

NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE: PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

BOSNIA

WHERE:

Yugoslavia was bordered by Italy, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania.

The wider situation involved conflict across former Yugoslavia - the federation of six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, (including the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina), Montenegro, and Macedonia.

Bosnia and Herzegovina were where some of the heaviest combat and serious civilian incidents occurred.

The two republics north of Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia also had wars of independence.

WHEN:

The tension that grew during the 1980s erupted in wars of independence that included separatist movements inside these republics; in Slovenia and Croatia in March of 1991, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in June of 1992.

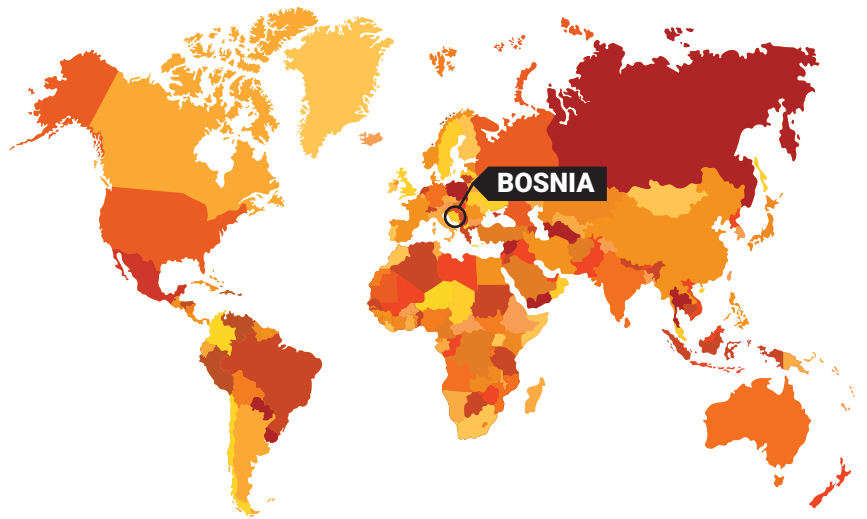
WHO:

The former Yugoslavia had mixed ethnicities of Croats, Serbians, and Bosniaks, with three key religions - Catholic, Eastern Orthodox Christian, and Muslim. The path to nationalism and independence divided these communities within the republics.

WHAT:

Economic hardship and lack of leadership after the death of the Yugoslavian leader Tito and the collapse of the Soviet Union, created tension and a power vacuum. Nationalism and the movement for independent republics generated division along ethnic lines. The evolving democratic process was complicated by different ethnic groups wanting to form separate regions within disputed republics.

The Serbians under Slobodan Milosevic had influence over the existing Yugoslav military and Serbians living in other republics. The resulting war in Bosnia included the siege of Sarajevo and the Srebrenica massacre. In total, there were 100,000 deaths and millions of people were displaced.



NZDF PEACEKEEPING IN BOSNIA UNITED NATIONS PROTECTION FORCE

WHEN:

In September 1991, the United Nations (UN) passed Resolution 713; a small international team was to go to Yugoslavia to assess the situation and potential strategies. UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) was established.

WHERE:

Bosnia and Herzegovina. KIWI Company was at Camp Santici at Vitez (60km north-west of Sarajevo). They manned check points at Stari Vitez, a Muslim enclave in the Vitez Pocket and carried out foot patrols in the Lasva Valley, where their total responsibility covered 1,100 square kilometres.

WHAT:

NZDF key roles included monitoring compliance to the federation accord between Bosniak's and Bosnian Croats, particularly in the buffer zones. They were also responsible for the freedom of movement and quality of life for civilians.

- Restoring utilities (electricity and water) for civilians.
- Providing medical aid to civilians, including operating medical clinics.
- The Māori Cultural Group performing in the community, including at local schools.
- Providing landmine awareness programmes for local children.
- Rebuilding homes and schools (some engineers stayed until 2001).

WHY:

The original UNPROFOR Mandate Resolution 743 was to create the conditions for peace and peace accords. By mid-1994, 36,000 UN personnel were involved with UNPROFOR.

FATALITIES:

New Zealand Defence Force: One fatality in Rome, while on leave. Two personnel were seriously wounded due to landmines and mortar fire.