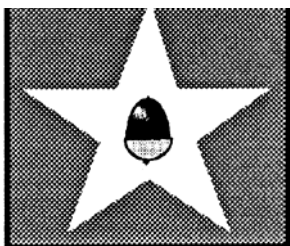


**Conflict Studies Research Centre**

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**Kosovo:  
Background & Chronology**

**April 1999**



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# **Kosovo: Background & Chronology**

**By Dr M A Smith**

## **Kosovo: Background to the Conflict**

The Serb province of Kosovo has been of extreme importance to both the Serbs and Albanians, who before the emergence of armed conflict in 1998, made up around 90% of the population of 1.9 million. To the Serbs, Kosovo is the birthplace of the Serb nation. At the battle of Kosovo in 1389, the Serbs were defeated by the Ottomans, and for this reason, Serbs feel a strong emotional attachment to the province somewhat akin to the attachment Jews have for Jerusalem. Various Orthodox Churches and monasteries in Kosovo symbolise the spiritual importance of Kosovo to Serbia. Milovan Djilas wrote: 'wipe away Kosovo from the Serb mind and soul and we are no more. If there had been no battle at Kosovo, the Serbs would have invented it for its suffering and heroism.'<sup>1</sup>

Kosovo is also economically important. It is rich in various minerals. It has 50% of all known nickel deposits in former Yugoslavia, 48% of lead and zinc, 47% of magnesium, 36% of lignite, and 32.4% of kaolin deposits. Other minerals, such as chrome and bauxite are also to be found in Kosovo.<sup>2</sup>

Kosovo is also of strategic importance to Serbia. It borders on Albania, which is closely tied to Turkey, and the mountains separating the Kosovo plain from Albania are the only natural protection Serbia has from Albania. This could be an important barrier if Serbia were ever to come into conflict with Albania and Turkey.

The Albanians also consider Kosovo historically important. The Albanian national movement was born in Kosovo in 1878, and so it is considered to be the centre of Albanian nationalism. However, the Albanians' main claim to Kosovo is based on demographics. Before the ethnic cleansing of 1998-99, Albanians made up more than 90% of Kosovo's population. In the 1991 census, which was based on a statistical projection as most Albanians boycotted it, the total population of the province was estimated to be 1,954,747, with Albanians making up 1,686,661.<sup>3</sup> The Albanian birth rate is much higher than that of the Serbs, and official Yugoslav projections predict that the Albanian population could reach almost 2.6 million by 2001. The population balance has been steadily shifting in favour of the Albanians for many decades. In 1961 Albanians made up 67.1% of Kosovo's population. By 1971 this had increased to 73.7%, and by 1981 to 77.5%. The Serb share of the population had correspondingly declined. In 1971 Serbs numbered 228,000 and made up 18.3% of the population. By 1981, Serbs numbered 210,000 and made up 13.2% of the population.<sup>4</sup>

After the First World War, around half a million Albanians were incorporated against their will into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later named Yugoslavia). Since then, Albanian-Serb relations in Kosovo have gone through eight stages:<sup>5</sup>

1. 1918-41. The Albanian minority had no rights, and was ruled by an imported Serb elite.

2. 1941-45. A large part of Kosovo was united with Albania under Italian rule. Many Albanians in Kosovo collaborated with the German and Italian occupation administration, and were opposed by predominantly Slav resistance forces.
3. 1945-66. Serb-Albanian relations oscillated, shifting from armed conflict to attempts at political resolution of disputes, including the administrative restriction of the rights of Albanians.
4. 1967-81. Albanian minority rights were acknowledged and accepted. The 1974 Yugoslav constitution gave Kosovo considerable autonomy within Serbia, and this autonomy stimulated Albanian self-assertiveness.
5. 1981-91. The disintegration of Yugoslavia. Albanian self-assertiveness led to serious riots in Kosovo in 1981 and 1982. Serbia sought to re-establish its domination over Kosovo and Kosovo responded by declaring independence.
6. 1992-95. Serb apartheid in Kosovo. Serbia swamps Kosovo with security forces, and the Kosovan Albanians develop a parallel state. The Rugova leadership believes in non-violent resistance to Serb rule.
7. 1996-March 1999. Violent Kosovan resistance to Serb rule. Disappointed at being ignored by the West at the 1995 Dayton settlement for Bosnia, Kosovan Albanians increasingly turn to armed struggle to achieve independence. The KLA emerges as the main force in Kosovo. Serbia responds with ethnic cleansing. The international community attempts to promote a negotiated settlement with the Rambouillet Agreement of February 1999. Serbia's rejection of the Rambouillet Agreement leads to NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia.
8. March 1999 to the present. NATO airstrikes aim at forcing Belgrade to allow foreign peacekeeping troops into Kosovo, permitting the return of refugees, and granting autonomy to Kosovo. Belgrade responds by intensifying the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo, apparently aiming at driving the Albanian population out of Kosovo into Albania and Macedonia.

### **The Albanianisation Of Kosovo And Milosevic's Rise To Power<sup>6</sup>**

The federal Yugoslav constitution of 1974 made Kosovo an autonomous province within Serbia, and Kosovo subsequently enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. An increasing Albanianisation of political, economic and cultural life took place, which resulted in an increasing Serb migration from the province, so reducing the size of the already small Serb minority. The Albanianisation of Kosovo was accompanied by discrimination against the Serb minority. The potential for instability was high, as revealed in the riots by Kosovan Albanian students in Pristina in 1981. Further riots took place in 1982. Calls for either a separate republic within Yugoslavia or outright independence became stronger, which intensified the concerns of the Serb minority in the province. In May 1986, Slobodan Milosevic became head of the Serb Communist Party. By this time the Serb concern over the Albanianisation of Kosovo was becoming acute. In October 1986, members of the Serb Academy of Sciences issued a memorandum, which expressed concern over Serbia's fate in communist Yugoslavia. At a CP meeting in Kosovo Polje in April 1987, Milosevic told Serbs, "No one has the right to beat you". This resulted in him becoming a folk hero to Serbs in Kosovo, and after this meeting, he was determined to reverse the Albanianisation of Kosovo, seeing it as a path to supreme power in Serbia. In

December 1987 Milosevic removed Ivan Stambolic from the Serb presidency. Milosevic himself became Serb president in May 1989.

Amendments to the Serb constitution in March 1989 began the process of the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy. These amendments suspended the work of the Kosovo Executive Council and Kosovo Assembly. They were later allowed to operate but with reduced powers. In July 1990 the Serb government prevented the Kosovo parliament from meeting. Albanian parliamentary deputies responded by proclaiming Kosovo as a republic within the Yugoslav federation and seceding from Serbia. The Serbian government countered by dissolving Kosovo's government and assembly, and the Serbian National Assembly took full control of the province.

The Serb constitution adopted in September 1990 defined Kosovo as a region within the Serbian republic. The constitution's downgrading of Kosovo's status intensified the desire of the close knit Kosovo Albanian community to turn the province into a state and place it outside the scope of Serbia's authority. Emergency rule began in 1990, which resulted in a process of forced Serbianisation, and the subsequent repression of the Albanian community, which responded by creating parallel political structures. In September 1991 the Kosovo parliament approved an independence resolution, which was then confirmed by referendum. In October 1991 the parliament declared Kosovan independence. Ibrahim Rugova was elected as President of Kosovo in May 1992. He was committed to achieving independence from Serbia by peaceful means. He opposed violent resistance to Serb rule, as he feared it would provoke a backlash, which the Kosovo Albanians would be unable to resist. He believed that the higher birth rate of the Kosovo Albanians would eventually make it impossible for Belgrade to rule Kosovo indefinitely.

### **The Beginning Of Armed Resistance**

However other forces among the Kosovan Albanians have been committed to armed resistance. There was considerable frustration that the international community did not consider the Kosovo issue at the Dayton conference on Bosnia in 1995, and this resulted in an increasing number of Kosovan Albanians turning to armed struggle.<sup>7</sup> Bomb attacks took place on refugee camps housing Serb refugees from Croatia in February 1996. The National Movement for the Liberation of Kosovo claimed responsibility for these actions. This was followed by actions carried out by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA - its Albanian acronym is UCK - *Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves*).<sup>8</sup> These were stepped after April 1996, when several EU states recognised the new Yugoslavia. Gunmen killed several Serbs in Decan and Pec in April 1996, and the KLA later admitted it was responsible for these actions.

