

April 1, 2004

Condemn Ethnic Violence In Kosovo



Dear Colleague:

Between March 17th and 19th, 2004, ethnic violence in Kosovo led to numerous deaths, several injuries, and the complete destruction of villages, homes, and sacred religious sites. In an area of the world with a painful history of ethnic violence, it is now time for the U.S. and the International Community to condemn the violence, strive for peace and achieve a final resolution in the Balkans.

During the attacks that have devastated Kosovo, Serbs and other minority groups were deliberately targeted by the Albanian majority. Harri Holkeri, the UN Envoy to Kosovo said “[Kosovo Albanians] have tried to destroy the whole future of Kosovo [and] are responsible for severe crimes against humanity.” The crimes were orchestrated acts of violence and have been described by NATO as an organized and coordinated attempt to ethnically cleanse the minority communities of Kosovo.

Left in the aftermath of the ethnic violence was:

- 20 people brutally killed: 8 Serbs, 8 Albanians, 4 other innocent victims,
- 600 Kosovo Serbs and other minorities seriously injured,
- 4,000 Kosovo Serbs and other minorities displaced from their homes,
- Over 30 Christian Churches and monasteries desecrated, including the home of the Christian Bishop of Kosovo and the Devic Convent,
- 2 historic Islamic Mosques set ablaze in Serbia in the towns of Belgrade and Nis.

I have recently drafted legislation that acts as a companion resolution to S. Res. 326, introduced by Senator George Voinovich of Ohio. Our resolution seeks to condemn the recent ethnic violence in Kosovo and resolve that all community leaders unite to rebuild burnt-out buildings, renounce violence, and encourage dialogue to ensure the peaceful future of a multi-ethnic Kosovo.

If you would like to become an original cosponsor, or need further information, please contact Stephen Schatz at stephen.schatz@mail.house.gov <<mailto:stephen.schatz@mail.house.gov>> or call him at 202-225-2276. Thank you for your personal attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Burton
Member of Congress