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HUNGARIAN DIPLOMACY AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF YUGOSLAVIA 1990–1991

Abstract: This study aims to explore Hungarian–Yugoslav diplomatic relations in the first phase of the disintegration of the second Yugoslav state through relevant documents from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and accounts from the contemporary Hungarian press. The study mainly focuses on relations between the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Except for Serbia, diplomatic relations between Hungary and the other Yugoslav republics were not taken into consideration due to length constraints. The study also examines Budapest’s diplomatic activities with the great powers regarding the Yugoslav question. The documents used in this study can be found in XIX-J-1-j records at the Department of Political Government and Party Authorities of the Hungarian National Archives after 1945 (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára 1945 utáni Politikai Kormányiszervek és Pártiratok Főosztálya, MNL OL).

Keywords: Yugoslavia, Serbia, Vojvodina, Hungary, disintegration, Antall József, Ante Marković, Hungarian minority, Kalashnikov case.

After the death of Josip Broz Tito, the president for life of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in 1980, national and ethnic differences that had been severely suppressed until then came to the fore with elemental force. A clear sign of this was the 1981 uprising of Kosovo Albanians who were demanding the province be given the status of a republic. In the first days of April 1981, a state of emergency was declared in Kosovo, and the protests were eventually crushed. In parallel with the onset of economic difficulties, national trends intensified across the country. In the second half of the 1980s, Yugoslav domestic political tensions intensified in parallel with the changes in the great power arena.

The Antall government was formed after Hungary’s first free elections in 1990,¹ and although aware of Yugoslavia’s internal problems, it did not anticipate the disintegration of the federal state. As part of a new national policy, Hungarian foreign policy could not and

¹ The Antall government was formed on 23 May 1990.

did not circumvent the minority issue. Accordingly, and in the spirit of what had been announced in the government program, Hungarian foreign policy, which had been placed on new footing with neighboring countries that had a significant Hungarian minority, began to be enforced.²

On 29 May, István Ószi, the Hungarian ambassador to Belgrade, held talks with Milivoje Maksić, the first deputy minister of foreign affairs, in Belgrade. During the talks, the processes of political and economic transformations in Hungary and Hungary's policy toward Hungarians living abroad were discussed.³

At the invitation of Budimir Lončar, the Yugoslav federal foreign minister, Géza Jeszenszky, the Hungarian foreign minister, paid a two-day visit to Yugoslavia between 21 and 22 June 1990, during which he held talks with Serbian, Croatian, and Vojvodinian leaders in addition to the federal government. The focus of the discussions was the main issues of international politics, bilateral relations, and Yugoslav domestic political developments, but the issue of minorities was also raised several times. Slobodan Milošević, president of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, said at a meeting with that the integrity of Serbia was not threatened by the relationship between the Hungarian minority and Hungary. He also said that although there was no discrimination against the Hungarian minority in Serbia, the reality of this could not be ruled out in the event of an opposition party coming to power. During the negotiations about minorities, federal foreign minister Budimir Lončar claimed they had been provided with education in their mother tongue even at the university level. However, he did not deny the rise of anti-minority impatience and nationalism. The president of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, approached the question from a different perspective: He understood Hungary's interest in the fate of Vojvodinian Hungarians in Croatia, if only because the Croats in Vojvodina were in a worse position than the Hungarians.⁴

A few days later, on 27–28 June 1990, Serbian foreign minister Aleksandar Prlja visited Budapest to meet with, among others, Ferenc Mádl, a minister without portfolio, and Ferenc Somogyi, the secretary of state for foreign affairs. During the meeting, the domestic political situation in Yugoslavia was reviewed, but the issue of minorities was also discussed. Regarding the latter, the Serbian foreign minister then said that minorities living in Serbia had been granted all rights except statehood and then denied any news that minority rights had been violated.⁵

On 12 October, Prlja traveled to Budapest again as part of a ceremony to mark the three-hundredth anniversary of the Serbs' settlement in Hungary.⁶ At that time, Serbian president Slobodan Milošević was originally supposed to visit the Hungarian capital, but he canceled the trip without explanation on 3 September. The Serbian foreign minister met

² Jeszenszky 2011: 44–45.

³ *Rejtjeltávirat Belgrádból. Ószi István belgrádi nagykövet megbeszélése Milivoje Maksićtyal, a jugoszláv szövetségi Külügyminisztérium titkárával. 1990. május 29.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 38. d.