The command structure of the KLA is not clear. It appears to have backing from the Kosovan diaspora in Germany and Switzerland. The KLA's weaponry is confined largely to small arms, most of which enter Kosovo illegally from Albania. The KLA gained major credibility in September 1997, when it launched ten coordinated operations in Kosovo against Serb police barracks and vehicles. Overt KLA activity began on 28 November 1997. The KLA gained much of their weapons from the looting of Albanian military arsenals in spring 1997 during the upheavals caused by the collapse of the pyramid schemes in Albania. The KLA undertook more and more actions, which eventually resulted in a backlash by Serb security forces in February 1998 in the Drenica region. This, however, resulted in increasing support for the KLA. In summer 1998, it was claimed that the KLA had 30,000 men under arms. In August 1998, the KLA appointed the leader of the Parliamentary Party of Kosovo, Adem Demaci, as its political representative. In mid-July 1998, the KLA

claimed to control 40% of Kosovo. However Serb forces succeeded in regaining many positions held by the KLA in July and August 1998. Since then, until the NATO attack in March 1999, the UCK controlled many rural districts, with Serb forces controlling main roads and cities.

### **Attempts To Resolve The Crisis**

On 9 August, the Contact Group presented a peace plan on Kosovo. It proposed autonomy. Serbia welcomed the proposals, but they were rejected by Rugova as they made no mention of independence. Rugova formed a negotiating team but Adem Demaci refused to participate and instead became the chief political representative of the KLA. On 18 August, Rugova's team refused to negotiate with their Serb counterparts. In September, Serb forces stepped up attacks on ethnic Albanians. On 23 September the UNSC adopted Resolution 1199 which called for a cease-fire and on the FRY leadership and Kosovans to enter into a dialogue. It also caused for the withdrawal of security units used for civilian repression. On 24 September NATO authorised Supreme Allied Commander Wesley Clark to ask member states for the forces necessary to carry out military intervention. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook warned that NATO military action would be forthcoming if the Serbs failed to comply with Resolution 1199.

Prior to that, US envoy Christopher Hill met Rugova and Milosevic on 1-2 September and secured from them an agreement to discuss an interim settlement for Kosovo and to postpone discussion of the long-term legal status of the province. Kosovan Albanian leaders issued a draft proposal for an interim solution on 20 September, which saw Kosovo as temporarily part of Yugoslavia, as an independent entity equal to the two other republics in the federation. It would have autonomy, but be part of a common Yugoslav economy and the FRY would continue to guard its borders.

On 1 October the UNSC reported that Milosevic had made no attempt to comply with Resolution 1199. NATO was almost immediately in a high state of readiness to launch air strikes. On 4 October Milosevic claimed he was withdrawing forces from Kosovo. US envoy Richard Holbrooke visited Belgrade on 5 October and urged Milosevic to withdraw Serb forces and allow international monitoring. On 8 October the Contact Group issued six demands to Milosevic. It demanded: an end to Serb offensives in Kosovo; withdrawal of Serb forces; freedom of access and full cooperation with the International War Crimes tribunal; safe return of refugees to their homes; a start to a negotiated solution to the crisis.

On 12 October Milosevic made key concessions to Holbrooke, and agreed to comply with UN demands. He agreed to allow a 2,000 strong OSCE observer force enter Kosovo and NATO to fly reconnaissance missions over Kosovo. On 13 October NATO approved action for air strikes, but delayed implementation until 17 October to allow Milosevic to sign implementation accords. On 15 October Milosevic gave permission for NATO reconnaissance flights to begin, and on 16 October he agreed to allow the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) force enter Kosovo. On 17 October NATO again extended its deadline to 27 October to give Milosevic time to withdraw troops and allow the OSCE to gauge compliance with UNSC resolutions. It appeared that not all forces were being withdrawn and some new units were being sent into Kosovo. Supreme Allied Commander Wesley Clark and NATO Military Committee Chairman Klaus Naumann visited Belgrade on 24 October and warned Milosevic that NATO would launch air strikes unless forces were withdrawn by 27 October. The threat was suspended by NATO on 27 October as it appeared

that Milosevic was withdrawing his forces. NATO said it would keep its forces in a high state of alert, however.

Fighting nevertheless continued in Kosovo, despite the beginning of the deployment of the KVM on 6 November. An extraction force of 1,800 troops was to be deployed in Macedonia to extract the KVM if they came under threat. On 15 November Serb President Milan Milutinovic offered to hold talks with Kosovan Albanian leaders, but this was rejected by Fehmi Agani, an adviser to Rugova. US envoy Christopher Hill continued to move forward the peace plan he presented in September, which envisaged autonomy for Kosovo. His peace deal was redrafted on 18 November, but stalled because of renewed violence. Hill's failure to involve the KLA was seen by many as a major stumbling block.

Fighting intensified in December in Kosovo between Serb forces and the KLA. Clashes took place on 14 December in Prizren, and heavy fighting erupted on 24 December in northern Kosovo. A local truce was agreed on 27 December. On 7 December Fehmi Agani rejected a new US draft for a peace plan, saying it was too close to Serb views. The Serb government also rejected the plan. On 29 December, NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana warned all parties to maintain peace or face the threat of force.

In early 1999, the situation worsened further. A massacre of Albanian civilians was reported in Racak in Kosovo, and Yugoslavia accused Albania of aiding terrorists. Tirana reported an increase in the number of firings by Yugoslav forces into Albania. Belgrade also became increasingly hostile to the OSCE KVM. In late January 1999 Adem Demaci stated that Serb military action was making it impossible to conduct negotiations with Serbia. Albania and the Kosovan political leadership were calling for NATO intervention in Kosovo.

On 29 January, the Contact Group met in London and called for talks to take place in Paris between the Serbs and Kosovan Albanians. These talks began in Rambouillet near Paris on 6 February under British and French chairmanship. An agreement was eventually reached on 23 February, which offered Kosovo a high degree of autonomy.<sup>9</sup> It also stipulated that most Yugoslav and Serb military and other internal security forces would be withdrawn. The Rambouillet Agreement invited the UN Security Council to pass a resolution endorsing the implementation arrangements of the Agreement, including the establishment of a military implementation force in Kosovo. The parties to the Agreement invited NATO to constitute and lead a military implementation force to ensure the fulfilment of all provisions of the Agreement. Non-NATO nations could also take part, but the implementation force would operate under the authority and be subject to the direction and the political control of the North Atlantic Council through the NATO chain of command.

The Agreement was to last for three years from the time of its entry into force. After three years, an international meeting is to be convened to determine a mechanism for a final settlement for Kosovo, on the basis of will of the people, opinions of relevant authorities, each Party's efforts regarding the implementation of this Agreement, and the Helsinki Final Act.

A follow up meeting was planned in Paris to sign the peace agreement on 15 March. The Kosovo Albanian delegation eventually signed the Rambouillet Agreement on 18 March in Paris. There was disappointment in some elements of the Kosovan leadership that the Agreement did not specifically guarantee independence. Adem

Demaci resigned from the KLA for this reason. The Serb and Yugoslav leaderships were hostile to the Agreement and the Serb President Milan Milutinovic refused to sign it. They opposed the idea of foreign troops entering Kosovo to oversee the implementation of the Agreement, or any possible referendum on independence. In late February and early March Serb and Yugoslav forces were reinforced and stepped up military action in Kosovo. On 19 March the OSCE KVM were withdrawn. On 24 March NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana authorised Operation Allied Force to compel Belgrade to allow an implementation force into Kosovo. NATO airstrikes began on the evening of 24 March, and the Yugoslav government declared a state of war in Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslav leadership has responded to the NATO airstrikes by intensifying the ethnic cleansing process and driving a large proportion of the Kosovan Albanian population out of the province into Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro. Belgrade appears to be aiming at the complete removal of the Albanian population of Kosovo. The Yugoslav/Serb authorities are stripping the Kosovan Albanian expellees of all identity documents before driving them out of Kosovo, so making return all the more difficult. By depopulating Kosovo, Belgrade is hoping to "create facts on the ground". If depopulation is accomplished, it is then possible that Milosevic may offer to partition Kosovo, keeping the places of historic importance to the Serbs and mining regions, and offering the other areas to NATO. Although Serbia makes much of the symbolic importance of Kosovo, there may well be elements within the Yugoslav/Serb leadership that may be prepared to abandon some of the province.<sup>10</sup> If Milosevic ever comes to believe that abandoning Kosovo will help him to remain in power, then abandoning or partitioning the province becomes a likely option. However, if he believes that retaining Kosovo is crucial to remaining in power, then he is likely to do all in his power to ensure that Kosovo remains within Serbia.

