

~~SECRET~~

3777

Card 1 of 4

POINTS TO BE MADE FOR MEETING WITH  
KOSOVO ALBANIAN LEADER IBRAHIM RUGOVA

- CONGRATULATIONS ON THE AGREEMENT TO BEGIN TALKS WITH BELGRADE. THE DIALOGUE YOU HAVE SET IN MOTION OFFERS THE ONLY HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION.
- ULTIMATELY, THE SOLUTION IS FOR YOU AND BELGRADE TO WORK OUT. WE WILL WORK WITH YOU TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF ALL THOSE WHO LIVE IN KOSOVO.

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Card 2 of 4

- ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT SUPPORT INDEPENDENCE, WE KNOW THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE BELIEVE A SOLUTION CAN AND MUST BE FOUND WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (FRY).
- THE SOLUTION WILL SURELY CALL FOR FURTHER COMPROMISES ON ALL SIDES. WE WILL KEEP THE PRESSURE ON MILOSEVIC TO DO HIS PART. AND AMBASSADOR HILL WILL REMAIN CLOSE TO THE PROCESS TO HELP MAINTAIN MOMENTUM.

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Card 3 of 4

- I AM VERY CONCERNED ABOUT BELGRADE'S TACTICS IN RECENT DAYS. BUT YOU MUST NOT LET THAT DISTRACT YOU FROM THE MAIN OBJECTIVE. BELGRADE WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO SEE YOU WALK OUT OF THE TALKS.
- I ADMIRE YOUR CONSISTENT STAND AGAINST VIOLENCE. TO THE EXTENT THE UCK OR OTHER KOSOVARS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLENCE, IT ONLY MAKES YOUR SITUATION WORSE. I URGE YOU AND YOUR TEAM TO DO ALL YOU CAN TO KEEP THE VIOLENCE FROM SPIRALING OUT OF CONTROL.

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Card 4 of 4

- (IF ASKED ABOUT REITERATING THE CHRISTMAS WARNING) WE AND OUR ALLIES HAVE MANY OPTIONS OPEN TO US, DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES. WE HAVEN'T RULED ANYTHING OUT BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO SPECULATE, EITHER. AT THE SAME TIME, VIOLENCE BY THE UCK BLURS THE PICTURE AND MAKES OUR OPTIONS MORE DIFFICULT.

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3777

SUMMARY POINTS FOR MEETING WITH  
IBRAHIM RUGOVA

- Congratulations on agreement to begin talks with Belgrade. Dialogue offers only hope for peaceful resolution.
- We do not support independence, but agree current situation is unacceptable. Solution must be found within context of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- Need further compromises on all sides. We will keep the pressure on Milosevic, and Ambassador Hill will remain close to the process.
- Do not let Belgrade's recent tactics distract you from main objective. They want nothing better than for you to walk out of talks.
- I admire your consistent stand against violence. You and your team must do all you can to keep violence from escalating.

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SUMMARY POINTS FOR MEETING WITH  
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98 MAY 28 PM 9:41

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 28, 1998

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PER E.O. 13526

2022-0830-M (1.04)  
KBH 12/6/2024

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

5-29-98

MEETING WITH  
KOSOVO ALBANIAN LEADER IBRAHIM RUGOVA

DATE: May 29, 1998

LOCATION: Oval Office

TIME: 9:50 to 10:00 a.m.

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER

*(Handwritten mark)*

I. PURPOSE

To demonstrate U.S. support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kosovo.

II. BACKGROUND

Dr. Rugova's (ROO-go-vah) historic, U.S.-brokered meeting with FRY President Milosevic on May 15 opened the possibility of averting escalating conflict leading to regional instability. On May 22, Rugova's negotiating team and their Belgrade counterparts began practical talks. These workmanlike discussions have yielded little of substance so far, but they hold promise of more substantive dialogue in weeks to follow. While Rugova agreed to talks without direct international participation, Ambassador Hill's quiet facilitation "outside the room" has been welcomed by both sides.

For much of this decade, Rugova enjoyed near universal approval in Kosovo (and among other Albanian communities) for his steadfast, non-violent struggle for human rights and independence. The lack of concrete results, however, has left many Kosovars and members of the Albanian diaspora impatient and inclined to see in the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) a real alternative to pacifism. The public has been especially critical of Rugova's willingness to talk without international mediation. More dangerously, voices in the UCK have condemned Rugova's compromises as betrayal, a charge that could put Rugova at risk of assassination. Despite this -- and his rather passive, other-worldly style -- Rugova can still count on the support of a strong majority of Kosovars, but his political base will continue

to erode unless the dialogue produces prompt, tangible gains. But the most serious challenge will come when Rugova eventually gives up his historic demand for Kosovar independence, as he must if he is to retain the support of the international community.