⁴ *Jeszenszky Géza jelentése a Kormánynak a jugoszláviai látogatásáról. 1990. június 27.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

⁵ *Kristóf Lázárnak, a 4. Területi Főosztály tanácsosának feljegyzése Aleksandar Prlja szerb külügyminiszter magyarországi látogatásáról. 1990. július 3.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

⁶ In 1690, under the leadership of Patriarch Arsenije Čanojević, some 40–60 thousand Kosovo Serbs settled in historic Hungary.

with the Hungarian foreign minister, Géza Jeszenszky. During the meeting, the Hungarians discussed the cadre changes at the daily newspaper *Magyar Szó* in Novi Sad and at the weekly *Hét Nap* in Subotica that had caused great controversy among the Hungarians in Vojvodina. Prlja called the change at the head of the media a standard procedure, and in response to the outrage over it, he asked the Hungarian side for patience and understanding.⁷

On 7 December, prime minister József Antall met with the federal prime minister Ante Marković in Budapest. Following face-to-face discussions between the two prime ministers, the two sides reviewed topical issues in relations between their countries as well as key international issues. Regarding the transformations taking place throughout the region, the Hungarian prime minister made it clear that Hungary had no interest in destabilizing the region. The Yugoslav prime minister reported on economic reforms in the country. However, given the Yugoslav domestic political situation and the multi-party elections, he did not ignore the growing nationalist overtones in the country.⁸

Following Marković's visit, relations between the federal government, and especially Serbia and Hungary, clearly turned negative. A key factor in this was the so-called Kalashnikov case, an arms transport scandal that had erupted during the first weeks of January. The first news about arms transfers to Croatia came to light in October 1990. On 30 October 1990, the Yugoslav minister of defense Veljko Kadijević requested information on the developments from the Hungarian minister of defense, Lajos Für, who replied to him the following day. Due to the sensitivity of the case, it was not discussed by prime ministers József Antall and Ante Marković in Budapest on 7 December.

In the Marković–Antall negotiations, this sensitive issue was not on the agenda despite the fact that the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) had essentially complete information about the Croatian arms purchases already in the first days of November. Given this, on 3 December 1990, the Yugoslav security council evaluated information claiming the Croatian minister of national defense Martin Špegelj and the minister of the interior Josip Boljkovac had traveled to Hungary to purchase weapons, even though the defense laws in force at the time did not allow it. It was said at the meeting that the weapons had been purchased through the Astra company in Zagreb, and over the previous two months, under the direction of the Croatian Minister of Interior and Defense, ten trucks loaded with weapons had crossed the Hungarian–Croatian border carrying more than ten thousand Kalashnikov machine guns and millions of rounds of ammunition. The weapons were distributed exclusively among trusted members of the Croatian ruling party. At the same time, complex plans were being created that targeted the deployment of weapons against the JNA stationed in Croatia. Because of this, those at the security council meeting also discussed reports that Croatia was preparing to set up special units that, in addition to subversive acts, would have carried out assassinations of officers in the JNA according to previously prepared lists.⁹

On 26 January 1991, deputy federal minister Dušan Rodić called a meeting with the Hungarian chargé d'affaires in Belgrade. He stated that, according to his government's

⁷ *Megbeszélés Prlja Alekszandar szerb külügyminiszterrel. 1990. október 13.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

⁸ Markovics Budapestben. Cseretapasztalat. *Népszabadság*, 1990. december 8. 1., 3.

⁹ For more on this, see Nikolić 2018: 297–303.

assessment, there had been no cooperation from the Hungarian side despite the seriousness of the situation. On 2 February, foreign minister Géza Jeszenszky requested a meeting with the Yugoslav ambassador Rudi Sova. Jeszenszky said his government was ready to clarify any details that might arise in the case, and then expressed the view that the emphasis should be on cooperation between the two countries in the future. Linking the issue of arms transfers to terrorism, Sova reiterated that his government viewed the events as an interference in internal affairs, and he therefore expected the Hungarian side to conduct a proper investigation and find a clear resolution in order to maintain good neighborly relations. Two days later, Rodić handed over another letter of protest to the Hungarian embassy in Belgrade, again accusing Hungary of violating Yugoslavia's sovereign rights and interfering in its internal affairs. He expressed his dissatisfaction with statements from the Hungarian government and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 1 February and with views Jeszenszky expressed to Sova, whose assessment was that they "bypassed the problem, minimized its magnitude, and even tried to justify it." The Yugoslav letter of protest handed over at that time demanded that the Hungarians continue the investigation, take further action, and take appropriate measures.