## Endnotes

- 1 Cited in Miranda Vickers, Between Serb and Albania: A History of Kosovo, London, Hurst & Co, 1998, p.213.
- 2 Op cit, p.xv.
- 3 Op cit, p.xvi.
- 4 Op cit, p.318.
- 5 This periodisation is partly based on the periodisation of Miranda Vickers, op cit, pp.xiii-xiv.
- 6 For an overview of Milosevic's rise to power, see Sabrina P Ramet, Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia 1962-1991, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1993, pp225-238.
- 7 Vickers, op cit, pp.289-313.
- 8 For more on the Kosovo Liberation Army, see International Crisis Group, Kosovo's Long Hot Summer: Briefing on military, humanitarian and political developments in Kosovo, 2 September 1998, <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/sbalkans/reports/reports/kosrep05.htm>.
- 9 For the text of the Rambouillet Agreement, see <http://kosovainfo.com/english/politics/990305-peace.htm>.
- 10 In June 1996, the president of the Serb Academy of Sciences, Alexander Despic suggested that because of the demograophic superiority of the Albanians in Kosovo, the time had possible come for a peaceful and civilised secession of Kosovo from Yugoslavia. See Vickers, op cit, p.304.

## Kosovo/Albania Chronology – January-April 1999

### January

**4 January 1999** *Koha Ditore* publishes a statement by the UCK general staff on the interim settlement proposed by Christopher Hill. It is extremely critical of the proposed settlement.

**4 January 1999** The KLA sets up its own radio station and press agency.

**4 January 1999** Clashes take place between Serb and Albanian forces in Klina.

**5 January 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports that Adem Demaci visits Tirana. He says he is ready to meet Ibrahim Rugova. Demaci also has talks with Albanian foreign minister Paskal Milo.

**5 January 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports that Albanian premier Pandeli Majko and SHIK chief Fatos Klosi met at the end of December.

**6 January 1999** Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov tells Belgrade that it must negotiate with the Kosovo Albanians.

**6 January 1999** Tanjug reports that armed Albanians have attacked a coal mine in Belacevac in Kosovo.

**6 January 1999** *Koha Ditore* reports that political representatives of Kosovo Albanian factions may meet in Albania to try and patch up their differences.

**6 January 1999** Sali Berisha meets Adem Demaci in Tirana.

**7 January 1999** Armed Serbs block all main roads out of Pristina. This block is withdrawn except from the road to Macedonia on 8th January.

**7 January 1999** US special mediator Christopher Hill says that the Kosovo settlement process must be speeded up.

**7 January 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports Albanian President Meidani as saying that the West should play a more active role in the Kosovo conflict.

**8 January 1999** The Yugoslav army confirms that eight soldiers have been captured by Kosovo rebels in northern Kosovo.

**8 January 1999** The Yugoslav army says it was attacked from Albanian territory near the Kosare border post.

**8 January 1999** President Meidani of Albania meets Rexhep Qosja, chairman of the United Democratic Movement in Kosovo in Tirana.

**9 January 1999** President Meidani of Albania meets OSCE chairman and foreign minister of Norway, Knut Vollebaek, and proposes an OSCE-NATO accord on Kosovo.

**9 January 1999** ATA reports from an organisation called PNUDI, which claims that 15% of the Albanian population has emigrated since 1990.

**9 January 1999** *Koha Jone* reports that Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko has appointed an intelligence service watchdog, Arben Isaraj.

**10 January 1999** *Kosovo Albania Radio 21* reports tank attacks in northeast Kosovo. Heavy Serb forces are also reported around Podujevo.

**11 January 1999** OSCE chairman and foreign minister of Norway, Knut Vollebaek, meets Yugoslav President Milosevic and foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic

**11 January 1999** Enver Maloku, head of the Kosovo Information Centre in Pristina is shot dead.

**11 January 1999** The Albanian Public Order Ministry reports that Serb helicopters have violated Serb airspace.

**12 January 1999** Adem Demaci rules out the unconditional release of the eight Yugoslav soldiers abducted on 8 January.

**12 January 1999** OSCE chairman and foreign minister of Norway, Knut Vollebaek meets Ibrahim Rugova.

**12 January 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko says that NATO intervention in Kosovo is imperative.

**12 January 1999** Serb Journalists Association reports that 119 Serb policemen were killed and 399 wounded in 1998 and the first 11 days of 1999.

**12 January 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports that Albanian president Rexhep Meidani is to mediate in talks between Kosovo Albanian leaders.

**12 January 1999** The Italian defence minister visits Albania.

**12 January 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* assesses the Majko government's foreign policy. It sees it as different from Nano's.

**12 January 1999** Sali Berisha calls for new elections.

**13 January 1999** Pandeli Majko gives an assessment of his government's first 100 days in office.

**13 January 1999** The eight Yugoslav soldiers abducted by the KLA on 8 January are released.

**14 January 1999** The Yugoslav Foreign Ministry (MFA) condemns Albanian support for Kosovo terrorists.

**14 January 1999** The newspaper *Albania* reports that Albania has stepped up security on its border with Yugoslavia.

**14 January 1999** *Shekulli* reports that the Democratic Party (DP) in Albania is calling for cooperation with the ruling parties to fight serious crime.

**14 January 1999** The Albanian MFA accuses Belgrade of warmongering.

**15 January 1999** The Albanian MOD issues a statement denying the presence of terrorists in Albania.

**15 January 1999** The Italian foreign minister calls on Albania to take a moderate stance over Kosovo. Pandeli Majko is visiting Italy.

**15 January 1999** President Meidani, defence minister Luis Hajdaraga and Chief of the General Staff Andoni meet to discuss border security following incursions of Albanian airspace by Yugoslav airplanes.

**15 January 1999** The Democratic Party (DP) ends its boycott of local authorities in southern Albania.

**15 January 1999** The Serb government calls for an end to foreign support for the Kosovo rebels.

**16 January 1999** The Albanian government calls for a UN Security Council meeting on Kosovo.

**16 January 1999** The Albanian MFA condemns the Racak massacre in Kosovo.

**16 January 1999** *Koha Jone* reports the secret arrival of missile equipment in Durres.

**16 January 1999** Kosovo Albanian newsagency ARTA reports that 38 Albanians have been killed by Serb security forces near Racak in central Kosovo. The OSCE verification mission confirms the killing of at least 23 civilians. Rugova calls for NATO intervention.

**16 January 1999** Serb deputy prime minister Ratko Markovic says that the Serb state's tolerance of OSCE verifiers may run out. Zoran Andjelkovic, chairman of the Kosovo Provisional Executive Council says that OSCE verifiers must not obstruct the struggle against terrorists.

**16 January 1999** It is announced that the UN monitored collecting of weapons in Albania will begin in late January. It will begin in Gramsh, southeast of Tirana. This pilot project began in June 1998

**16 January 1999** *Zeri i Popullit* quotes a statement from the Albanian MOD saying it will defend Albania's territorial integrity at any price.

**17 January 1999** The Serb leadership accuses the OSCE of being biased against Belgrade. The Serb information ministry accuses the western media of manipulating reports of the Racak massacre.

**17 January 1999** OSCE reports renewed fighting in Racak. OSCE verifiers pull out of Racak.

**17 January 1999** The Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK) calls for the immediate deployment of NATO troops in Kosovo.

**17 January 1999** *Radio B92* says that the Yugoslav army thwarts attempts by Albanian rebels to cross from Albania into Yugoslavia.

**17 January 1999** Police clash with bandits in southern Albania near Lazarat.

**18 January 1999** The Yugoslav government declares the head of the OSCE mission in Kosovo, William Walker, persona non grata.

**18 January 1999** The Albanian parliament approves a statement on Kosovo calling for NATO airstrikes on Serbia. Majko and Berisha meet to discuss the situation in Kosovo following the Racak massacre.

**19 January 1999** Head of the Kosovo Albanian negotiating team Fehmi Agani says he doubts NATO will intervene in Kosovo.

**19 January 1999** The Kosovo Daily Report (KDR) reports fresh Serb artillery attacks in the Shtime area, south of Pristina.

**19 January 1999** *La Stampa* reports that Italy will send troops to defend Kosovo refugee camps in Albania.

**19 January 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko writes to Bill Clinton arguing the case for NATO intervention in Kosovo.

**20 January 1999** Russian first deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Avdeyev visits Yugoslavia.

**20 January 1999** In a statement in *Koha Ditore*, the KLA accuses the premier in exile of Kosovo, Bujar Bukoshi, of misusing funds intended for the KLA to finance the assassination of UCK commanders and to set up a rival armed force.

**20 January 1999** Fatos Nano resigns as Socialist Party (PS) chairman.

**20 January 1999** German foreign minister Joschka Fischer visits Albania.

**20 January 1999** A delegation headed by the Greek interior minister visits Albania.

**21 January 1999** The OSCE opens an office in Korce, eastern Albania.

**21 January 1999** The Yugoslav government suspends its decision to expel William Walker.

**22 January 1999** *Kosovo Sot* reports that KLA forces deliberately attacked OSCE verifiers.

**23 January 1999** Kosovo governor Veljko Odalovic criticises the work of OSCE verifiers, saying that they are allowing the separatists to ethnically cleanse villages.