Dr. Rugova has led the LDK, Kosovo's largest party, since he founded it in 1989, and has been repeatedly elected Shadow President of Kosovo. Rugova is accompanied by three members of his diverse "Group of 15" advisory council. Fehmi Agani is Chief Kosovar negotiator in the ongoing practical talks in Pristina. Veton Suroj is a prominent journalist and publisher. Bujar Bukoshi is Shadow Prime Minister of Kosovo but lives in exile in Germany, where he raises and manages most LDK party funds. He founded the LDK party with Rugova but has long since become his principal rival.

III. PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President  
Strobe Talbott  
Sandy Berger  
Ambassador Gelbard  
Ambassador Hill  
Jim Steinberg  
Leon Fuerth  
Jock Covey (notetaker)

Ibrahim Rugova  
Bujar Bukoshi  
Fehmi Agani  
Veton Suroj

IV. PRESS PLAN

White House Photographer only

V. SEQUENCE

Brief discussion with Rugova, followed by photographs.

Attachments

Tab A Points to make  
Tab B Biography

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Reason: 1.5 (d)  
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SUMMARY POINTS FOR MEETING WITH  
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POINTS TO BE MADE FOR MEETING WITH  
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- Ultimately, the solution is for you and Belgrade to work out. We will work with you to find a solution that protects the rights of all those who live in Kosovo.
- Although we do not support independence, we know that the current situation is unacceptable. We believe a solution can and must be found within the context of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).
- The solution will surely call for further compromises on all sides. We will keep the pressure on Milosevic to do his part. And Ambassador Hill will remain close to the process to help maintain momentum.
- I am very concerned about Belgrade's tactics in recent days. But you must not let that distract you from the main objective. Belgrade would like nothing better than to see you walk out of the talks.
- I admire your consistent stand against violence. To the extent the UCK or other Kosovars are responsible for violence, it only makes your situation worse. I urge you and your team to do all you can to keep the violence from spiraling out of control.
- (If asked about reiterating the Christmas Warning) We and our Allies have many options open to us, depending on the circumstances. We haven't ruled anything out but we are not going to speculate, either. At the same time, violence by the UCK blurs the picture and makes our options more difficult.

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2023-0830-M (1.08)

KBH 12/6/2024

MEETING WITH  
KOSOVO ALBANIAN LEADER IBRAHIM RUGOVA

DATE: May 29, 1998

LOCATION: Oval Office

TIME: 9:50 to 10:00 a.m.

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER

I. PURPOSE

To demonstrate U.S. support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kosovo.

II. BACKGROUND

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to erode unless the dialogue produces prompt, tangible gains. But the most serious challenge will come when Rugova eventually gives up his historic demand for Kosovar independence, as he must if he is to retain the support of the international community.

Dr. Rugova has led the LDK, Kosovo's largest party, since he founded it in 1989, and has been repeatedly elected Shadow President of Kosovo. Rugova is accompanied by three members of his diverse "Group of 15" advisory council. Fehmi Agani is Chief Kosovar negotiator in the ongoing practical talks in Pristina. Veton Suroj is a prominent journalist and publisher. Bujar Bukoshi is Shadow Prime Minister of Kosovo but lives in exile in Germany, where he raises and manages most LDK party funds. He founded the LDK party with Rugova but has long since become his principal rival.

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Ibrahim Rugova  
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Fehmi Agani  
Veton Suroj

IV. PRESS PLAN

White House Photographer only

V. SEQUENCE

Brief discussion with Rugova, followed by photographs.

Attachments

Tab A Points to make  
Tab B Biography

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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2023-0830-M (1.12)  
KBM 12/6/2024

MEETING WITH  
KOSOVO ALBANIAN LEADER IBRAHIM RUGOVA

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Attachment  
Tab A Points to make  
Tab B Biography

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SUMMARY POINTS FOR MEETING WITH  
IBRAHIM RUGOVA

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- ~~Although~~ we do not support independence, <sup>but agree</sup> we know that the current situation is unacceptable. We believe a <sup>71</sup> solution can and must be found within the context of ~~the~~ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- Need further compromises on all sides. We will keep the pressure on Milosevic, and Ambassador Hill will remain close to the process.
- <sup>Do</sup> ~~You must~~ not let Belgrade's recent tactics distract you from ~~the~~ main objective. <sup>They want</sup> Belgrade would like nothing better than <sup>for</sup> to see you walk out of talks.
- I admire your <sup>to</sup> consistent stand against violence. I urge <sup>must</sup> you and your team to do all you can to keep the violence <sup>from</sup> ~~spiraling out of control~~. <sup>escalating.</sup>

POINTS TO MAKE

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