Following a closed meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs on 7 February, Antall briefed Marković on the results of the investigation in a telephone conversation lasting more than half an hour. Antall also reported to the Yugoslav prime minister about legal errors in authorizing arms sales and then expressed regret over the arms transfer case. Tamás Katona, the political state secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Imre Szokai, the deputy state secretary, met with foreign minister Budimir Lončar and deputy foreign minister Milivoje Maksić in Belgrade on 11 February 1991 and handed over the Hungarian government's manifesto. Katona then provided detailed information on the results of the investigation ordered by Antall in connection with the arms transaction.¹⁰ At the meeting, Lončar drew the Hungarians' attention to the fact that the Hungary had approved the arms shipments despite the agreements concluded with the Yugoslav federal government at a time when major changes were taking place in the country. He also pointed out that several ideas about the future of the country and the

¹⁰ For the sale of arms in Croatia and the related explanations below, we relied on the following archival documents: *Jeszenszky Géza bekérte Rudi Sova budapesti jugoszláv nagykövetet a magyar–horvát fegyverszállítás ügyében. 1991. február 5.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d; *Rejtjeltávirat Pekingből. Ilija Đukić pekingi jugoszláv nagykövet véleménye a magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatokról. 1991. február 7.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d; *A 4. Területi Főosztály összefoglalója a horvátországi fegyvereladás következményeiről. 1991. február 14.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d; *Svraka Istvánnak, a belgrádi Nagykövetség első beosztottjának feljegyzése a Szövetségi Külügyi Titkárság véleményéről a magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatokat illetően. 1991. február 28.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d; *Rusz Boriszlávnak, a belgrádi Nagykövetség beosztott diplomatájának összefoglalója Jeszenszky Gézának a horvátországi magyar fegyverszállításról a jugoszláv médiában. 1991. március 4.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d; *Szokai Imre, a Külügyminisztérium helyettes államtitkár bekérte Rudi Sova budapesti jugoszláv nagykövetet a magyar–jugoszláv együttműködés lehetőségeinek ügyében. 1991. március 5.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d; *Bagi Gábor zágrábi főkonzul főnöki levele Jeszenszky Gézának a magyar–horvát fegyverügylet horvát megítéléséről. 1991. február 27.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d; *A külügyminisztérium közleménye a Magyar diplomáciai lépésekről Jugoszlávia felé a Magyar–horvát fegyvereladás kapcsán, 1991. január 26.* In Sáringer 2018: 744–745; *A Magyar kormány nyilatkozata a horvátországi Magyar fegyverszállítás ügyéről, 1991. február 2,* in Sáringer 2018: 749–750.

relationship between the republics had been formulated in connection with the transformation; however, in addition to the concept of preserving a unified state, there were also extreme positions that could result in the disintegration of the country. In this situation, the Yugoslav government had judged the weapons shipment to Croatia to be a diversion. In the interests of good neighborly relations, the Yugoslavs therefore requested a full investigation of what had happened, and for the federal government to be informed of the responsibility of the Hungarian ministers who had played a role in it.¹¹

On 12 February, the Antall informed the National Assembly about the content of the manifesto handed over to the Yugoslav side.¹² The arms transport scandal did not influence international judgment of Hungary. The United States Department of State stated that it appreciated the Hungarian government's efforts to clarify the matter in detail. It also made clear that it had accepted the Hungarian position and did not doubt the good intentions of

¹¹ See: United Nations ICTY Court Records. Unified Court Records, https://ucirmct.org/_Case IT-02-054.Slobodan Milošević. Exhibit D338.5.

