia. When Bosnia-Herzegovina became independent, he turned over the Serbian army's arsenals in that country to the Bosnian Serb soldiers resident in Bosnia-Herzegovina and to Serb civilians.

No arms were given to the Bosnian members of the (former) Yugoslav army who did not subscribe to Milosevic's Greater Serbia ambitions. Thus did Milosevic ensure that Serbian aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina will meet with success.

The UN embargo on arms for the combatants in (former) Yugoslavia merely serves to weaken the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina further and enable Radovan Karadzic's Serbs to massacre the Bosnian Muslims.

It is not correct to assume that the bloodbath in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a civil war between the Muslims and the rest. Although most of the defenders of Sarajevo are Muslims, who call themselves Bosnians, many Serbs and Croats are included in their number. This mix is also reflected in the Government. They are all Bosnians and Herzegovinans.

The Bosnian Government desperately appealed for help from the vaunted defenders of human rights of the world. Bosnians were being killed and Bosnia-Herzegovina was about to be dismembered. But neither the European Union nor the United Nations Security Council took decisive actions.

Humanitarian aid was offered subject to permission being granted by the Serbian aggressors. And as can be expected, the Serbs were not quite co-operative. UN forces protecting food

convoys may not hurt the Serbs under any circumstances. In other words, the Bosnians, by consent of the UN, are placed at the mercy of their Serbian aggressors.

At the same time, a well-conceived and successful strategy began to split the peoples of the newly-formed country. It resulted in the Croats in Bosnia abandoning their Bosnian identity and discarding their traditional alliance with the Bosnian Muslims.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is the victim of the evil designs of certain people and powers who are quite happy to see the emergence of Slovenia and Croatia but will do nothing for Bosnia, although Bosnia-Herzegovina has as much right as the other two to nationhood. This kind of double standards is apparently what the new world order is about.

The London international conference had pledged that it would not recognise any advantage gained by force or the creation of facts. Yet Cyrus Vance and Lord David Owen put together a package based on ground realities which would effectively legitimise territorial acquisition by force, ethnic cleansing and the partitioning of Bosnia-Herzegovina along ethnic lines. And, in Geneva, they saw fit to place the leadership of the legitimate and internationally recognised Bosnian Government on an equal footing with the insurgent Serbs and the Croats. Thus aggressors are legitimised.

The Geneva process, now presided by Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, is bent on forcing the Bosnians to accept Serbian occupation as a basis for settlement. Certain countries which have participated in the UN peacekeeping forces are threatening to withdraw the minimal protection they afforded the Bosnians unless the latter agree to Owen's surrender of Bosnian territories to the Serbs. History is repeating itself. The spirit of Neville Chamberlain lives on and the result is another holocaust.

The carnage and destruction in Bosnia-Herzegovina continue without relent. Sarajevo remains under siege until this day, surrounded by Serbian guns capable of delivering 800 rounds of

shells each day. For the fifth time, Western nations have threatened to launch airstrikes against the Serbs unless they stop strangling Sarajevo. And for the fifth time, the Serbs have thumbed their noses at these so-called righteous great powers. Of course, no airstrike is mounted.

Aggression, occupation and the redrawing of territorial boundaries by force is unacceptable in this day and age. But, when aggression is accompanied by the abominable practice of ethnic cleansing, it is not just unacceptable but despicable by any standard of international behaviour. And yet the Serbs complement this with rape and murder of young girls and women, even of little children. The so-called civilised world is horrified but is not prepared to stop the Serbs. Yet woe betide any little developing country which violates even the most trivial of human rights.

The Serbs know that the bark of these defenders of human rights is worse than their bite. And so they will go on raping and murdering, fully convinced that they will not only go unpunished, but will actually be rewarded. We know that nations are usually hypocritical when conducting foreign relations. But the attitude of the powerful nations in the Bosnian affair must epitomise hypocrisy at its worse.

Today, the Bosnians are confronted with the choice of either accepting the tattered remnants of Bosnia-Herzegovina or risk being violently wiped off the map of the world. They are right in refusing to accept either. They are right in continuing to fight for their country. The cost to them is very high. The killings are real. People are dying. People are being starved, raped and tortured. Unless the civilised world puts a stop to what is going on in Bosnia-Herzegovina, weak nations will know no freedom. Might will always be right. Is this the message of Bosnia? Where are the champions of freedom, of human rights, of justice? Where have they gone?

It is immoral of us to hide behind the illusion that the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina is the story of a simple civil war. It is not. It is nothing less than a war of conquest by the Serbs abetted by others who have their own agendas.

