

## "PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY IN ACTION"

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"PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY IN ACTION" features comments from:

**Ambassador LJUBICA ACEVSKA** Republic of Macedonia

**President JIMMY CARTER** U.S. President, 1977-81

Founder, Carter Center

**ANATOLE KANYENKIKO** Prime Minister of Burundi,

1994-1995

**JOHN MARKS** Search for Common Ground

**EMMANUEL MPFAYOKURERA** Member of Parliament, Burundi

**JEAN LUC NDIZEYE** Communications Director,

Buyoya government, Burundi

**Ambassador AHMEDOU OULD-ABDALLAH** Global Coalition for Africa

**Dr. BARNETT RUBIN** Center for Preventive Action

**ADRIEN SIBOMANA** Prime Minister of Burundi,

1988-1993

with additional comments from:

**Burundian Man in Refugee Camp**

**Toby GATI**, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and

Research - Senate Hearing, 22 February 1996

**LCOL HOLTON** (USA), Commander, Task Force Able Sentry, Republic of

Macedonia

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(Program Begin)

**NARRATOR:** Ethnic tensions... Political upheaval... Societies simmering on the brink of war...

What strategies work to prevent them from boiling over?

**LJUBICA ACEVSKA**, Ambassador of Macedonia to the U.S.:

The best way to resolve conflicts are via political dialogue. Even where there have been wars, at the end of the day, the warring parties have had to sit down and work out their problems.

**JIMMY CARTER**, U.S. President, 1977-81:

The basic premise of mediation is to make sure that every time any side makes a concession that the benefits exceed what they give up. And you have to have a constant realization that no agreement, no

matter how nice it may look on paper, is going to last unless both sides feel that they have won.

["**AMERICA'S DEFENSE MONITOR**" program introduction.]

**NARRATOR:** Today there is an emerging consensus among policymakers around the world that early action to keep regional disputes from exploding into full-scale wars saves lives and resources in the long run.

**TOBY GATI,** Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Resources (Senate Hearing, 22 February 1996):

"We spent several billion dollars on humanitarian crises in Africa and on sending in American troops and troops of other countries. Nowhere near the amount was spent in preventive diplomacy or in assistance, which might have forestalled some of those actions. And most people looking back on it would say the opportunity was lost at a much less cost to avert some of those crises."

**NARRATOR:** Whether it's mediation between two adversarial groups, deploying peacekeeping forces while there's still a peace to keep, providing appropriate development assistance, or broadcasting balanced media programming to counter ethnic hate rhetoric, actions taken before tensions boil over into armed conflict can often keep a country at peace.

This post-Cold War framework for addressing regional disputes is variously called "preventive diplomacy," "preventive action," and "conflict prevention." Increasingly, it involves governments coordinating their peace-oriented interventions with international organizations and nongovernmental groups.

**President CARTER:** The thing that needs to be understood, too, is that now in the world almost every one of the wars are civil wars. They're not between two nations anymore.

**NARRATOR:** Former President Jimmy Carter is probably the highest profile "citizen-diplomat" in the world, mediating disputes in places such as Haiti, Bosnia and North Korea.

**President CARTER:** The United Nations was founded and was organized to deal with conflicts between two nations, not inside a country. And it's totally inappropriate for a UN official even to communicate with a revolutionary group just trying to overthrow a government that's a member of the UN. So, this means that unofficial groups like the Carter Center I hope will be used more and more in the future.

**NARRATOR:** By examining efforts at conflict prevention in two very different countries -- Burundi in central Africa and Macedonia in the South Balkan region of Europe -- this program will explore what works and what doesn't in the evolving field of preventive diplomacy.

## **BURUNDI**

Located in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, Burundi's six million people belong primarily to two major ethnic groups. Although Hutus make up 85 percent of the population, Tutsis have for the most part held economic, political and military power. The groups share a common language, often live side by side, and frequently intermarry. However, during a half-century of Belgian rule, the two groups were consciously set up against one another. The result was a divisive class system that helped Belgium maintain its colonialist grip on the region until 1962.