¹² Following appeared in the Hungarian daily *Magyar Nemzet*: "On February 11, 1991, prime minister József Antall informed the Parliament about secretary of state Tamás Katona's trip to Belgrade. Explaining the main points of the manifesto, the Prime Minister emphasized the following: Hungary regrets that tensions in the two countries' successfully developing relations have arisen in connection with arms sales. It is in Hungary's fundamental interest for the problem to be resolved as soon as possible, and for relations with Yugoslavia to develop again based on mutual trust. Another important finding is that the arms deal and the licensing of transfers had no political background; it was done solely for business reasons. The Hungarian government had no reason to doubt the good faith of the supplier or the buyer or to question the company's right to make a purchase. However, it was found that there was a procedural irregularity at the time the license was issued; only three of the five members of the Licensing Division of the Secretary of State Committee approved the shipment. Stakeholders have acknowledged their own partial responsibility for the mismanagement of the arms deal, with an emphasis on their good faith. Citing the manifesto, József Antall emphasized that the government would draw the appropriate conclusions and tighten the order of arms sales in order to settle the matter completely. The Hungarian government appreciates the fact that the Yugoslav government firmly rejects any unfounded assumptions linking the arms issue to Hungarians living in Yugoslavia. Speaking about the Yugoslav reaction to the manifesto, the prime minister emphasized that the Yugoslav government had assessed the Hungarian government's readiness to resolve the problem, and expected Hungary would clearly explain its relationship and behavior toward Yugoslavia. József Antall also pointed out that, in the opinion of the Yugoslavs, the minority issue cannot be viewed in terms of the problems that have arisen. Now knowing the Yugoslav position, József Antall made t statement before the plenary session of the Parliament. According to this, the prime minister expressed his regret that tensions had arisen in connection with the matter in the successfully developing Hungarian–Yugoslav relations. It is in Hungary's fundamental interest for the issue to be resolved reassuringly; Hungarian–Yugoslav relations should once again be based on mutual trust. Within the framework of the cooperation, the Hungarian government is ready to provide adequate guarantees that a similar case will not occur in the future. The government approved a new, stricter regime for licensing arms trades back in February. Hungary seeks a mutually beneficial, lasting, and good relationship with friendly Yugoslavia. It appreciates the progress made so far in all areas of cooperation and is interested in its continued growth, both with the federal authorities and with the Republics of Yugoslavia. In its relations with Yugoslavia, Hungary assumes that the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a federal union of several nations. Yugoslavia's borders are guaranteed by valid international documents; its statehood is part of the European status quo on which the peace, security, and cooperation of the continent rests. Hungary has no interest in destabilizing Yugoslavia. József Antall expressed the hope that the case, which had temporarily overshadowed relations, could be closed once and for all." Incidentally, the Yugoslav government has also expressed its readiness to do so. See: Antall József: A jugoszláv kormány értékeli a fegyverügyrendezésére tett magyar erőfeszítéseket. *Magyar Nemzet*, 1991. február 13. 3.

the Hungarian government. German political circles also did not attach any particular importance to the case, where the less fortunate and ill-considered handling of the case had come as a surprise. Similar statements came from the United Kingdom,¹³ and the European director of the French foreign office said that “the arms sales scandal is a completely negligible phenomenon that the French foreign ministry does not want to address at all.”¹⁴

Meanwhile, internal destabilization in Yugoslavia continued. A ministerial meeting of the Conference on Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was held in Berlin on 19 and 20 June 1991. At the conference, clear support was given for preserving the integrity of Yugoslavia along with a request to quickly resolve the constitutional crisis and reach an agreement on a peaceful and democratic transformation for the Yugoslav state and social community.¹⁵ In this context in Berlin, at the initiative of US Secretary of State James Baker, the Austrian, Luxembourg, and Hungarian foreign ministers, held a consultation with Frans Andriessen, the EC commissioner in charge of foreign affairs. The talks focused on discussing a common position to be reached regarding Croatia and Slovenia’s declarations of independence. However, there were significant differences in emphasis and priority among the parties present. While the Luxembourg and EC foreign ministers emphasized the need to preserve territorial integrity and the integrity of Yugoslavia, the Austrian and Hungarian foreign ministers emphasized the need to preserve the democratic, constitutional, and nonviolent nature of the Yugoslav process and the need for a peaceful solution to the conflict. In the end, despite Baker’s pressure, no unanimity was reached, and the parties in Berlin could only agree that Washington would urge Serbia to refrain from violence and use democratic, constitutional, and peaceful means while also respecting human rights.¹⁶

The next day, Baker traveled to Yugoslavia. Baker held a total of nine separate meetings: one meeting with Albanian leaders from Kosovo, six with the presidents of the Yugoslav republics, and two with Marković. His general approach to the Yugoslav crisis was completely in line with European policy—Slovenia and Croatia should not be allowed to secede, and federal authorities should not use force. He conveyed the messages of his government, that they supported unity, reform, human rights, and a peaceful solution to the Yugoslav crisis. He promised “significant economic assistance” from the US and confirmed that the European Union still stood by its offer of assistance in the event of a peaceful settlement. He also raised the issue of respect for the human rights of Albanians in Kosovo, Hungarians in Vojvodina, and Serbs in Croatia.¹⁷

On 25 June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, thus triggering JNA

¹³ *A 4. területi Főosztály összefoglaló a horvátországi fegyverszállítással kapcsolatos távirati jelentésekről. 1991. február 28.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

¹⁴ *Szávai János párizsi nagykövet összefoglaló jelentése a jugoszláv helyzet francia megítéléséről. 1991. június 3.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

¹⁵ Nikolić 2018: 473.

