

Statement by Lord Carrington, The Presidents of the republics of Croatia and Serbia, and the
Minister of National Defence

Igalo, 17 September 1991

This country is only days away from a state of irretrievable civil war. On that at least there is no argument.

I therefore call upon the three leaders most directly concerned with the current grievous loss of life to come together, before the Yugoslav peoples and the peoples of the world, to state the following without equivocation or reserve:

“There are deep and dangerous divisions between us about the responsibility for what is now happening in Yugoslavia, and equally about the political future of this country. But on one thing we are united: that no viable solution for our peoples can result from violence and killing, and that we must talk together to determine if we can agree the future relationship between our peoples.

We therefore pledge ourselves that everyone within our control and under our political and military influence should cease fighting immediately. When forces are closely intertwined, there are inevitable problems of provocation, real or imagined, and retaliation. It is therefore imperative for the forces on the ground instantly to withdraw sufficiently to guarantee a genuine and total ceasefire. This means that instantly and simultaneously all armed formations, including the paramilitary forces, irregular units, the Croat National Guard and the JNA [Yugoslav Peoples Army] shall withdraw from immediate contact and from actual or previous areas where hostilities have take[n] or are taking place. All paramilitary forces and irregular units shall disarm and disband; the Croat National Guard reserve forces shall be demobilized; the JNA shall return to barracks. This process too shall be immediate and simultaneous. We welcome readiness of the EC Monitors to oversee such a cease-fire, and we undertake to facilitate their work in reasonable conditions.

We recognize that this is the last chance for a de-escalation and cessation of actual warfare without which there can be no meaningful negotiation on the future of our peoples. We are fully conscious of the heavy responsibility we share at this crucial moment in our history.”