Since independence, Burundi has been wracked by military coups and waves of violence incited by political extremists. Hopes for democracy were dashed in October 1993 when the first democratically elected president, a Hutu, was tortured and assassinated by extremists just six months after taking office. Since then the country has been sliding into a growing civil war with the Tutsi-dominated army and Hutu

guerilla groups carrying out murderous campaigns that have targeted civilians rather than each other. An estimated 150,000 have perished.

**Ambassador AHMEDOU OULD-ABDALLAH:** It is not random violence, it is politically motivated and well-targeted.

**NARRATOR:** Ambassador Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah served as the United Nations special envoy to Burundi from 1993 to 1995.

**Ambassador OULD-ABDALLAH:** Poverty is one of the causes of the crisis, the endemic crisis. It is not ethnicity, it is poverty, selfishness and incompetence of the early leadership.

**NARRATOR:** The conflict has forced thousands to flee their homes and to seek shelter in UN refugee camps. For many, the relief comes too late.

**BURUNDIAN MAN in Refugee Camp:** (Translated) The local people had no part in starting the war. The leaders couldn't agree, so they started fighting. The local people suffered, and that is why we are here.

**NARRATOR:** The 1993 assassination of President N'dadaye set in motion a "creeping coup" that eroded Burundi's legal and political structures. In July 1996, with the country descending into chaos, Major Pierre Buyoya, who had held power at the time of the election, again seized power with the aid of the Tutsi-dominated army. In response, the country's neighboring Burundi imposed stiff economic sanctions.

**EMMANUEL MPFAYOKURERA:** I do support the sanctions. Otherwise, there is no way out.

**NARRATOR:** Emmanuel Mpfayokurera is a member of the Burundian parliament representing the majority FRODEBU party, or Front for Democracy in Burundi.

**Mr. MPFAYOKURERA:** Buyoya, as I told you, he doesn't mean to restore democracy. He's fooling the international community.

**JEAN LUC NDIZEYE:** The blockade is killing the peace process. The blockade has crippled the nation.

**NARRATOR:** Jean Luc Ndizeye is communications director for the Buyoya government.

**Mr. NDIZEYE:** The longer we stay under the blockade, the more we get into a Somali-like situation where we will have factions all over the country.

**President CARTER:** Along with the imposition of economic constraints have to go the sustained imposition, but also a carrot or a promise that if you do make constructive steps, then the elements of the trade restraints will be lifted.

**NARRATOR:** Buyoya has made some cosmetic concessions in response to the sanctions, but pressure from hardliners within his own government who oppose any compromise make it difficult for him to follow through.

In April 1994, the world watched in horror as government-sponsored Hutu extremists in Rwanda, Burundi's neighbor with a similar ethnic makeup, systematically slaughtered as many as a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Despite early warnings, the international community failed to intervene because it could not come to a consensus on what to do.

A costly relief effort and establishment of huge refugee camps in eastern Zaire only postponed the pressing need for a real solution. The presence in those camps of armed Hutu militants who had perpetrated the 1994 genocide led to renewed fighting in October 1996. By November, the militants had been driven from the camps in Zaire, triggering a sudden flood of refugees homeward.

What became increasingly clear throughout this crisis is that events in Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi are inextricably related, a fact which any peace-building efforts must take into account.

**Mr. MPFAYOKURERA:** If Zairians and Burundians, Hutu Burundians and Hutu Rwandans, if they are going to unite, this is going to be a war which is a never-ending war.

**NARRATOR:** Because it failed to prevent the Rwandan genocide in 1994, the international community has focussed an extraordinary amount of attention on Burundi. The United Nations, the Organization for African Unity, the governments of Europe and the United States have all sponsored preventive efforts there.

In Washington, the Burundi Policy Forum meets monthly, bringing together representatives from government, international organizations and private humanitarian groups to share information and ideas on how to address the situation. A broad array of nongovernmental groups have been working to promote dialogue and encourage peace in Burundi. The Carter Center has organized two regional summits to provide a forum for discussion.

**President CARTER:** The role that the Carter Center has played has been to bring the Burundians in different elements together with their neighbors, the leaders from Rwanda, the leaders from Tanzania, from Uganda, from Zaire together in two definitive and major conferences, very private, but free-wheeling and with adequate ability to express themselves.