¹⁶ *Bába Ivánnak, a Politikai Elemző és Tájékoztató Főosztály vezetőjének összefoglaló jelentése Antall Józsefnek a magyar, az amerikai, az osztrák, a luxemburgi külügyminiszterek és Frans Andriessen, az Európai Közösségek „külügyminisztere” közötti megbeszéléséről Berlinben. 1991. június 20.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

¹⁷ Nikolić 2018: 475, 481. It should be added that Baker gave different messages to all the presidents of the Yugoslav republics and to prime minister Marković. See more in Nikolić 2018: 481–483.

to intervene in the conflict. Two days later, on 27 June 1991, the Hungarian government held an extraordinary meeting on the Yugoslav crisis. At this meeting, Jeszenszky announced that Slovenia had asked Hungary to recognize its independence. Antall then warned against taking any hasty steps and drew the attention of the members of the government to the fact that the four hundred thousand Hungarians in Vojvodina were essentially hostages of Serbia.¹⁸

On the same day, Imre Szokai informed the US, German, Austrian, and Italian ambassadors about the Hungarian government's official position regarding these events while also clarifying that Hungary respected the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia but was also interested in the situation, rights, and institutions of the Hungarian national minority, which should not be adversely affected by these events.¹⁹

On 29 June, prime minister József Antall informed federal prime minister Ante Marković of the Hungarian position that the unity of the South Slavic state should be preserved. The following day, he also informed the presidents of the European Community, the United States, and the Soviet Union. At the same time, he considered it desirable to reshape the country's constitutional and political system in line with a proposal for a confederation from the sovereign states of Macedonia and Bosnia.²⁰

On 30 June 1991, the Hungarian prime minister wrote a letter to Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev expressing his deep concern about the culminating Yugoslav crisis and informing him of his telephone conversation with Ante Marković the previous day.²¹

Concerning the Yugoslav crisis, the Soviet ambassador Ivan Pavlovich Aboimov requested a meeting with the Hungarian foreign minister Géza Jeszenszky on 5 July 1991. Aboimov then handed over a letter to Soviet foreign minister Alexander Bessmertnykh in which Moscow essentially warned Hungary against intervening, formally or informally, in the crisis. In his reply to the Soviet ambassador, the Hungarian foreign minister said that, taking into account the realities, his government supported the survival of Yugoslavia as a confederation of sovereign states, and it would accept any agreement that would stop the bloodshed and contribute to a peaceful solution. Jeszenszky also emphasized that Budapest was following the situation of Hungarians in Vojvodina with great concern, and then, reflecting in part on Bessmertnykh's suggestion, spoke in detail about the Croatian arms sales scandal that had erupted earlier that year. He stressed that his government supported the US proposal to ban arms sales to Yugoslavia.²²

On 10 July 1991, Tamás Katona, the secretary of state for foreign affairs, met with Yugoslav ambassador Rudi Sova. The Yugoslav ambassador had requested the visit due to Hungarian statements, newspaper reports, and other allegations related to the crisis. The

¹⁸ *Részlet a Magyar kormányülés jegyzőkönyvéből a délszláv válság témájában, 1991. június 27.* In: Sáringer 2018: 756–766.

¹⁹ *Amerikai, osztrák, olasz, német nagykövetek bekérése. 1991. június 27.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

²⁰ Jeszenszky 2011: 52.

²¹ *Antall József levele Mihail Gorbacsovnak az Ante Marković szövetségi kormányfővel folytatott telefonbeszélgetéséről. 1991. június 30.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

²² *Jeszenszky Géza emlékeztetője Ivan Pavlovics Abimov szovjet nagykövet látogatásáról a Külügyminisztériumban. 1991. július 5.; 346. Jeszenszky Géza és Alekszandr Bessmertnih szovjet külügyminiszter levélváltása Jugoszláviáról. 1991. július 5. – 1991. július 8.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

Yugoslav ambassador quoted a statement from Antall that the Treaty of Trianon defined the border between Hungary and Yugoslavia, not the one between Hungary and Serbia.²³ The ambassador indicated that Belgrade considered these statements to be the opening of a border audit. He also attacked Jeszenszky's statement from 9 July, in which spoke about settling the autonomy of Vojvodina. In his reply, Katona stated that Hungary was interested in a peaceful resolution to the Yugoslav crisis and had no interest in Yugoslavia disintegrating into separate nation-states. There was no intention to revise the statements about Vojvodina that had mentioned Trianon and Paris, but only to record the facts and shed light on the complicated situation. He also stressed that his government had not addressed the idea of border revision and had not ordered the mobilization and reinforcement of border forces, but he also indicated that Hungary was not happy that the JNA had stated its intention to play a role in resolving the crisis.²⁴