**22 January 1999** In an interview in *Albania*, former interior minister Perikli Teta calls for early elections and says that the mafia is running Albania.

**22 January 1999** Macedonian prime minister Ljubco Georgievski visits Albania.

**22 January 1999** Five ships donated by the US for coastguard purposes reach Albania.

**24 January 1999** *Kosovo Albanian Radio 21* website reports that Serb police have sealed off Albanian villages in western Kosovo.

**25 January 1999** Genc Pollo says that the DP may end its boycott of parliament.

**26 January 1999** The main staff of the KLA says that by 10 February they will have concluded consultations with political representatives on the constitution of a parallel assembly and government of the Kosovo Albanians.

**26 January 1999** One of the KLA commanders, Remi, says that the KLA may accept a 3-5 year temporary agreement on Kosovo.

**26 January 1999** Sali Berisha calls for a national pact to restore order and fight crime in Albania.

**26 January 1999** A delegation from the Kosovo parliament led by Idriz Ajeti visits Albania.

**27 January 1999** Albanian and Serb sources confirm heavy artillery fire in northern Kosovo.

**28 January 1999** Adem Demaci says it is impossible for Kosovo Albanians to negotiate with Serbia as they are under constant attack from the Serbs.

**28 January 1999** Yugoslav border guards report killing 50 armed Albanians who attempted to cross into Yugoslavia in southwestern Kosovo.

**29 January 1999** Ibrahim Rugova says that any Kosovo negotiating team will include KLA representation.

**29 January 1999** The Contact Group meets in London and calls for negotiations in Paris to begin on February 6th between Belgrade and Kosovo Albanians.

**29 January 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko visits Albanian troops on the Yugoslav border.

**30 January 1999** British foreign secretary Robin Cook visits Yugoslavia and has talks with Ibrahim Rugova in Macedonia. Cook calls for negotiations in Paris.

**30 January 1999** *Zeri i Popullit* reports Paskal Milo welcoming the decision of the Contact Group to hold settlement talks in Paris.

**31 January 1999** The unofficial Kosovo Albanian parliament issues a statement on Kosovo. It welcomes the Paris talks.

### **February**

**2 February 1999** Adem Demaci recommends that the KLA stay away from peace talks in Paris.

**2 February 1999** Pandeli Majko visits the USA.

**2 February 1999** *Zeri i Popullit* reports that one-third of the state administration is corrupt.

**3 February 1999** An article in *Koha Jone* by Enton Abilekaj claims that the KLA is controlled by Tirana.

**3 February 1999** Kosovo Albanians meet today to discuss the composition of their Paris negotiating team. It will include representatives of the KLA. It will also include Ibrahim Rugova of the DLK, Rexhep Qosja (United Democratic Movement), Fehmi Agani (chief Albanian negotiator), Veton Surroi (editor of *Koha Ditore*).

**4 February 1999** The newspaper Albania reports a rift in the PS. It says that PS organisational secretary Ndre Legisi has accused Pandeli Majko and deputy prime minister Ilir Meta.

**4 February 1999** Prec Zogaj, adviser to President Meidani, is interviewed in *Koha Jone*. He denies that Tirana controls the KLA.

**5 February 1999** *Koha Jone* reports on reform of the police being carried out by Public Order Minister Petro Koci.

**5 February 1999** Iran's first ambassador to Albania presents his credentials to President Meidani.

**5 February 1999** Albanian TV reports an explosion at a Serb military base in northern Kosovo.

**5 February 1999** The district court of Pristina imprisons 26 Kosovo rebels.

**5 February 1999** A Tirana district court authorises the tapping of the telephone of Sali Berisha.

**6 February 1999** Kosovo-Serb talks begin in Paris, chaired by Britain and France.

**6 February 1999** ATA claims that tracer bullets were fired at a border post from within Yugoslavia.

**7 February 1999** Serb premier Mirko Marjanovic says that a Kosovo deal is possible, but rules out any foreign military presence in Kosovo.

**8 February 1999** Sali Berisha says that NATO should intervene in Kosovo irrespective of whether an agreement is reached or not.

**9 February 1999** Transport workers in southern Albania begin a strike.

**9 February 1999** *Shekulli* reports that DP chairman Sali Berisha and deputy chairman Genc Pollo have decided that the DP will continue to boycott parliament. The DP is also demanding the release of six imprisoned former DP state officials.

**9 February 1999** In *Shekulli*, Pandeli Majko is reported as saying that if atrocities committed in Kosovo continue, then all Albanians in the Balkans, Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro have the right to organise collective self-defence.

**10 February 1999** The KLA confirms it will not give up its request for independence.

**11 February 1999** The Serb delegation approves the basic principles put forward by the Contact Group. Serb President Milan Milutinovic says that the Kosovo Albanian delegation must also sign these principles.

**11 February 1999** The Albanian interministerial committee of integration headed by the state secretary for European integration, Maqo Lakrori, decides to set up

several special commissions to help drafting and implementing the strategy of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

**11 February 1999** A report from ATA claims that there have been over 170 Albanian casualties in Kosovo since 1999.

**12 February 1999** Serb President Milutinovic accuses Contact Group mediators of obstructing the Rambouillet talks. He says no one has given him a satisfactory explanation as to why the Kosovo Albanians have not signed the 10 basic principles.

**12 February 1999** Ibrahim Rugova's spokesman Xhemal Mustafa says that the only solution to the Kosovo problem is a free Kosovo.

**12 February 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko says he was not aware that Sali Berisha's phone was being tapped.

**13 February 1999** The Romanian defence minister visits Albania.

**13 February 1999** A bomb goes off in Urosevac in Kosovo. 40 Albanians are arrested.

**14 February 1999** Serb President Milutinovic says that no foreign troops are necessary to implement any Kosovo settlement.

**15 February 1999** The KLA describes calls for them to lay down their arms as laughable.

**15 February 1999** The KDR says that fresh Serb forces are being sent into Kosovo.

**15 February 1999** Albanian naval ships resume patrols from Durrës after a three year break.

**16 February 1999** *Koha Jone* reports that two Islamic terrorists have been arrested for conducting surveillance of the US embassy. On 18 February *Koha Jone* reports that a Tirana court has ruled that they be detained indefinitely.

**16 February 1999** Kosovo prime minister in exile Bujar Bukoshi says that rebel forces will not lay down their arms.

**16 February 1999** The Serb negotiating team presents its proposals on Kosovo to the Contact Group.

**16 February 1999** A KLA official says that NATO forces must be deployed in Kosovo, only if the temporary agreement foresees the referendum for self-determination.

**17 February 1999** Yugoslav Information Minister Milan Komnenic says that Belgrade's opposition to NATO deployment in Kosovo is non-negotiable. The Kosovo Albanian delegation insists that NATO forces be deployed, and that the three year deadline be followed by a referendum on Kosovo's future.

**17 February 1999** At a press conference in Rambouillet, the KLA says its objective is the liberation of all Albanian lands. It warns the authorities in Macedonia and Montenegro to be mindful of how they treat the Albanian populations in their respective countries. Adem Demaci is appointed supreme political spokesman of the KLA.

**17 February 1999** *Belgrade Radio B92* reports that the Yugoslav 3rd Army has increased its combat readiness in Kosovo.

**17 February 1999** Albanian TV reports increased Serb troop movements in northern Kosovo.

**17 February 1999** Chairman of the Party for Democratic Prosperity in Macedonia, Arben Xhaferri visits Albania for talks with Pandeli Majko.

**18 February 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* interviews Albanian foreign minister Paskal Milo on the Rambouillet talks.

**19 February 1999** The spokesman for Ibrahim Rugova, Xhemal Mustafa, says that Belgrade is opposed to a solution of the Kosovo conflict.

**19 February 1999** Yugoslav air force commander Lt-Col-Gen Sapsoje Smiljanic says that the Yugoslav Air Force is ready to defend its homeland.

**19 February 1999** *Shekulli* reports that Paskal Milo says that the Albanian government stands by its decision to respect the right of the Kosovo Albanians to self-determination and the non-violent change of borders.

**20 February 1999** Albanian TV reports that the Kosovo Albanian delegation insists on the right of self-determination for Kosovo.

**20 February 1999** Yugoslav deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic refuses to rule out the possibility of NATO deployment in Kosovo.

**20 February 1999** *Radio B92* reports that the Yugoslav Army is restricting the movement of OSCE verifiers.

**21 February 1999** Albanian TV reports that Suleyman Selimi has been appointed new commander in chief of the KLA.

**21 February 1999** Opposition leader Sali Berisha warns the Kosovo Albanian leaders not to sign an agreement against the rights of the Albanian people.

**22 February 1999** Serb President Milutinovic says he may accept an international presence in Kosovo if a good deal is reached. He says he wants a political agreement before a deal on military implementation.