**NARRATOR:** In a country this polarized, the first challenge for any outsider is to establish neutrality and a sense of trust.

**President CARTER:** When I go into a country, I make a public statement that I'm there just to explore the situation -- I'm not mediating, I'm on a pre-mediating mission -- and then to meet with a wide range of people and let my meetings be well-known. I met with I think 26 different leaders of factions or political parties or groups in Bujumbura when I was in Burundi last fall. And of course, this does build up an element of trust in me as an outsider.

**NARRATOR:** Another nongovernmental group, Search for Common Ground, runs a radio station in Burundi staffed by Hutu and Tutsi journalists, broadcasting non-polarized programming designed to counter hate radio.

John Marks, the group's president, explains one reason preventive efforts in Burundi have been less successful than elsewhere.

**JOHN MARKS:** Preventive action works very well before violence breaks out. Once violence breaks out, it's not very effective. It works well pre-conflict or post-conflict. I don't think it works very well mid-conflict, which is the problem in a place like Burundi today.

**NARRATOR:** Involving the local population in deciding what are appropriate actions is also a prerequisite for success.

**Mr. NDIZEYE:** Any outsider, any foreign group or any foreign NGO can only assist Burundi. They cannot build the country for Burundians themselves.

**Ambassador OULD-ABDALLAH:** Everytime the international community works together in close cooperation with joint approaches, exchange of information, we are helpful. But every time we have many leaderships, different or hidden agendas, we contribute to the chaos.

**NARRATOR:** Burundi is a country at war with itself. Politicians on both sides agree that before negotiations toward power-sharing can begin, a ceasefire must take effect.

**Former Prime Minister ADRIEN SIBOMANA:** We cannot restore democracy when we have violence

in the country.

**NARRATOR:** Adrien Sibomana was Burundi's prime minister from 1988 to 1993 during Buyoya's previous government.

**Mr. SIBOMANA:** The most interesting thing to do now is to stop the violence, to stop killings. And afterwards, Burundians should discuss very frankly, without any exclusion, and find what's the best way of governing this country.

**Mr. MPFAYOKURERA:** Every day there are people who are being innocently killed. And we can't understand how the international community is watching these cynical things and they don't do anything. They pushed us to adopt democracy; they should help us to maintain democratic institutions.

**NARRATOR:** While economic sanctions can sometimes convince combatants to negotiate, internal civilian pressure is often underestimated.

**President CARTER:** There's an underlying pressure almost invariably on the part of military leaders who are at war from people who are suffering who want to see the violence ended. These are mothers who've lost their children, or farmers who've lost their homes, or soldiers who are dying on the battlefield or have suffered the ravages of landmines, or starvation, or deprivation of shelter.

I mean, folks want to go back to a normal life, it doesn't matter where they are. And to build on that desire that exists among the general population is quite often a pressure that can be put on military leaders, who may not be suffering at all, to come to the negotiating table.

**NARRATOR:** Some have called for an international peacemaking force to enter Burundi to establish the security necessary for political negotiations to take place.

**ANATOLE KANYENKIKO:** (Translated) The question of military intervention is one which is very controversial.

**NARRATOR:** Anatole Kanyenkiko was Burundi's prime minister in 1995, but was forced from office by extremists opposing his conciliatory views.

**Mr. KANYENKIKO:** (Translated) In our neighboring countries, when there has been a military intervention of this kind, the results have not been felt tangibly to be good.

**NARRATOR:** While the Hutu majority feels that an intervention force is necessary to stop the killings by the Tutsi-dominated army, the Tutsis fear such a force would disarm them and make them vulnerable to extermination.

**Ambassador OULD-ABDALLAH:** To call for a standing force to Burundi, to me should be considered with extreme caution. The problem again, we are still in the Cold War mentality. You have a crisis, you send troops. This is costly and may be inadequate. In Burundi, I personally believe, they need more psychiatrists than the Blue Helmets. They need policemen more than troops. They need FBI investigators more than troops because the problem is eminently psychological.

**NARRATOR:** However, there is broader support for the creation of an all-African standby force to deal with future crises. President Clinton has proposed the establishment of an African Crisis Response Force made up of troops from African nations who would be funded and trained by the West. Similar proposals have come from African leaders.

