

**Memorandum**

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To: John Ryan  
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Maj-Gen Gobilliard  
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Commander UNPROFOR  
UNPROFOR HQ Sarajevo

From: David Harland  
SCVAO  
Sector Sarajevo HQ

Date: 27 July 1995

Subject: Negotiations on Zepa (10)

Update

Talks at Sarajevo airport resumed at 12:00 noon today. The Serb position remained unchanged: the men of Zepa must surrender, and then there should be an all-for-all prisoner exchange agreement in which they would be set free. The Bosnians continued to insist that the men of Zepa should be evacuated from Zepa without falling into Serb hands, and pointed out that this arrangement should be satisfactory to the Serbs, given that it was envisaged that the men would be released anyway in the all-for-all exchange.

At approximately 2:00 pm, Ed Joseph called from Zepa and explained that most of the civilian population had been evacuated already, and that the local leaders were going to meet with General Mladic just outside the pocket. It was Ed's understanding that the local leaders were going to negotiate a surrender agreement on their own, without reference to Sarajevo. Ed also noted that the Serbs seemed to be closing in on the areas to which the Bosnian fighters had withdrawn, and that they did not seem inclined to wait long for an agreement in Sarajevo.

I then passed this information to the parties. The Serbs repeated their basic demand that the Bosnian fighters in Zepa should surrender to them. They held out to them the promise that they would be registered by the ICRC as prisoners of war straight away -- allaying the fear that there would be a repeat of the Srebrenica scenario in which men surrendered and then disappeared. After a brief exchange, the Bosnians withdrew

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from the meeting to consult with their military leaders and with their people in what was left of the Zepa enclave. The sides agreed that the meeting should reconvene at 5:00 pm if the Bosnians were willing to accept the Serb proposals. 5090

At about 4:30 pm, General Smith called from Zepa, where he was meeting with General Mladic, to say two things. First, the Serbs had given the Bosnians a deadline of 6:00 pm this evening, after which men who had not surrendered would be attacked. Second, three local Bosnian civilian leaders had been negotiating with the Serbs, and had signed -- or were about to sign -- a capitulation agreement of their own.

Just before 5:00 pm, Minister Muratovic called and said that the Bosnian military in pocket would not surrender, but that talks at the airport should continue nonetheless. He said that the new talks should take place at the ministerial level.

UNPROFOR is waiting for the sides to finish their consultations, and is expecting a high-level meeting at the airport late this evening or early tomorrow.

Assessment

We appear to be in a mess.

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