**22 February 1999** The leader of the Kosovo Albanian delegation at Rambouillet says the KLA will not disarm after agreement is reached. It would become the state army of Kosovo.

**22 February 1999** The Kosovo press website reports that there has been fighting in northern Kosovo between KLA and Serb forces.

**22 February 1999** The Albanian government says that the Contact Group plan gives scope for the will of the Kosovo people.

**22 February 1999** The 2nd Infantry division in northern Albania reports it is increasing its readiness.

**23 February 1999** An accord on Kosovo is reached at Rambouillet.

**23 February 1999** The Contact Group issues a statement on the Rambouillet talks. A conference on implementation will be held on 15th March.

**23 February 1999** The Albanian government issues a statement welcoming the outcome of the Albanian-Serb talks at Rambouillet. It considers these talks as only the first phase of the implementation of the agreement. The accord reached will only be put into practice by the military and political instruments enforced by NATO and the OSCE.

**23 February 1999** Paskal Milo is interviewed in Rambouillet on the accord. He says it is a good basis for further talks.

**23 February 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko has a telephone conversation with NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana. Majko tells him that only NATO troops in Kosovo can guarantee peace in Kosovo. Defence minister Luan Hajdaraga says that Albania will offer NATO the use of its airspace.

**23 February 1999** President Meidani says that NATO troops are a necessity in Kosovo.

**24 February 1999** Yugoslav deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic suggests that OSCE and UN troops are acceptable in Kosovo, whereas NATO ones are not.

**24 February 1999** The various parties of the Kosovo delegation at Rambouillet, the KLA, DLK and UDM agree to form a temporary government of Kosovo. However Adem Demaci expresses his opposition to this.

**24 February 1999** Kosovo Albanian sources report shelling of village in northern Kosovo. A large build-up of Serb forces in Kosovo is reported.

**24 February 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports that US guarantees convinced the Kosovo delegation to sign the Rambouillet agreement.

**24 February 1999** *Radio Koha* broadcasts a statement by Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko on the Rambouillet agreement. He repeats the need for a NATO presence in Kosovo.

**25 February 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko sends a letter to NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana, expressing concern over Serb military action in Kosovo and calls on NATO to halt this action.

**25 February 1999** Albanian TV broadcasts an interview with Kosovo "premier designate" Jakup Krasniqi, who is upbeat on the outcome of the Paris talks.

**25 February 1999** The Albanian parliament approves a military agreement with Turkey.

**26 February 1999** A senior KLA official is reported by the Croat news agency HINA as stating that KLA spokesman Jakup Krasniqi has been appointed premier designate by the Albanian delegation in Rambouillet.

**26 February 1999** Adem Demaci, chief political representative, condemns the Rambouillet agreement, as it only offers autonomy.

**26 February 1999** Ibrahim Rugova accuses Belgrade of launching new offensives in Kosovo.

**26 February 1999** The newspaper *Albania* reports Serb airplanes entering northeast Albania.

**27 February 1999** The KLA HQ criticises Demaci's opposition to the Paris agreement.

**27 February 1999** Kosovo delegation member Fehmi Agani says that the Albanian delegation accepted the sovereignty of Yugoslavia for the transitional period and will be ready to sign the peace agreement on 15 March. He says in three years Kosovo should make a decision about its future.

**27 February 1999** Sabri Godo, leader of the Republican Party and head of the parliamentary foreign commission, calls for all political forces in Albania to show a united front over Kosovo.

**28 February 1999** KDR reports claim Serb forces have resumed shelling in northeastern Kosovo.

### **March**

**1 March 1999** Milosevic tells OSCE chairman Knut Vollebaek to stop Kosovo OSCE verifiers to stop exceeding their mandate. Foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic requests Vollbaek to call a special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council to discuss violation of UNSC resolutions on stopping the infiltration of terrorists into Kosovo.

**1 March 1999** KLA GHQ names Hashim Thaci as prime minister designate of the provisional government of Kosovo.

**1 March 1999** The DLK under Ibrahim Rugova backs the Rambouillet agreement.

**1 March 1999** Albanian President Meidani is in Paris. He meets the Kosovan delegation.

**2 March 1999** Deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic rules out an independence referendum for Kosovo. Special EU envoy for Kosovo Wolfgang Petritsch meets with Draskovic. He says that Albanian community in Kosovo will have autonomy and so will the Serb community.

**2 March 1999** Adem Demaci resigns as political representative of the KLA, as he opposes the Rambouillet accord.

**2 March 1999** The KLA says it has received an invitation from the US State Department to visit the USA.

**3 March 1999** The eight parties represented in the Kosovan parliament elected in March 1998 have given support to the Rambouillet accords.

**3 March 1999** Momcilo Trajkovic, president of the Serb Resistance Movement, calls the Rambouillet draft a catastrophic compromise. Trajkovic is part of a delegation of Kosovo Serbs that proposes to OSCE Chairman Kurt Vollebaek and KVM mission head William Walker that the accord should have an annex that would give the Serb population the right to self-rule in areas where they are a majority.

**3 March 1999** The Albanian Ministry of Public Order claims that 20 Yugoslav soldiers entered Albania in the Tropoje region for a few minutes.

**3 March 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko visits Turkey.

**4 March 1999** Deputy prime minister Vojislav Seselj says that Serbia and Yugoslavia will not agree to any foreign troops entering Kosovo or the separation of Kosovo from Serbia and the Yugoslavia. He says that it is not certain that the Serb delegation will resume talks in Rambouillet.

**4 March 1999** Bujar Bukoshi, member of the Kosovan delegation at Rambouillet says that independence remains the ultimate Kosovan aim. He says differences between the various Albanian parties could be overcome.

**4 March 1999** Kosovska Mitrovica regional court sentences 13 Kosovo Albanians for enemy activities.

**4 March 1999** Albanian TV claims that KLA forces have repelled Serb attacks on villages in central Kosovo.

**4 March 1999** Albanian police in Has on the border with Yugoslavia report that Serb forces have fired on border villages in Albania.

**4 March 1999** The Albanian parliament pass a unanimous resolution calling on the Kosovo delegation in Rambouillet to sign as soon as possible the agreement of 23 February. The resolution says that NATO troops in Kosovo to implement the accord are indispensable.

**5 March 1999** The Serb delegation at Rambouillet says the Kosovo peace deal is utterly unacceptable.

**5 March 1999** Ibrahim Rugova claims that Kosova Albanians give overwhelming support to the Rambouillet accords.

**5 March 1999** The Albanian government meets to discuss defence of borders in northern Albania and law and order.

**5 March 1999** Albanian forces in the Kukes area report a large build up of Serb forces over the border.

**5 March 1999** The Albanian Public Order minister says that the police should shoot criminals without warning.

**6 March 1999** KLA commander Suleyman Selimi says that his troops will fight on for full independence. He rejects any partial deals with Belgrade.

**6 March 1999** The Kosovo parliament accepts the 23 February agreement.

**6 March 1999** Jakup Krasniqi is interviewed in *Zeri*. He says the Rambouillet agreement is a step towards independence.

**7 March 1999** KDR claims that Serb police have sealed off a suburb in Pristina.

**7 March 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko has talks in Tirana with two members of the Kosovo delegation in France, Hashim Thaci and Xhavit Haliti.

**7 March 1999** *Shekulli* reports that the Albanian government will set up an anti-terrorist force of 3,000.

**7 March 1999** *Shekulli* reports that former Albanian prime minister Fatos Nano and current prime minister Pandeli Majko have clashed about the latter's willingness for a dialogue with the DP opposition.

**8 March 1999** *Radio B92* reports that the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) claims that fighting has been going on in Kacanik near the border with Macedonia.

**8 March 1999** Yugoslav President Milosevic tells visiting German foreign minister Joschka Fischer and European Commissioner Hans van den Broek that foreign

troops in Kosovo are unacceptable. Foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic urges Europe to cut support for Kosovo terrorism.

**8 March 1999** The KLA website claims that major Serb forces have arrived in Kosovo heading in the direction of Pristina.

**8 March 1999** UNHCR accords DM 1 million for the housing of Kosovo refugees in northern Albania.

**9 March 1999** The Serb interior ministry issues arrest warrants for eight top Kosovo rebel leaders, including Hashim Thaci, and Jakup Krasniqi.

**9 March 1999** The Yugoslav army reports attacks by rebels in the border region with Macedonia.

**9 March 1999** Albanian TV reports clashes between Serb and Kosovan forces in northern Kosovo.

**9 March 1999** Albanian foreign minister Paskal Milo is interviewed on Albanian TV. He expresses confidence that the Kosovan delegation at Rambouillet will sign the 23 February accord soon.

**9 March 1999** German foreign minister Joschka Fischer and European Commissioner Hans van den Broek visit Tirana. Pandeli Majko tells them that the Kosovan Albanian delegation is close to signing an accord.