**President CARTER:** Knowing that foreign troops would come in might be a deterrent to the excessive use of violence by the army. So, the fact that the force exists doesn't mean that it's going to be used. The fact that it exists might very well preclude the need for it to be used. But I don't think we should let the Tutsi army have a veto power over whether or not the international effort should be exerted.

**NARRATOR:** Although he questions its appropriateness in the case of Burundi, Ambassador Ould-Abdallah thinks such a force would contribute to more active pan-African cooperation in addressing regional disputes.

**Ambassador OULD-ABDALLAH:** The advantage of creating this force is to train Africans to think and act together in time of crisis.

**NARRATOR:** Whatever action is taken in Burundi, two issues loom large for restoring peace: Re-establishing a system of justice that ends killing with impunity and drastically restructuring the army so that it guarantees the security of all the people regardless of ethnicity.

**President CARTER:** If there was some kind of a coalition government put together, if the Tutsi army could basically stay intact, but add over a period of time more and more Hutu soldiers into the ranks, if maybe some internal police force could be established that might be possibly dominated by the Hutus, there could be a working relationship built up there that would make a better society.

**Mr. MPFAYOKURERA:** The minority, which was in power and which is now powerful after the 25th of July's coup, it has been excluding the majority of the population. It cannot work now. People have taken part in the democratic process, they can't go back.

## MACEDONIA

**NARRATOR:** Dawn -- the Macedonia-Serbia border in the troubled South Balkans. United Nations peacekeeping troops are on patrol. All is quiet -- which is exactly the point of their presence.

**LCOL HOLTON,** Commander, Task Force Able Sentry: This UN mission in Macedonia is quite unique. It's unique in that this is the first time the United Nations command has gone in to conduct peacekeeping operations or United Nations operations prior to the initiation of hostilities within the region. It is also historic and unique in that this is the first time a US combat force has been deployed under United Nations command and control.

**NARRATOR:** When Yugoslavia broke up in 1991, the people of Macedonia voted for independence, rejecting membership in a state dominated by Serbia. But with war raging in Bosnia, potential conflicts brewing with Greece and Albania, and a restive Albanian ethnic minority, the fragile new democracy decided it needed help to keep the peace.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** President Gligorov, with his vision, decided to ask for troops to come in and maintain the peace in Macedonia.

**NARRATOR:** Ljubica Acevska is the Republic of Macedonia's ambassador to the United States.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** Right now there are about 1100 troops, UN troops. It's called UNPREDEP, which stands for United Nations Preventive Deployment. And it is composed of half from the United States and the other half are from the Nordic countries, such as Sweden, Norway and Finland.

**NARRATOR:** Of the sixteen UN peacekeeping operations around the world, this is the only one to arrive before conflict broke out. Its presence has sent a strong signal of the international community's, and especially the United States' commitment to Macedonian independence. The force has also served another function.

**Dr. BARNETT RUBIN:** The presence of the UN force probably had a kind of calming effect internally.

**NARRATOR:** Dr. Barnett Rubin directs the Center for Preventive Action at the Council on Foreign Relations.

**Dr. RUBIN:** Though very serious political differences remain between the representatives of the majority Macedonian ethnic group and the minority Albanian group, nonetheless these have not broken out into

violence.

**NARRATOR:** Ethnic Albanians make up 23 percent of Macedonia's population. They speak their own language and are Muslim, while ethnic Macedonians are largely Orthodox Christian. Because a separatist movement exists in the Albanian enclave of Kosovo in neighboring Serbia, there is a fear that Macedonia's Albanians might join a movement to establish a Greater Albania. To prevent this, the Macedonian government is pursuing a policy of inclusion.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** From the beginning of our independence, the government has taken a lot of steps to ensure that all of the ethnic parties are equally represented in the political process.

**NARRATOR:** Particularly effective in reducing ethnic tensions in Macedonia has been the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or OSCE.

**Mr. MARKS:** In my view, the most successful preventive action program today is in Macedonia. You have governments contributing military force there. You have international organizations, like the OSCE, who've sent missions in and had a permanent presence on the ground that had a profound impact, particularly about two years ago in having violence not break out. And then you have nongovernmental organizations like mine working there, I think very successfully.

