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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Quincy, Illinois)

For Immediate Release January 27, 2000

TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE

January 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In my report to the Congress of July 19, 1999, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and Herzegovina and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

The U.N. Security Council authorized member states to continue SFOR for a period of 12 months in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1247 of June 18, 1999. The mission of SFOR is to provide a continued military presence in order to deter hostilities, stabilize and consolidate the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, contribute to a secure environment, and provide, within its means and capabilities, selective support to key areas and key civil implementation organizations.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the process of being reduced from approximately 6,200 to 4,600 personnel. In the second half of 1999, all NATO nations and 19 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided military personnel or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. forces are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 1,500 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, and Italy in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. The U.S. forces continue to support SFOR in efforts to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes. In the last 6 months, U.S. forces have sustained no combat-related fatalities.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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