**10 March 1999** Greek foreign minister Yeoriyos Papandreou visits Tirana. He proposes a Balkan Kosovo initiative. Papandreou supports the 23 February accord and says that a NATO force should ensure its implementation.

**10 March 1999** The Pristina branch of the Serb Socialist Party says that OSCE verifiers are acting as protectors to the Kosovo guerrillas.

**10 March 1999** The KLA website states that 20,000 refugees have been driven from their homes by the Serb offensive in northern Kosovo.

**10 March 1999** *Gazeta Shqiptare* reports that the government has put northeastern Albania on a war footing.

**11 March 1999** Adem Demaci says he opposes talks while violence in Kosovo continues.

**11 March 1999** Tanjug reports that Kosovan terrorists have attacked border units of the Pristina Corps southwest of Prizren.

**11 March 1999** Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov visits Albania.

**11 March 1999** The Shkoder division and tank brigade in Lac are placed on high alert and go on exercise.

**11-13 March 1999** The Bulgarian foreign minister visits Macedonia and Albania.

**12 March 1999** Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov visits Yugoslavia

**12 March 1999** Serb deputy prime minister Vojislav Seselj says that nothing will come of the meeting on 15 March when the Rambouillet accord is supposed to be signed. He says the Western powers are only interested in deploying forces in Kosovo.

**13 March 1999** Bombs explode in the centre of Podujevo and Kosovska Mitrovica in Kosovo, killing at least five and wounding 60. Kosovo rebels blame Serb forces.

**14 March 1999** Serb deputy prime minister Ratko Markovic says in Paris that Serbia will never give up Kosovo, and NATO troops who arrive uninvited will be treated as aggressors.

**14 March 1999** It is reported that Albania is reinforcing her armed forces in the Tropoje area.

**15 March 1999** Belgrade *Radio B92* reports that there have been armed clashes in Luzane between Yugoslav army units and Serb police and Kosovan Albanians.

**15 March 1999** The Yugoslav Army extends conscript duty for 30 days because of the increased threat to Yugoslav security.

**16 March 1999** The Serb president says in Paris that a political agreement must be concluded first, before any agreement on implementation can be agreed. The Contact Group rejects most Serb proposals.

**16 March 1999** The head of the Kosovan Albanian delegation, Hashim Thaci, sends a letter to the French and British foreign ministers stating the intention of the Kosovan Albanian delegation to sign the 23 February agreement.

**16 March 1999** KLA representatives for the Lab operational zone in northeastern Kosovo distance themselves from the policy carried out by the Kosovo Albanian delegation in Paris.

**16 March 1999** The Albanian Ministry of Public Order reports that Yugoslav soldiers have crossed the border into Albania. Some have also fired into Albanian territory.

**16 March 1999** *Zeri i Popullit* reports that NATO will use Albanian railways for transporting military equipment to Macedonia.

**17 March 1999** Albanian defence minister Luan Hajdaraga visits Macedonia for talks with his Macedonian counterpart.

**18 March 1999** A Russian Duma delegation headed by Sergey Baburin visits Albania for talks on Kosovo.

**18 March 1999** Yugoslav foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic calls on the UN Security Council to order NATO to end its threat of force against Yugoslavia.

**18 March 1999** The Kosovan Albanian delegation in Paris signs the 23 February agreement. The Serb delegation refuses to do so. The Serb president Milan Milutinovic describes it as a fake document.

**19 March 1999** Yugoslav foreign minister criticises the OSCE decision to withdraw Kosovo verifiers.

**19 March 1999** The Albanian government welcomes the decision of the Kosovan Albanian delegation to sign the 23 February accord.

**19 March 1999** *Koha Jone* reports that a new wave of Kosovo refugees arrive in northeast Albania.

**21 March 1999** The Yugoslav embassy in Macedonia denies reports that Yugoslav forces entered Macedonia on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

**21 March 1999** *Radio B92* reports that the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Yugoslav army, General Nebojsa Pavkovic, says that the Yugoslav army is read to respond to any NATO attacks. He inspects units in Kosovo.

**21 March 1999** Yugoslav deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic says that 85% of the peace accord are acceptable.

**21 March 1999** The KLA website reports the torching of Albanian villages in central Kosovo by Serb forces.

**21 March 1999** Albanian foreign minister Paskal Milo calls for an urgent NATO meeting on Kosovo.

**22 March 1999** Serb President Milosevic meets the ambassadorial trio of Christopher Hill, Wolfgang Petritsch and Boris Mayorskiy. He explains his rejection of the Kosovo accord.

**22 March 1999** A bomb explodes in the centre of Pristina.

**22 March 1999** The Yugoslav Army General Staff denies the excessive use of force in Kosovo.

**22 March 1999** The KDR states that Serbs are sending fresh forces into Kosovo.

**22 March 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko hopes for closer cooperation with Kosovan Albanians following a meeting with the Kosovan Albanian delegation which was in Paris.

**23 March 1999** The Yugoslav prime minister, Momir Bulatovic, states that there is a direct danger of war because of the threat of NATO aggression.

**23 March 1999** Vuk Draskovic, deputy Yugoslav prime minister, calls on the Serb authorities to compromise over Kosovo. He says that the authorities should agree to the implementation of the Kosovo agreement if the troops have a UN mandate, and if the international community agree to amend the political part of the agreement.

**23 March 1999** Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Yugoslav army General Nebojsa Pavkovic tells *Jedinstvo* that the Yugoslav armed forces will oppose any foreign attack.

**23 March 1999** The Yugoslav Army General Staff denies that an offensive is under way in Kosovo.

**23 March 1999** The KLA reports killing two collaborators in the region of the 133<sup>rd</sup> brigade.

**23 March 1999** Albanian President Rexhep Meidani calls for immediate foreign intervention in Kosovo. The Albanian government holds an urgent meeting on the

Kosovo situation. It later issues a statement on measures it is taking on the Kosovo crisis.

**24 March 1999** NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana gives the go-ahead for NATO bombing of military targets in Yugoslavia. Bombing commences. The Yugoslav government declares a state of war in Yugoslavia.

**24 March 1999** The Yugoslav 3<sup>rd</sup> Army commander says that two NATO planes have been downed.

**24 March 1999** It is reported that NATO has hit targets in Montenegro.

**24 March 1999** The Yugoslav authorities close down *Radio B92*.

**24 March 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko broadcasts to the nation and welcomes NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia.

**24 March 1999** NATO gives written security guarantees to Albania, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia.

**25 March 1999** The Yugoslav ambassador to the UN, Vladislav Jovanovic, calls on the UN Security Council to stop NATO aggression.

**25 March 1999** *Tanjug* reports that Kosovo rebels have begun an all-out attack following NATO airstrikes.

**25 March 1999** Albanian radio reports the shelling of its northern border region by Yugoslav forces.

**25 March 1999** A mob sets the US Embassy in Skopje alight.

**25 March 1999** It is reported that Greece and Italy have expressed unease about the NATO attacks on Yugoslavia.

**25 March 1999** Yugoslavia breaks off ties with USA, UK, France and Germany. It expels journalists from these four states.

**25 March 1999** Arkan offers his men to defend Kosovo.

**25 March 1999** The KLA General Staff issues a statement welcoming NATO airstrikes.

**25 March 1999** Hungarian TV reports that a general mobilisation has been ordered in Vojvodina and Hungarian conscripts are being taken from their homes by force.

**25 March 1999** The Albanian MFA protests to the Yugoslav Embassy in Tirana about Yugoslav forces firing into Albania in the Has district.

**26 March 1999** Russia's attempt to get the UN Security Council to condemn the NATO airstrikes is voted down 12 to 3.

**26 March 1999** Vuk Draskovic says that talks over Kosovo can continue, but that NATO bombing must stop, and provisions from the Rambouillet Accord granting Kosovo the status of a third republic or independent state must be deleted.

**26 March 1999** The Albanian minister of information Musa Ulqini says that Albania's airspace is at the complete disposal of NATO.

**26 March 1996** President Meidani of Albania addresses the nation on Kosovo.

**27 March 1999** The Ukrainian foreign and defence ministers visit Yugoslavia for talks with Milosevic.

**27 March 1999** *Radio Belgrade* says that four NATO planes have been shot down and two pilots captured. This is denied by NATO.

**27 March 1999** *Kosovapress* reports eyewitnesses claiming that at least 500 people have been massacred in central Kosovo by Serb security forces.

**27 March 1999** A Stealth F-117 fighter is brought down over Serbia.

**27 March 1999** The Albanian Public Order Ministry reports that Yugoslav troops have fired on a border post at Dobrunë. The spokesman of the prefecture of Kukes says that Yugoslav forces have shelled towards Tropoje district. Some 30 shells landed inside Albania.

