Extent

200 folders, approximately 4,327 pages

Summary

This collection contains regards regarding communications between President Clinton and his National Security Advisor Anthony Lake regarding the conflict in Bosnia. The material, dating from 1993 to 1995, comes from the NSC Records Management System numbered document series and includes memorandums to the President regarding Bosnia policy, Congressional correspondence, and press materials. For a list of subject lines corresponding to the individual RMS numbers, see the appendix at the end of the finding aid.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2020-0093-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. The collection contains material regarding communications between National Security Advisor Anthony Lake and President Clinton regarding the conflict in Bosnia from 1993 to 1995. The records processed in response to this request consist of NSC Records Management System (RMS) numbered documents. They include memos from National Security Advisor Lake to the President regarding Bosnia policy, Congressional correspondence, press materials, and other matters related to the conflict. For a list of subject lines corresponding to the individual RMS numbers, see the appendix at the end of this finding aid. Records responsive to this FOIA request have also been previously processed in the following collections: 2006-0215-F Prime Minister John Major 2006-0235-F General Wesley Clark 2006-0647-F Genocide in the former Yugoslavia 2006-1363-F Jesse Helms 2008-0995-F War Powers Resolution 2013-0768-F Operation Storm, Croatia 2014-0837-F Correspondence between President Clinton and Boris Yeltsin 2015-0183-S U.S. Congressional Correspondence and Russia 2018-0781-F Presidential Emergency

Action Directives (PEAD) 2020-0095-F Secretary of Defense and Bosnia 2020-0096-F Madeleine Albright and Bosnia Other responsive records have been declassified as a part of the following Mandatory Declassification Review requests: 2012-0799-M Declassified documents concerning Bosnia 2013-0517-M Declassified documents concerning Bosnia 2015-0810-M Declassified documents concerning German Chancellor Helmut Kohl 2015-0923-M Declassified documents concerning Bosnia.

Biographical Note

The multiethnic nation of Yugoslavia, which had been united since the Ottoman Empire, began to break apart in the late 1980s as the Soviet Union dissolved. As the republics of Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina voted for independence, Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević ascended to the Presidency of Yugoslavia and used the office as a vehicle for his Serbian nationalist ideology. In 1991 and 1992, fighting broke out between pro-independence and pro-Serbian forces throughout the region. The worst of this fighting occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United Nations (UN), Europe, and the United States grew increasingly alarmed with the situation in Bosnia and feared implications of a wider Balkan war. As multiple attempts at a ceasefire failed, the UN sent peacekeeping forces (UNPROFOR) and the Security Council imposed economic sanctions and an arms embargo against the former Yugoslav republics. In May 1993, the Clinton Administration announced its intention to pursue a policy of lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia while conducting airstrikes against the Serbs, also referred to as “lift and strike.” However, after rejection of the plan by European allies, the UN Security Council worked to create “safe areas,” or humanitarian corridors, for the Bosnian Muslims. Despite NATO pressure to abide by the UN resolutions, the Serbian forces continued to antagonize safe areas, and reports of heinous humanitarian abuses continued to emerge. The final straw for the United States and NATO came in July 1995, when Bosnian Serb forces invaded the safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepa, slaughtering between 5,000 and 10,000 Muslims. In response, NATO began airstrikes. Following the NATO bombing and Muslim and Croat successes on the ground, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke facilitated agreement in Geneva between the parties on a negotiating framework to partition Bosnia in a way that reflected the status of control at the time. A new ceasefire went into effect in October 1995, and unlike previous attempts, was generally respected. In November, Presidents Slobodan

Milošević of Serbia, Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina met at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. The agreement provided for an independent Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina comprising two states: the Muslim and Croat Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the West and the Serb Republika Srpska in the East. The agreements were signed on December 14, 1995 and a NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) was deployed between the two sections to secure peace. The Dayton Agreement remains in effect to this day. An estimated 100,000 people died in the conflict.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2025. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2026-03-18

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2020-0093-F:
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