

FOCUS ON NATO

NATO Secretary General **Lord Robertson** visited **Skopje**, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,* on 26 March and met with President **Boris Trajkovski** and leaders of the country's political parties. Lord Robertson reaffirmed support for the government in its struggle with ethnic Albanian rebels, but also urged restraint and appealed to the insurgents to lay down their arms.

Lord Robertson set out NATO's priorities in southeastern Europe in the keynote speech of a conference examining security challenges in southeastern Europe and regional perspectives in **Rome**, Italy, on 26 March.

Lord Robertson unveiled a package of measures on 21 March designed to enhance stability in the southern Balkans and demonstrate support for the multi-ethnic government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.*

President of the International Committee of the Red Cross **Jakob Kellenberger** met with **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 21 March and addressed the **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council**.

Bosnia briefing



High Representative **Wolfgang Petritsch** met **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 19 March and briefed a meeting of **SFOR troop-contributing nations** on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia).

On 14 March, **Yugoslav troops** entered entered the **Ground Safety**

Zone, a five-kilometre strip of southern Serbia bordering Kosovo, for the first time since the Yugoslav Army's withdrawal from Kosovo in June 1999.

Lord Robertson visited **Athens**, Greece, on 16 March, meeting President **Constantinos Stephanopoulos** and Prime Minister **Costas Simitis**, as well as the Greek foreign and defence ministers.

The situation in and around Kosovo dominated talks between the **North Atlantic Council** and the **EU Political and Security Committee** in Brussels on 14 March.

Submarine rescue and medical experts from 13 NATO countries participated in **Phoenix 2001**, an exercise to rehearse procedures for dealing with submarines in distress, held at the NATO headquarters at **Northwood**, England, from 13 to 15 March.

NATO mediators brokered a ceasefire between the **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** and **ethnic Albanians** in southern Serbia on 12 March.

US trip

Lord Robertson visited the **United States** from 6 to 10 March. He met UN Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** and attended an informal meeting of the UN Security Council before meeting US President **George W. Bush** and top officials in the new administration, as well as several senators and congressmen. He also addressed a symposium organised by the American Enterprise Institute on Capitol Hill.

On 8 March, **Lord Robertson** announced measures to restore stability in **southern Serbia** and the former **Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*** and prevent ethnic Albanian extremists abusing the **Ground Safety Zone**.

NATO and **Russian parliamentarians** met at NATO on 5 and 6 March to discuss political, military, scientific and environmental cooperation and the need to reinforce dialogue.

Bulgarian President **Petar Stoyanov** discussed concerns over increasing

violence in the neighbouring former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* with **NATO Ambassadors** on 5 March at NATO.

Exercise **Cooperative Osprey 2001** took place at Canada's Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in **Halifax**, Nova Scotia, involving six NATO and 13 Partner countries from 1 to 9 March.

Newly appointed UN Special Representative **Hans Haekkerup**, the former Danish defence minister, visited NATO on 28 February to brief **NATO Ambassadors** on the situation in and around Kosovo.

Powell visit



US Secretary of State **Colin Powell** met **Lord Robertson** and **Allied foreign ministers** during a visit to NATO on 27 February. Secretary Powell stressed the new administration's support for the development of a European Security and Defence Identity and its commitment to consult Allies on plans for a National Missile Defense.

EU, OSCE, NATO, UN and **UNHCR** officials met at NATO for the first time on 27 February to discuss how to address the problems of increasing violence along Kosovo's boundaries.

Lord Robertson met President **Václav Havel**, Prime Minister **Miloš Zeman**, and the Czech foreign and defence ministers on 21 and 22 February in **Prague**, the Czech Republic.

New command arrangements

In line with new command arrangements unveiled last year, Allied

Forces Southern Europe (**AFSOUTH**), a regional headquarters based in **Naples**, Italy, took over day-to-day command of the Stabilisation Force (**SFOR**) from Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe (**SHAPE**) on 20 February. The command of the Kosovo Force (**KFOR**) transferred to AFSOUTH on 18 January.

Moscow office



Lord Robertson inaugurated the **NATO Information Office** in **Moscow** on 20 February, a visible sign of improving relations with Russia.

NATO parliamentarians discussed NATO's current agenda with the **North Atlantic Council** on 19 February.

New Hungarian ambassador

Ambassador **János Herman** succeeded Ambassador **Andras Simonyi** as **permanent representative of Hungary** to the North Atlantic Council on 19 February. A career diplomat, Ambassador Herman, 48, was formerly deputy state secretary for multilateral affairs.

More than 1,500 people from seven NATO nations trained in a disaster relief exercise, **Relieve Discomfort 2001**, on the Caribbean island of **Curaçao** from 18 to 22 February.

Twelve NATO countries participated in the world's largest annual anti-submarine warfare exercise, **Dogfish 2001**, which took place in the **Ionian Sea** east of Sicily, Italy from 15 to 28 February.