**28 March 1999** It is claimed that Serb soldiers have crossed the border near Dobrun village, opened fire and then left after 10 minutes.

**28 March 1999** It is reported that several Kosovan Albanian leaders have been killed by Serb security forces, including Fehmi Agani. It is also reported that Pec has been cleansed of Albanians. Massive numbers of refugees are fleeing to Macedonia and Albania. It is reported that 4,000 refugees are entering Albania every hour. NATO spokesman Jamie Shea states that an imminent humanitarian catastrophe is taking place. He says that more than half a million Kosovan Albanians are believed to have been displaced. It is reported that Serb forces have depopulated Pec. There have also been large scale expulsions from Pristina.

**28 March 1999** Milosevic meets with the top state and military leadership to discuss defence measures against the NATO attacks.

**28 March 1999** Serbia celebrates Statehood Day.

**28 March 1999** President Meidani of Albania calls for NATO ground forces to intervene in Kosovo.

**28 March 1999** Refugees entering Albania from Kosovo report that Serb authorities are stripping them of identity papers and car number plates at the border.

**29 March 1999** Russian defence minister Igor Sergeyev in Moscow claims that NATO attacks on Yugoslavia have resulted in the deaths of 1,000 civilians.

**29 March 1999** NATO warns Milosevic that he and his military commanders will be held responsible for war crimes committed in Kosovo. Those named include Lt-Col-Gen Pavkovic, commander of the 3rd Army in Kosovo, Major-General Lazerovic, commander of 52 Corps also in Kosovo and Radomir Markovic, head of the Yugoslav internal security organisation.

**29 March 1999** Albanian minister of information Musa Ulqini says that 50,000 refugees arrived in Albania on 28 March.

**29 March 1999** The Albanian parliament adopts a statement calling for NATO ground troops in Kosovo.

**29 March 1999** The Yugoslav government bans men of conscription age from travelling abroad.

**30 March 1999** Russian prime minister Yevgenny Primakov visits Milosevic in Belgrade. Milosevic offers to negotiate provided NATO ceases bombing. NATO rejects this offer as unacceptable.

**30 March 1999** Milosevic offers to reduce troop numbers in Kosovo and negotiate if NATO halts its bombing.

**30 March 1999** The KLA General Staff issues Political Declaration No.34, which states that they are convinced that the international community will accept the independence of Kosovo.

**30 March 1999** Macedonian foreign minister Aleksandr Dimitrov meets NATO Secretary-General in Brussels and demands early membership of NATO.

**30 March 1999** The Macedonian deputy prime minister Radmila Kiprijanova says the situation in Macedonia is stable following anti-NATO riots in Skopje.

**30 March 1999** The Kukes prefecture in northern Albania reports that two artillery shells landed in its territory.

**31 March 1999** Vuk Draskovic is interviewed in *Suddeutsche Zeitung*. He warns that Russia might declare war against NATO.

**31 March 1999** The Albanian parliament passes a law on the president's powers as commander in chief of the armed forces.

**31 March 1999** *Tanjug* publishes the text of a letter from Yugoslav foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, calling on the UN Security Council to end NATO aggression.

**31 March 1999** Ibrahim Rugova is still alive. He is under Serb guard and calls on NATO to halt its bombing. He makes no mention of ethnic cleansing. It is reported that other Kosovan Albanian leaders are also still alive, including Fehmi Agani. NATO claims that Rugova is acting under duress.

**31 March/1 April 1999** Three US troops go missing in Macedonia following an exchange of fire near the border with Yugoslavia. They are later shown on Serb TV.

#### **April**

**1 April 1999** Serb Radio reports that Milosevic has reshuffled the Yugoslav military leadership in Montenegro.

**1 April 1999** Serb deputy prime minister Vojislav Seselj attacks Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria for aiding NATO.

**1 April 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko says that NATO ground troops in Kosovo are the only solution.

**1 April 1999** *Radio B92* reports that Milosevic and Rugova have signed a joint statement calling for the Kosovo crisis to be resolved by political means. KLA leader Hashim Thaci condemns Rugova's meeting with Milosevic.

**2 April 1999** NATO warns Milosevic against attempting a coup in Montenegro.

**2 April 1999** A Duma and Belarusian parliamentary delegation headed by Sergey Baburin visits Yugoslavia. Yugoslav defence minister Pavle Bulatovic says that Yugoslavia is prepared to give Russia the remains of the F-117 Stealth fighter plane. He says Yugoslavia expects Russian help with arms and military equipment.

**2 April 1999** Serb deputy prime minister Bojic calls on Russia to end promises and start helping.

**2 April 1999** Albanian TV broadcasts the line up of the new Kosovan government headed by Hashim Thaci. There are no members of Ibrahim Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo in the government.

**2 April 1999** Albanian TV reports that there are over 100,000 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo without food or shelter.

**2 April 1999** The Serb government closes down *Radio B92*.

**2 April 1999** Deputy Macedonian foreign minister Boris Trajkovski says that Macedonia is threatened with a humanitarian catastrophe.

**3 April 1999** Yugoslav prime minister Momir Bulatovic sends a letter to nominee European Commission President Romano Prodi warning of the unforeseeable consequences of NATO strikes.

**3 April 1999** The President of Macedonia orders a partial mobilisation to strengthen the border with Yugoslavia.

**3 April 1999** NATO bombs interior ministry buildings in Belgrade.

**3 April 1999** BBC TV news broadcasts an amateur video taken by a Kosova Albanian showing Serb massacres of Albanian men in Kosovo.

**3 April 1999** NATO issues a new mission statement. It now calls for a political solution for Kosovo in which autonomy would be granted. There is no longer any call for a signed agreement with Belgrade before a NATO PK force enters Kosovo.

**4 April 1999** The USA says it will deploy Apache helicopters in Albania for operations against Serb armed units in Kosovo.

**5 April 1999** NATO bombs the Yugoslav air force HQ.

**5 April 1999** Macedonian government estimates it has 115,000-120,000 refugees.

**5 April 1999** Clare Short visits refugees in Macedonia. A refugee camp is set up in Brazda in Macedonia.

**5 April 1999** Four waves of NATO airstrikes bomb 30 targets in Yugoslavia. Residential areas in Aleksinac are hit by mistake. NATO admits the error.

**6 April 1999** OSCE chairman Kurt Vollebaek announces that the OSCE will undertake a mission to Moscow to in an attempt to end the war in Kosovo.

**6 April 1999** The OSCE states there are 280,000 refugees in Albania. Gramoz Pashko, economic adviser to the Albanian prime minister, states that supporting the refugees for six months could cost the government \$150-\$200 million.

**6 April 1999** Milosevic declares a unilateral ceasefire. He promises talks on allowing 400,000 refugees to return and will allow Kosovo substantial autonomy. NATO leaders reject this offer and say that military action will continue. The Yugoslav government also says that it is having talks with Ibrahim Rugova.

**6 April 1999** Some Kosovan refugees are air-lifted from Macedonia to Turkey.

**6 April 1999** RAF Harriers attacks Serb mobile units for the first time in Kosovo.

**6 April 1999** Deputy Yugoslav deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic says that an international force of some kind might be acceptable for Kosovo.

**6 April 1999** A British MOD official says that 1.1 million inhabitants of Kosovo have become refugees since the civil war began in Kosovo in 1998.

**6 April 1999** The UNHCR states that 430,000 Kosovars have crossed borders since Operation Allied Force began: 262,000 to Albania, 120,000 to Macedonia, 36,700 to Montenegro.

**6 April 1999** At a briefing at NATO HQ, Air Commodore David Wilby says that NATO is now very close to “achieving our aim of localising fielded forces” in Kosovo.

**6 April 1999** Macedonian prime minister Ljupco Georgijevski says that the West's handling of the refugee crisis is irresponsible.

**6 April 1999** Albania rejects the Yugoslav ceasefire offer.

**7 April 1999** A Russian Duma delegation headed by Gennady Seleznev visits Yugoslavia.

**7 April 1999** Yugoslav deputy prime minister Vuk Draskovic says that the unilateral ending of arms and police activities against the KLA opens the door to a political settlement in Kosovo. He says the ball is now in NATO's court.

**7 April 1999** Milosevic tells a Duma delegation that NATO plans to occupy Serbia.

**7 April 1999** Kosovo information secretary Ivica Mihajlovic says that 30,000 refugees have returned to Pristina in the last 24 hours.

**7 April 1999** Hashim Thaci, head of the Kosovan Albanian delegation at Rambouillet, has talks on the Kosovo crisis over the telephone with Iranian foreign minister Kamal Kharazmi.

**7 April 1999** Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov meets Greek foreign minister Yeoriyios Papandreou in Skopje.