A week later, Katona had a meeting with Sova. The tense conversation took place after Belgrade had flooded Hungary with new accusations through direct and indirect channels. A press war had then broken out between the two countries after reports insulting Hungarian politicians appeared in the Serbian media, which the press commentators described in an ambiguous, sometimes harsh, and distorted manner. Katona made it clear that his government had never questioned Yugoslavia's external and internal borders, and he did not want to have a say in the future, which is why the Yugoslav claims to the contrary completely incomprehensible to him. Katona also protested the federal foreign office issuing a *démarche* to the Hungarian *chargé d'affaires ad interim* in Belgrade on 12 July. The secretary of state warned that such actions by the Yugoslavs and the press campaign against Hungary could lead to a deterioration of bilateral relations. In his response, Sova referred to József Antall's statements about Trianon, to which Katona responded that the Hungarian prime minister had never referred to historical rights and the government did not consider it part of its foreign policy, if only because he considered a unified Europe to be the future, not nation-states. Katona also indicated that his government wanted Vojvodina to regain the autonomy it had lost due to Kosovo. The ambassador responded that this was unacceptable for Belgrade, but at the same time offered to suggest a higher level of bilateral contact with his headquarters than his ambassador.²⁵

On 18–19 July 1991, Géza Jeszenszky discussed the Yugoslav issue in Washington with US Vice President Dan Quayle and acting secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger. Quayle accepted Hungary's view that the starting point for the crisis was the status of the

²³ In his exposition to trade advisers on July 8, 1991, the Hungarian prime minister welcomed the results of the Brijuni talks and the quarterly moratorium, underlining that if the nations of Yugoslavia accepted, Budapest would consider the confederation of sovereign republics to be the best solution. The prime minister also stated at the time that "it is legal and necessary to mention: If the 1947 Treaty of Paris restored the 1920 (Trianon) borders, it was legal for Vojvodina to not become part of the Serbian state but to be annexed by the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (after 1929 to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia)." This does not cover any revisionist, irredentist remarks, the prime minister emphasized—just a statement of fact, not a message. He then stated that "Budapest respects Helsinki, the Paris Charter, and European standards. We hope that these problems will be resolved within the Yugoslav federal borders," he concluded, moving on to the situation in the region. See Antall József: *Tiszteletben tartjuk Helsinkit. Népszabadság*, 1991. július 9. 1.

²⁴ *Rudi Sova jugoszláv nagykövet látogatása. 1991. július 11.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

²⁵ *Rudi Sova bekérése. 1991. július 22.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d.

Serb minority in Croatia, which should be settled in a reassuring and fair way, while also guaranteeing minority rights for Albanians in Kosovo and Hungarians in Vojvodina.²⁶

Following the agreement reached on the island of Brijuni on 7 July 1991, which declared a three-month moratorium on the independence of Slovenia and Croatia entering into force, the Hexagonale summit was held in Dubrovnik on 26–27 July 1991. In a constructive speech on the dramatic situation, Antall expressed his concerns and the interests of Hungary and the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina.²⁷

In a letter to French president François Mitterrand on 1 August, the Hungarian prime minister reiterated the main points of his speech in Dubrovnik, warning that political control over the JNA and irregular Serb forces should be restored during the three-month moratorium; for this and a fruitful dialogue between the republics, strong pressure must be brought to bear on the Serbian leaders in Belgrade. A similar letter was sent to US President George Bush the same day.²⁸

The next day, in a letter to Dutch foreign minister Hans Van den Broek, Jeszenszky summarized the main points of the Hungarian prime minister's correspondence from the previous day. Jeszenszky also informed Broek that he had received a delegation of Hungarian mayors from Croatia in Budapest a few days earlier, and they had told him local Serb forces were changing the ethnic composition of the area by forcing out the Hungarian and Croat populations and replacing them with Serb settlers.²⁹

After lengthy preparations and consultations, on 3 September 1991, Antall met with Marković in Subotica. The two heads of government held a two-hour face-to-face meeting at Subotica's city hall while their entourages held separate talks and the two sides attended a plenary session. The talks focused on the Yugoslav war situation, the country's economic situation, the fighting in Baranya and the related issue of refugees in Hungary, and the situation of the Hungarian minority.³⁰

Serbian foreign minister Vladislav Jovanović met with the Hungarian ambassador in Belgrade on 4 September and announced he was ready to accept an invitation from Hungarian foreign minister Géza Jeszenszky in the middle of the month. He acknowledged that communism had finally failed and said that Serbia had recognized this in the changing geopolitical situation. He said that Hungary had a direct connection with Europe, and that it was also interested in developing relations for economic reasons. He interpreted Belgrade's expectation that Hungary would show neutrality in the culminating Yugoslav crisis. Turning to the issue of the Hungarian minority, he pointed out that it had, by far, the most rights in Serbia.³¹

Although the meeting between Jeszenszky and Jovanović in Budapest had already been announced by the press, in the end it did not take place. On 12 September, Yugoslavia's

²⁶ Jeszenszky 2011: 54.