The Americans are blaming the British and the French for preventing airstrikes against the Serbs. However, some very highly placed British and French sources have told me that it is the United States which is against military action against the Serbs. I frankly do not know whom to believe. I suspect that neither the Americans nor the Europeans care enough to act. They do not wish to risk the lives of their boys for something that is not really very important for their own well-being.

If this is the case, they should allow the Bosnians to defend themselves. This is the right of any nation or people – the right to self-defence. But they are actively and positively preventing the Bosnians from acquiring the means to fight for their own self-defence. Western nations could not have done worse if they were to hold down the Bosnians to enable the Serbs to batter them. It is abetment and no less.

And yet they claim they are helping the Bosnians.

There is really no unity of support for the European Union's official position regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina. There is general dissatisfaction with the Owen peace package. There is dissatisfaction with Owen's lack of consultation with the European Union which appointed him and whose creature he is supposed to be. There is dissatisfaction with the way Owen is handling the so-called peace process.

It is obvious that so far no one has really approved of what the Serbs are doing. Indeed, everyone, including the Vatican, the Anglican Church, the various non-governmental organisations, even the Western media and the Western military commanders assigned to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), all have condemned Serbian aggression. UN commanders regularly resigned because they were not allowed by Boutros Boutros-Ghali

and the Security Council to take effective action to stop Serbian brutality. But the Western Governments remain obdurate, refusing to see anything wrong in their blatant disregard for the wholesale violations of every item of human rights by the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Your task, as parliamentarians, then is to help shock the people and your Governments out of their self-imposed stupor. The Governments, in particular, must not be allowed to believe that they can get away with their hypocrisy and still survive. You must do your best to force those in power to act.

I believe there are two things you can do. The first is to exert pressure on the UN Security Council to implement the various resolutions which it has passed. For example, despite systematic and widespread obstruction to the delivery of international humanitarian assistance, there has been no effort to enforce Security Council resolution 770 which provides for the use of all necessary means. Security Council resolution 836 created "safe areas" but relentless military actions by the Serbs have instead turned them into areas under siege.

The Security Council must now demand, and must be prepared to back its demand, by the use of force if necessary – not mere threats but actual use of force, to make the aggressors comply with certain critical requirements. Among others:

- the siege of Sarajevo must be lifted forthwith, by silencing or removing the Serbian big guns from around the city;
- all concerned parties must be made to permit, by force if necessary, the unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance; and,
- Tuzla airport must be opened to enable food, medicines and other essentials to reach the major surrounding towns.

These actions are necessary especially to save innocent lives during the harsh winter. But we must be clear about one thing. No amount of humanitarian action is going to put an end to the tragedy

in Bosnia. What is needed is political and diplomatic action, supported by the use of force when necessary.

Therefore, the second thing you should do is to urge the Security Council to take a hard look at the Geneva process, and since there is wide agreement that the Geneva talks cannot go on as before, seize the initiative to convene a new international conference on Bosnia-Herzegovina. Perhaps the successful international conference on Cambodia could serve as a model. There, not only the relevant parties but other concerned countries also participated and helped provide the diplomatic weight.

There is no point in having a second or third London conference unless the principles already adopted in the first conference are implemented.

We cannot speak for the Bosnian leadership but we can demand that they be given a chance to save their people and their country and a fair deal in negotiations. Malaysia feels extremely concerned, not merely because Bosnia-Herzegovina has something to do with Islam and Muslims. We feel strongly whenever and wherever injustice and oppression are perpetrated. Malaysia has been equally vehement about South Africa, about Cambodia and other non-Muslim communities which have faced similar problems.

The Serbs and the Croats have not succeeded in destroying the essence of Bosnia-Herzegovina. After nearly two years of unceasing assault and long after the Western experts have written it off, the republic is still alive. We cannot, and should not, forget Bosnia-Herzegovina. If we accept aggression and violence by strong neighbours as legitimate, then many of us who are weak will suffer the same fate.

Bosnia-Herzegovina used to be a cultural mix where the people lived in peace. It has as strong a historic claim to exist as do its neighbours.