**NARRATOR:** As we saw in Burundi, mass media can be used by extremists to polarize ethnic or political differences. Search for Common Ground produced a series of television programs broadcast in Macedonia to explore issues of conflict from all sides.

**Dr. RUBIN:** If you affect the media, then you really can have an impact on how a very large number of people perceive issues.

**NARRATOR:** Search for Common Ground also created a project to increase communication between reporters from different ethnic groups.

**Dr. RUBIN:** They brought together journalists from different ethnic groups who were writing for newspapers in different languages and had them work on reporting stories about the sufferings and problems of ordinary people together.

**Mr. MARKS:** And it was the first time I think in the country that people really got a cross-ethnic understanding of what everybody else was thinking and, obviously, they were all facing very similar kinds of problems.

**NARRATOR:** One essential ingredient in Macedonia's continuing peace has been openminded leadership that has supported policies of ethnic inclusion. President Kiro Gligorov, here meeting with John Marks and Ambassador Robert Frowick of the OSCE, was elected in 1992 and survived a car-bomb in 1995.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** He is a moderate. I mean, he understands the need for trying to resolve conflicts peacefully. So, he certainly does deserve the credit and he has led our country through to peace and also to remaining peaceful, which is quite an achievement in that very volatile region which is called the Balkans.

**NARRATOR:** Macedonia's southern neighbor, Greece, felt that Macedonia's new flag, constitution, and even its name suggested territorial ambitions toward the Greek region also known as Macedonia. In protest, Greece launched an economic blockade against Macedonia in 1992 that hurt an already struggling economy.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** In September of 1995, an important agreement was reached between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece where we did agree to change the flag, and to make changes in the constitution, and, of course, Greece made some concessions. You know, again, this is a very important aspect of preventive diplomacy. As difficult as these issues were, as tense as these issues were, both



countries decided to resolve these conflicts via political dialogue.

**NARRATOR:** Without question, serious problems remain for Macedonia. Nationalist tensions still seethe in the Balkan region and the country's economy is struggling to adjust to free-market realities. But the coordinated efforts of a variety of players clearly have contributed to stability.

**Dr. RUBIN:** One important lesson of Macedonia is that in this case, the international organizations, the major concerned governments and the nongovernmental organizations, as well as the local government really were working in the same direction, even if they had some differences on strategy or tactics. Therefore, their efforts were mutually reinforcing.

**Ambassador ACEVSKA:** This is preventive diplomacy and it has been a success. It has been a success for US foreign policy and it also has been a success for the United Nations. And we strongly feel that these types of acts must be done in the future to help a country maintain peace, which is certainly much easier than to help a country create peace.

**NARRATOR:** While the situation in every country is different, certain common factors can contribute to the success of preventive efforts: The early deployment of peacekeeping forces. Cooperation and unity of message among all the organizations working on the ground. And the presence of moderate inclusive leadership that deals with problems through dialogue rather than force.

Yet the resources our government commits to supporting preventive diplomacy keep shrinking.

**Dr. RUBIN:** Our foreign affairs budget is being cut back at the same time that military expenditure continues to grow. I don't think this is healthy for our country, I don't even think it's healthy for the military. Because it means that because that's where the resources are, we are tempted to use the military when it might be wiser still to use some kind of diplomatic approach.

**President CARTER:** It would be very nice if the United States Government would have a peace commitment -- which wouldn't cost all that much money -- just to analyze every troubled spot in the world and let those people in that little nation know that the vast resources and influence of the US Government would be available to them if they wanted to mediate or resolve the conflict peacefully.

**ADM JOHN SHANAHAN (USN, Ret.):** When you turn on your television and see wars everywhere, you may think nothing can be done to prevent them. But as we have seen, there are effective ways to encourage peaceful resolution to conflict. As the most influential nation in the world, we should be trying more of them. It's the wars you don't hear about because they never happen that are the true measure of successful preventive diplomacy. Focussing more resources on efforts to prevent wars will mean we won't have to spend so much preparing to fight wars in the future.

For "AMERICA'S DEFENSE MONITOR," I am Jack Shanahan.

**NARRATOR:** This program was funded by a generous grant from the Winston Foundation.

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