²⁷ Jeszenszky 2011: 54–55.

²⁸ Jeszenszky 2011: 55–56.

²⁹ Jeszenszky 2011: 56.

³⁰ *A Miniszterelnöki Titkárság jelentése Antall József-szabadkai látogatásáról, 1991. szeptember 24.* In: Sáringer 2018: 766–772.

³¹ *Rejtjeltávirat Belgrádból. A magyar–szerb külügyminiszteri találkozó előkészítése. 1991. szeptember 5.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 33. d.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused Hungary of making another arms transfer.³² By then relations between Belgrade and Budapest had become extremely tense and intimidation of the Hungarians in Vojvodina even more entrenched, and an increasing number of Hungarian reservists in Vojvodina were being called up.³³

On 5 September, German chancellor Helmut Kohl and prime minister József Antall spoke by telephone about the war in Yugoslavia. In his introduction, Antall gave a brief overview of his talks with the Yugoslav prime minister in Subotica, and then reported on Hungary's assessment of the crisis. Kohl agreed with Antall's views and expressed his view that, due to conflicts of interest and differing views, it was a very real possibility that the Yugoslav peace conference convened on 7 September would fail. He said that if this happened, Germany would be forced to take the position that the only way out of the crisis would be to recognize the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. Antall interjected that, although Budapest was leaning toward recognition, German and Hungarian recognition would not be enough to deal with the crisis. In response, Kohl replied that Bonn did not want to take this step alone, and indicated that, according to a German assessment, half of the EC member states were already in favor of recognition. He indicated that Paris had essentially also moved in this direction, but as London continued to fluctuate on the issue, it seemed necessary to hold a personal consultation with the British prime minister.³⁴

The increasingly critical situation for the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina was one of the main topics of a telephone conversation between the Antall and German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher on 16 September 1991. Antall drew Genscher's attention to the fact that the JNA had mobilized and that increasing numbers of Hungarians in Vojvodina were involved, but at the same time the psychological pressure on Hungarians in Vojvodina was also increasing. Although Antall agreed on the need to recognize the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, he also warned that Hungary could not be the first to do so because the Serbs considered his homeland, as well as Germany, to be the enemy. He also reported that he had shared similar thoughts a few days earlier with French president François Mitterrand, who was then urged to take decisive action, as were the British and the Russians.³⁵

Antall also consulted with the Italian deputy prime minister Claudio Martelli the same day. During a phone call initiated from the Italian side, Antall spoke about the details of a conversation with Genscher and then stressed that the EC and the G7 states³⁶ should take action against the Serbs, which should include tough economic sanctions. Martelli objected, saying that an embargo could only be enforced against Yugoslavia as a whole and not only Belgrade specifically. Antall then urged an expression of clear and unambiguous

³² *Rejtjeltávirat Belgrádból. A jugoszláv Külügyminisztérium illegális fegyverszállítással vádolja a magyar kormányt. 1991. szeptember 12* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.; *A Külügyminisztérium közleménye a fegyverszállítás vádjáról. 1991. szeptember 12.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

³³ Aggodalom a vajdasági magyarság helyzete miatt. Jeszenszky Géza magyar külügyminiszter rendkívüli sajtótájékoztatója. *Magyar Szó*, 1991. szeptember 21. 20.

³⁴ *A Miniszterelnöki Titkárság emlékeztetője Antall József és Helmut Kohl kancellár telefonbeszélgetéséről. 1991. szeptember 5.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

³⁵ *A Miniszterelnöki Titkárság emlékeztetője Antall József és Hans-Dietrich Genscher német külügyminiszter telefonbeszélgetéséről. 1991. szeptember 16.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

³⁶ The G7 countries are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

political intention. He pointed out that such hesitation from the West only served as confirmation for the Serbs that they could achieve their goals through violent and aggressive action. When asked by Martelli whether it would be necessary to convene the UN Security Council, Antall answered in the affirmative.³⁷

In a telephone conversation with US President George W. Bush on 20 September, the Hungarian prime minister reported on the gravity of the military situation and said that the Serbs could only be influenced by joint action from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia.³⁸