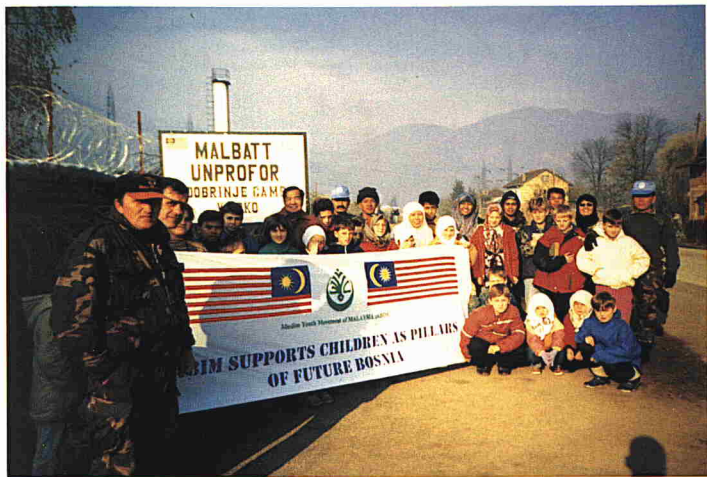
The fundamental principle of the right of nation states to exist must remain sacred and must be protected. This includes small, multi-ethnic and multi-religious states like Bosnia-Herzegovina.

If we allow the law of the jungle to apply, if we allow the strongest to determine the fate of the weakest, if we allow Bosnia-Herzegovina to be obliterated, then there will be no security for anyone of us.

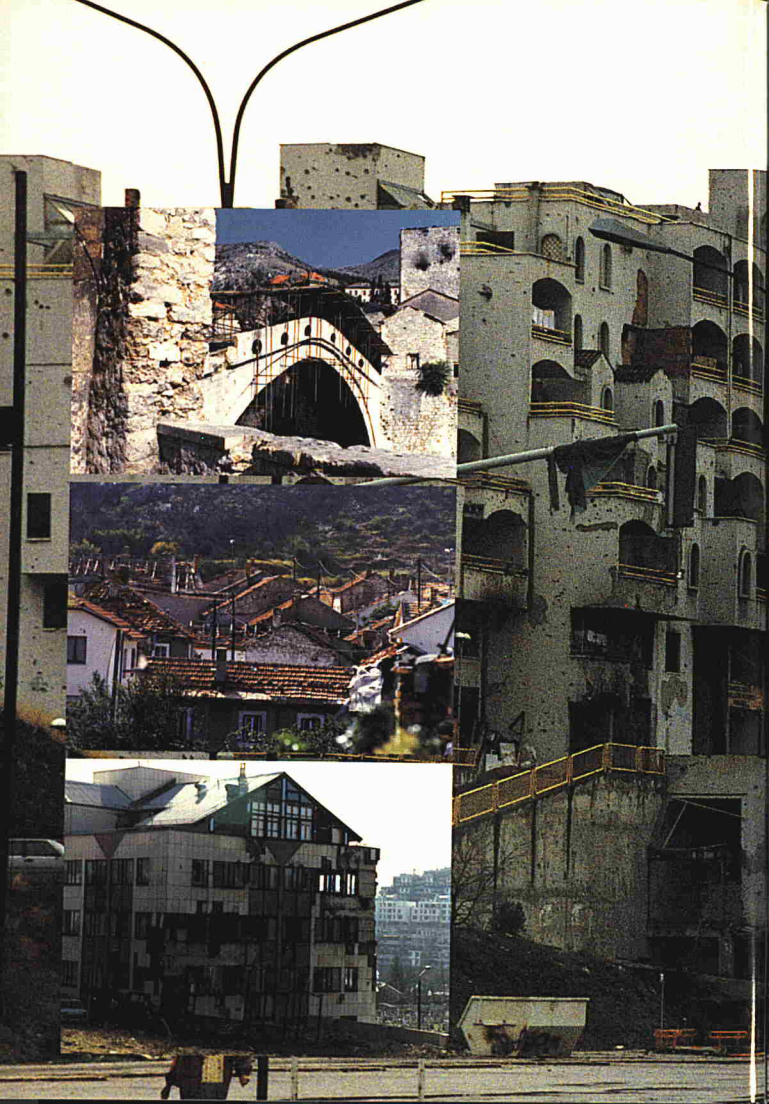
I urge you parliamentarians, therefore, to request your respective Governments to:

- place the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina high on your country's international agenda;
- commit the weight of your nation's diplomacy to call for the restarting of meaningful talks aimed at a lasting and just settlement; and,
- assert your rights as members of the United Nations to insist that the Security Council act decisively to end the sufferings of the Bosnian people and bring back peace to that country.

I wish this conference success in its pursuit of a just cause. I hope that your deliberations will be productive. We need to do everything we can right now. Ethnic cleansing of Bosnia-Herzegovina must be stopped or forever must those who mouth platitudes about democracy and human rights cease and desist from their pretence at righteousness.



ABIM, a Malaysian non-governmental body, providing assistance to Bosnian children.





