

25 July 2001

## "The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1) is critical"

At a special press conference given at NATO HQ on 25 July, NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, announced that he would be speaking to the President, government and political parties of the former



Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1) tomorrow, together with the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and the Chairman in Office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana.

He stated that their message would be simple: *"agreeing to a political settlement is the only viable option available, no party can advance its interest through force, maintaining the current cease-fire is of utmost importance"* and reiterating what he said yesterday, *"all provocations must cease so that those who have been displaced are allowed to return to their homes. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1) must not be a place of ethnic cleansing"*.

Speaking at a joint press conference held on the occasion of the visit of the Lithuanian Prime Minister, Mr Algirdas Brazauskas, the day before, Lord Robertson said *"It would be a tragedy if, over a very narrow area of difference, Macedonia were to slip into civil war - and the whole international community is determined that that will not happen. We urge everyone in Macedonia to keep their eye firmly on that objective as well"*. He added that all parties are obliged to respect the cease-fire, including the armed Albanian groups, which he stressed must *"remember their obligations as well"*. He concluded by saying that the peaceful resolution of the current situation depended wholly on political dialogue and the good will of all parties concerned.

1. Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

### Additional information:

- Audio file of the press point by NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson (on the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1)) ([.MP3/3.436Mb](#))- 25 July 2001
- Audio file of the Joint Press Point with NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson and Mr. Algirdas Brazauskas, Prime Minister of Lithuania ([.MP3/2.755Mb](#)) - 24 July 2001

- [NATO Update](#) - *26 July 2001* - Lord Robertson helps reinvigorate Skopje peace talks