**7 April 1999** The Albanian parliament passes a resolution on the presence of NATO forces in Albania.

**7 April 1999** Canadian defence minister Art Eggleton states that NATO planners are looking at all options, although he says that there are no plans to introduce ground troops. He says:

Let me make it quite clear that there is no change in the NATO plan. In terms of the air campaign we are intensifying that campaign and the objective is to diminish the military capacity of the Milosevic government and to get the Milosevic government back to the table so that in fact a peace agreement can be worked out and that forces,

allied forces, NATO forces can in fact go in to ensure the return of the refugees and the safety and security of the refugees. That is the plan. But at the same time it is only prudent to look at options if that should not happen. And of course what we've been hearing from the Milosevic government over the last few days is that while they're willing to allow the refugees to return and they say they're willing to at least in part remove some of their troops and have a cease-fire, what they are also saying is that no way would they have foreign troops on their soil. Well there is no way under those circumstances that the people of Kosovo would be safe. They're not going to be safe under the thumb of Slobodan Milosevic. So it's quite obvious if he's not going to come to the table then options have to be looked at. Now you say, what are those options? This is not the time to be looking at those options in a public way. Now is the time, certainly for military planners to look at all possible options. That is normal to do. But, by the same token it is important for NATO to stay the course, to stay the course on the allied bombing effort and to bring an end, resolution of this matter which will involve the safe return of the people of Kosovo into their home territory with NATO troops helping to ensure their safety and security.

**7 April 1999** It is reported that Yugoslavia has sealed the border with Macedonia and Albania, leaving refugees stranded inside Yugoslavia. Some 30,000 refugees in Macedonia disappear, giving rise to suspicion of collusion between Serbia and Macedonia. It is suspected that Serb forces will use these returned refugees as human shields.

**7 April 1999** Further government buildings are hit by NATO airstrikes in Belgrade.

**7 April 1999** In *Corriere della Sera*, Ismet Cakiqi, head of the KLA information service, says that NATO airstrikes have worsened the situation from the military point of view.

**8 April 1999** Cyprus House of Representatives speaker Spiros Kiprianou arrives in Belgrade to try to secure the release of US soldiers.

**8 April 1999** The Macedonian and Greek foreign ministers visit Albania to discuss the refugee problem.

**8 April 1999** Refugees reaching Albania say Serb forces are mining the Albanian-Yugoslav border.

**8 April 1999** In *Gazeta Shqiptare*, presidential political adviser Prec Zogaj says that President Rexhep Meidani approves the Kosovo government formed by Hashim Thaci.

**8 April 1999** A report on the ATA news agency states that the number of refugees in Albania is 290,000.

**8 April 1999** UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata, in Tirana, praises the response of the Albanian government to the refugee problem, and criticises that of the Macedonian government.

**8 April 1999** The German defence minister says there is fresh evidence of mass graves in Kosovo.

**8 April 1999** It is announced that 8,000 NATO troops will be sent to Albania to help in dealing with refugees.

**8 April 1999** Air Marshal Sir John Day, deputy chief of UK defence staff, says there are contingency plans for various ground options.

**8 April 1999** 8,000 NATO troops are being sent to Albania to aid humanitarian operations. This is Operation Allied Harbour. They will begin to arrive on 15 April.

**8 April 1999** Germany presents an EU stability plan for the Balkans.

**9 April 1999** Tony Blair states that "in relation to Kosovo, it's more difficult to see autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."

**9 April 1999** UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan calls for Yugoslav authorities to withdraw forces from Kosovo and accept an international military presence to oversee the return of refugees. He says if Yugoslavia agrees to this, then NATO should suspend air strikes.

**9 April 1999** Hungarian foreign minister Janos Martonyi warns that Vojvodina must not become the next Kosovo.

**9 April 1999** Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko says that the time has come to review the Rambouillet agreements.

**10 April 1999** Kosovo prime minister in waiting Hashim Thaci informs Robin Cook that 400,000 Kosovans are living rough in Kosovo and asks for food etc to be dropped for them. The British Department of International Development says that 100,000 Kosovan men could be missing.

**10 April 1999** Albanian President Rexhep Meidani holds talks with the head of the French parliamentary foreign commission, Jack Lang. Meidani rejects the idea of partitioning Kosovo.

**10 April 1999** Greek defence minister Akis Tsokhatzopoulos visits Albania.

**10/11 April 1999** Apache helicopters begin arriving in Albania.

**11 April 1999** Yugoslav information minister Milan Komnenic rejects Kofi Annan's proposal. He says the only solution is negotiations with Ibrahim Rugova.

**11 April 1999** Slavko Curuvija, editor of *Dnevni Telegraph* and a critic of Milosevic, is shot dead in Belgrade.

**11 April 1999** NATO releases photographs of mounds of freshly turned earth on Orahovac, which might indicate mass graves.

**11 April 1999** Paskal Milo Albanian foreign minister says that Albania is prepared to hand over control of its airspace, ports, airfields and military infrastructure to NATO. He calls for Kosovo to become an international protectorate. Robin Cook says that it is clear that Kosovo has to be under the protection of an international military force.

**11 April 1999** Australian Care Aid worker Steve Pratt is held in Yugoslavia and accused of spying.

**11 April 1999** John Podesta, White House chief of staff, says that "last autumn NATO did an assessment of putting ground troops in and these plans and assessments could be updated quickly if we decided to do that."

**11 April 1999** Macedonian defence minister Nikola Kljusev says that NATO had offered guarantees to Skopje that NATO troops in Macedonia would not be used to attack Yugoslavia.

**11 April 1999** Macedonian Radio reports that an airlift operation is underway to move Kosovo refugees to Turkey and Germany.

**11 April 1999** The deputy chairman of the DLK, Naime Jerliju, says that Rugova is a hostage of the Serb police.

**11 April 1999** Macedonian Radio reports that UNHCR states that there are now 120,000 refugees in Macedonia.

**11 April 1999** The Albanian prime minister Pandeli Majko meets Turkish President Suleyman Demirel in Tirana.

**12 April 1999** NATO foreign ministers meet in Brussels. Secretary-General Javier Solana states NATO's aims:

- A verifiable stop to all military action and ending of violence and repression
- Withdrawal from Kosovo of all Yugoslav military, paramilitary and police forces
- The stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence
- The unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons
- Credible assurance of Milosevic's willingness to work on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords towards a political solution for Kosovo in conformity with international law and the UN Charter.

**12 April 1999** The Albanian government condemns the attack made by Yugoslav forces on Tropoje in northern Albania.

**12 April 1999** Yugoslav foreign minister Zivadin Jovanovic is interviewed in *Il Giornale*. He says that Belgrade is willing to offer fullest possible autonomy for Kosovo, monitored by international civilian organisations. He rejects any foreign troops as PK forces.

**12 April 1999** The Yugoslav parliament votes to join the Russo-Belarusian union.

**12 April 1999** *Radio B92* comes back on air, albeit now following the line of the Yugoslav government.

**12 April 1999** KLA spokesman Jakup Krasniqi meets US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in Brussels.

**12 April 1999** *The Daily Telegraph* reports that the USA has started secret negotiations with the KLA on arming it.

**13 April 1999** SACEUR Wesley Clark says he has underestimated Serb resolve.

**13 April 1999** A major incursion of Serb forces into Albania is reported, seizing a border post at Kamenice. They then withdraw. Tony Blair announces that more British troops are to be sent to Albania.

**13 April 1999** The Yugoslav army denies that it crossed into Kamenica in Albania.

**13 April 1999** Albanian foreign minister Paskal Milo says that Kosovo Albanians can no longer live with Serbs. He says that a formula that goes beyond the Paris accord must be found.

**14 April 1999** German foreign minister Joschka Fischer proposes a six-point plan for a Kosovo settlement at a meeting of EU foreign ministers. Serb forces withdraw from Kosovo, and KLA ceases activities. Transitional arrangements for Kosovo to be approved by the UN Security Council and the text transmitted to Belgrade. That would lead to a 24 pause in the bombing, and NATO to establish military control of PK forces. The plan is not rejected but not approved. The EU foreign ministers agree a blueprint for an interim administration of Kosovo under EU control.

**14 April 1999** NATO admits it accidentally bombed Kosovo refugees between Prizren and Djakovica.

**14 April 1999** UN Commissioner for Refugees Sadaka Ogata says that there are 525,000 Kosovan refugees outside Kosovo.

**14 April 1999** Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko visits Yugoslavia. Lukashenko says that Milosevic is ready to accept civilian observers from countries not attacking Yugoslavia in Kosovo.

**14 April 1999** Albanian foreign minister visits Germany.

**14 April 1999** Italian defence minister visits Albania.

**14 April 1999** Milosevic submits an official request to join the Russo-Belarusian union.

**15 April 1999** Milosevic rejects the German peace plan.

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