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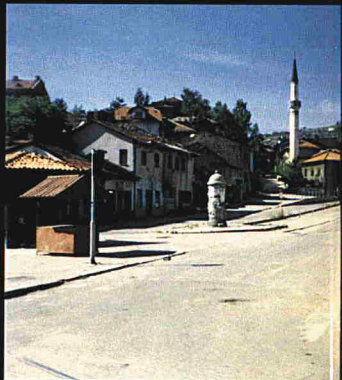
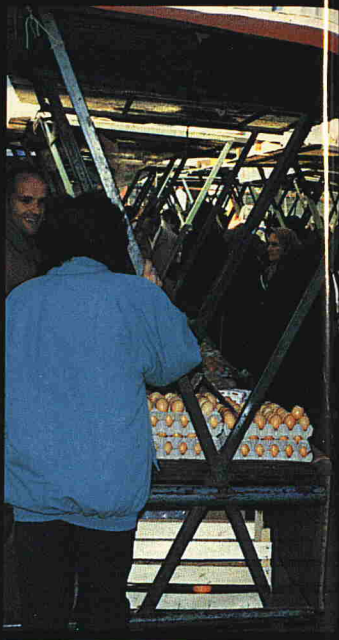
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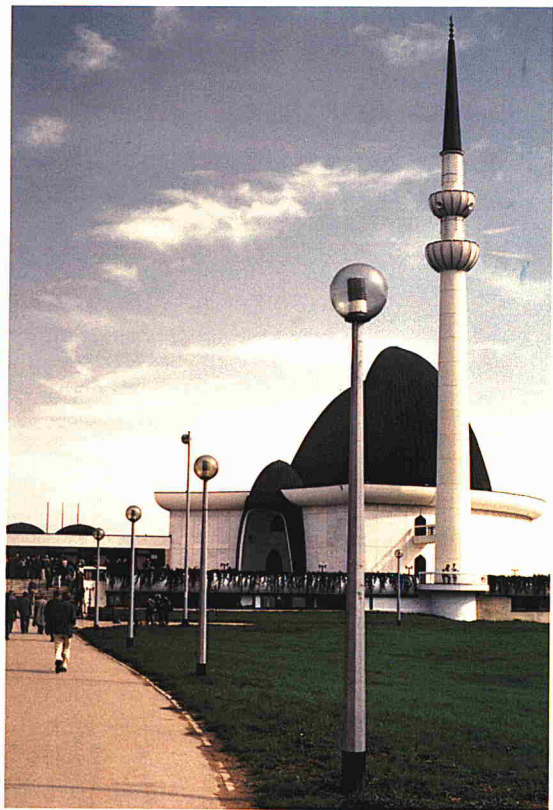
POMOC - INFORMACJA

MOSYAR

The market in Sarajevo which became the target of a Serbian mortar attack.







A mosque in Zagreb.



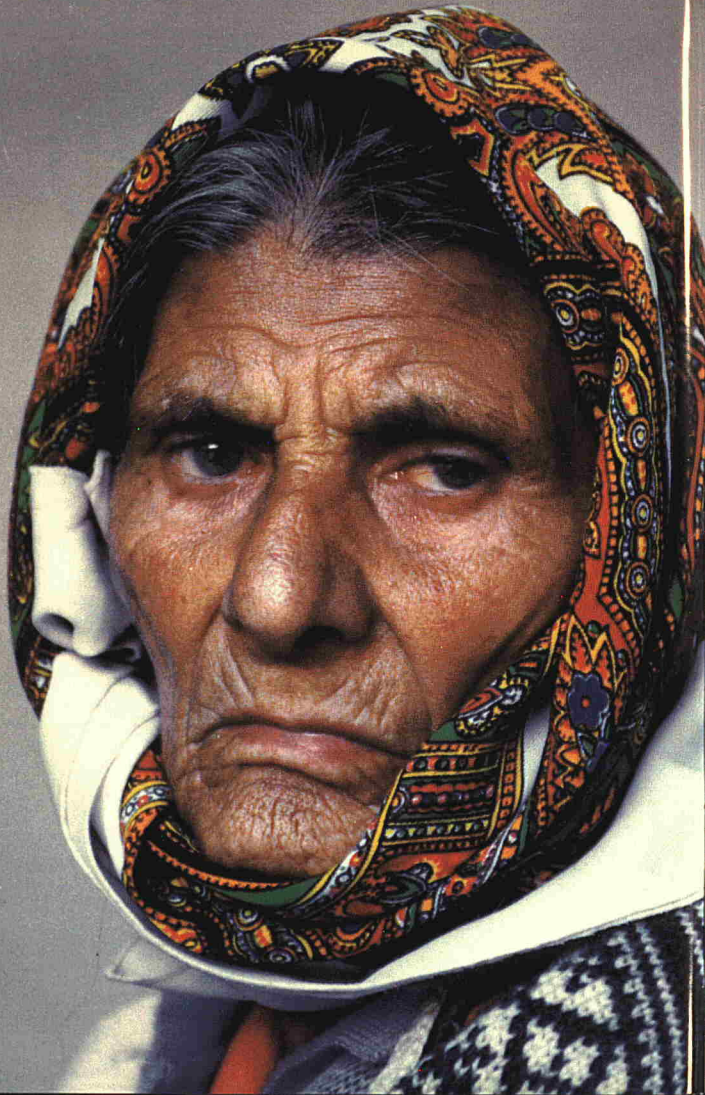
Presenting Hari Raya gifts on behalf of the Malaysian Prime Minister and his family to MALBATT.