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Serbian Deputy Prime Minister **Nebojsa Covic** and Yugoslav Foreign Minister **Goran Svilanovic** met **Lord Robertson** and **NATO Ambassadors** on 15 February at NATO to discuss proposals to resolve tensions in southern Serbia.

NATO's annual crisis management exercise, **CMX 2001**, took place from 15 to 19 February at NATO, involving Partner countries for the first time.

Implementation of the treaty on **Conventional Armed Forces in Europe** was discussed by its 30 signatory countries at the NATO Verification Coordinating Committee's annual seminar from 14 to 16 February at NATO.

Newly appointed UN High Commissioner for Refugees **Ruud Lubbers** met **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 6 February.

The first meeting of the **EU Political and Security Committee** and the **North Atlantic Council** under new permanent EU-NATO consultation arrangements took place on 5 February in **Brussels**, Belgium.

Lord Robertson outlined key items on NATO's agenda at the annual International Security Policy Conference held in **Munich**, Germany, from 2 to 3 February, where he also met new US Secretary of Defense **Donald Rumsfeld**.

Lord Robertson met Prime Minister **Jens Stoltenberg** and Norwegian foreign and defence ministers on 1 and 2 February in **Oslo**, Norway.

On 2 February, NATO's highest military authority, the **Military Committee**, visited **Northwood**, England, the headquarters of both the regional Allied East Atlantic command (**EASTLANT**) and the Allied Naval Forces North (**NAVNORTH**).

Lithuanian Prime Minister **Rolandas Paksas** met **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 31 January to discuss relations with Russia, peacekeeping in the Balkans and Lithuania's preparations for NATO membership.

Kouchner Farewell



Marking the end of 18 months in office, former UN Special Representative to Kosovo **Bernard Kouchner** addressed the **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council** and representatives of other KFOR contributing countries on 30 January at NATO.

Lord Robertson met German Defence Minister **Rudolf Scharping** on 25 January in **Berlin**, Germany, where he also delivered this year's Manfred Wörner Memorial Lecture.

Romanian Prime Minister **Adrian Nastase** met **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 24 January to discuss Romania's preparations for NATO membership and its contribution to KFOR and SFOR.

Mongolian Prime Minister **Nambaryn Enkhbayar** met **Lord Robertson** at NATO on 22 January.

Depleted uranium

Set up in the wake of public concern about possible environmental health risks associated with the use of depleted uranium, the **Committee on Depleted Uranium**, made up of NATO officials and representatives of past and present SFOR and KFOR contributing nations, met for the first time on 16 January to discuss medical and scientific evidence. NATO's senior medical advisory body, the **Committee of the Chiefs of Military Medical Services** met the day before to exchange information on the issue.

Lord Robertson visited **Armenia, Azerbaijan** and **Turkmenistan** between 15 and 18 January, meeting heads of state and foreign and defence ministers.

On 11 January, **Lord Robertson** visited **Sweden**, which currently holds the EU presidency, for talks with Foreign Minister **Anna Lindh** and Defence Minister **Björn von Sydow** about establishing robust EU-NATO links in crisis management.

First Yugoslav visit



The first Yugoslav minister to visit NATO since the ouster of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, Foreign Minister **Goran Svilanovic**, met **Lord Robertson** and **NATO Ambassadors** on 10 January.

New UK ambassador

Ambassador **David Manning** succeeded Ambassador **Sir John Goulden** as **permanent representative of the United Kingdom** to the North Atlantic Council on 8 January. A career diplomat, Ambassador Manning, 51, was formerly deputy under-secretary of state at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between 1998 and 2000. Before that, he was UK ambassador to Israel (1995-1998).

On the fifth anniversary of NATO's deployment in Bosnia, **Lord Robertson** visited **SFOR** troops and met Bosniac, Croat and Serb political leaders in **Sarajevo**, Bosnia, on 20 December.

Allied foreign ministers met in **Brussels**, Belgium, on 14 and 15 December and tentatively agreed an approach to permanent arrangements

between the Alliance and the European Union but noted that practical arrangements still needed to be worked out. Ministers also held meetings with their counterparts from Russia and Ukraine, and other Partner countries.

Trajkovski visit



Boris Trajkovski, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,* met **Lord Robertson** on 7 December at NATO to discuss security in southeastern Europe, relations with KFOR and preparations for possible future NATO membership.

New **confidence-building measures** between **Greece** and **Turkey**, were announced on 6 December, whereby each country will give the other advance notification of military exercises.

Allied defence ministers met in **Brussels**, Belgium, on 5 and 6 December and discussed, in particular, the Defence Capabilities Initiative and EU-NATO relations. Ministers also adopted a five-year force plan, reviewed the Allies' national defence plans for the period 2001-2005 and approved new ministerial guidance for NATO and national defence planning up to 2008. Ministers also met with their counterparts from Russia and Ukraine, and other Partner countries. UN Special Envoy **Carl Bildt** briefed ministers in the **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council** on recent developments in the Balkans and the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General **Joseph Ralston**, gave an update on the KFOR and SFOR operations.

 For more information see **NATO Update** at www.nato.int/docu/update/index.htm.