Spending Hari Raya Aidil Fitri
with Malaysian troops in
Bosnia.

Bosnians at MALBATT's
Hari Raya Aidil Fitri Open House.
(Top, bottom right)





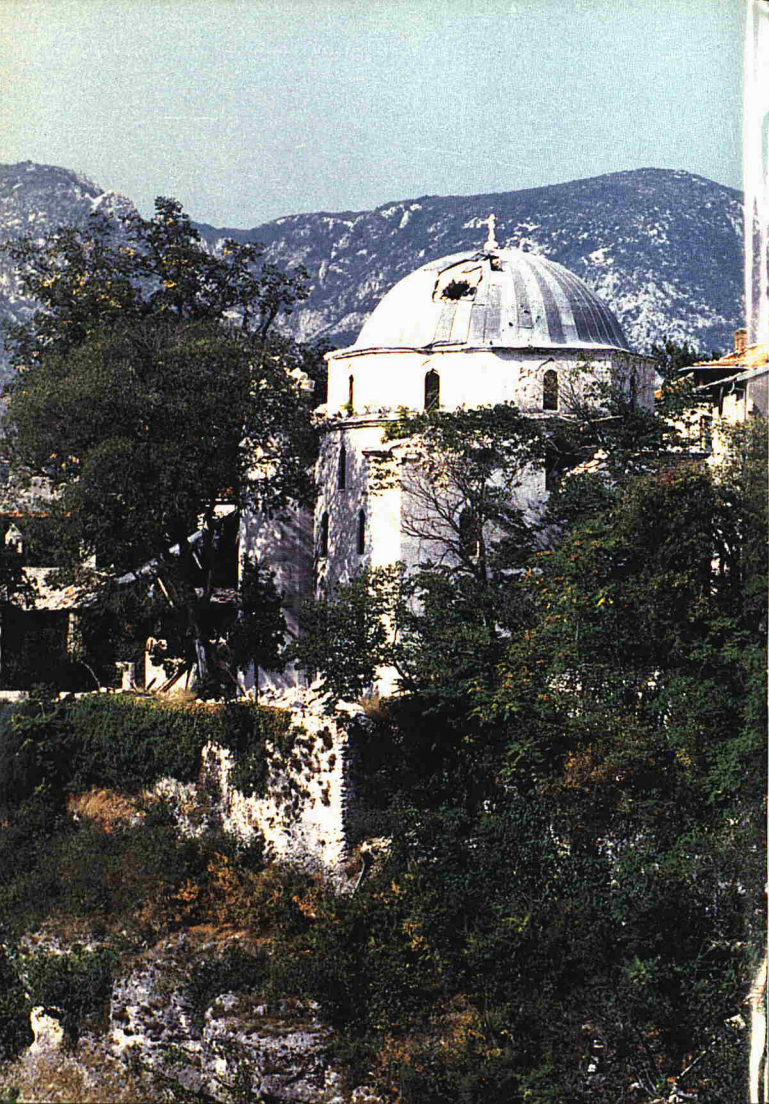






Meeting with the
President of Bosnia.
(*Top*)

Meeting the
Grand Imam of Sarajevo.
(*Bottom*)





A Bosnian Muslim couple prays under a makeshift sunshade at the United Nations air base of Tuzla.



The Prime Minister of Malaysia and his wife in Bosnia in April 1996.

With the Royal Malaysian Police contingent in Bosnia. (*Top*)

Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali with the Malaysian troops in Split airport, 20th April 1996. (*Bottom, left*)

Meeting Bosnians in front of the Mustapha Pasha Mosque, the oldest mosque in Skopje. (*Top, right*)

Visiting the damaged National Library, during his latest visit to Bosnia. (*Bottom, right*)







A prayer of hope for the future.



Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad receiving the Dragon of Bosnia Award from Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic in Sarajevo on 19 April 1996, in recognition of his untiring and significant support towards the Bosnian cause.