Three days later, Antall had a telephone conversation with Marković, who reported in detail on the situation at the front, stating unequivocally that there was increasingly more room for maneuver for those no longer working to preserve Yugoslavia and instead actively working to create a Greater Serbia. Antall said that the government could only recognize the sovereignty of the member republics if countries other than those of the European Community were also committed to this step. Antall also asked his Yugoslav counterpart to stop the enlistment of Hungarians in Vojvodina into the JNA if he had the opportunity to do so.³⁹

On 3 October 3, Antall wrote a letter to Lord Carrington, president of The Hague Peace Conference, requesting that his authority be used to enable the Hungarian minority to be represented at the peace conference.⁴⁰

On 11 October, the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest requested that Hungary allow the movement of JNA troops stationed in Slovenia.⁴¹ In response, Imre Szokai informed the Yugoslav ambassador that guarantees given by the embassy were not sufficient for the JNA to cross through Hungarian territory. This would require adequate guarantees from the federal government or the presidency, and specifically that any munitions transferred from Slovenia to Croatia would not be used in armed conflict.⁴²

The Hungarian ambassador was summoned by the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 18 October 1991. This was due to a document the Hungarian government had published on the political and ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia among the countries participating in the CSCE process. The Yugoslav government protested the findings on religious, socioeconomic, developmental, and ethnic differences contained therein.⁴³ At that time,

³⁷ *A Miniszterelnöki Titkárság emlékeztetője Antall József és Claudio Martelli olasz miniszterelnök-helyettes telefonbeszélgetéséről. 1991. szeptember 16.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

³⁸ Jeszenszky 2011: 60.

³⁹ *Összefoglaló és sajtóközlemény Antall József és Ante Marković jugoszláv kormányfő 1991. szeptember 23-i telefonbeszélgetéséről. 1991. szeptember 23.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

⁴⁰ *Antall József levele Lord Carringtonnak, a hágai békekonferencia elnökének. 1991. október 3.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 35. d.

⁴¹ This is referring to the withdrawal of JNA units from Slovenia after a decision by the Presidency of Yugoslavia on 18 July 1991.

⁴² *A budapesti jugoszláv Nagykövetség jegyzékben kéri, Magyarország engedélyezze a Jugoszláv Néphadsereg Szlovéniában állomásozó csapatainak átvonulását Magyarország területén. 1991. október 11.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.; *Szokai Imrénének, a Külügyminisztérium helyettes államtitkárának válasza Rudi Sova budapesti jugoszláv nagykövetnek a belgrádi kormány kérésére, a Jugoszláv Néphadsereg Szlovéniában állomásozó csapatainak szabad átvonulására Magyarország területén. 1991. október 14.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.

⁴³ In mid-October, the Hungarian government summarized its proposals for a solution in a non-paper handed over to the governments interested in resolving the South Slavic crisis, see Jeszenszky 2011: 67.

deputy foreign Minister Milan Vereš told Ambassador István Ószi in a sharp *démarche* that this document was unacceptable to Belgrade and identified it directly with Hungarian territorial claims. Vereš also added that Hungary's aim was to persuade the countries participating in the CSCE process to provide a biased explanation, and again accused Hungary of continuing to supply arms to Croatia. The Hungarian ambassador firmly rejected the allegations of further arms transfers and stated that Belgrade had been campaigning against Hungary for some time without supporting facts or documents, and in this situation, it would be increasingly difficult for his government to maintain its generous behavior.⁴⁴

On 27 October 1991, at 8:51 p.m., the JNA dropped two cluster bombs on the town of Barcs that exploded in a remote part of the city.⁴⁵ There were no injuries, but several buildings were damaged. During negotiations in Subotica concerning the incident, the Yugoslav side denied it had been intentional.⁴⁶ Serbian foreign minister Vladislav Jovanović visited Budapest on 28 October, the day after the bombing in Barcs. Jovanović then explained the position of the Serbian leadership on the Yugoslav crisis: war had broken out due to the Croats' efforts to break away, and Serbia had essentially been forced to act. He reiterated that Serbia expected neutrality from Hungary in connection with the Yugoslav crisis, but also added that Belgrade was of the opinion that Hungary was not in fact neutral. Despite all this, the Serbian foreign minister considered improvement in relations between the two countries to be particularly important and outlined a number of possibilities for this. The Hungarian foreign minister referred to a series of negative statements made by prime minister of Vojvodina Radovan Božović regarding Hungary and the Hungarian leaders. He then discussed restrictions on the Hungarians' cultural and educational institutional system in Vojvodina, redundancies in the workplace, military mobilizations, and that about 20,000 Hungarians had already fled. Jeszenkszy called on the Serbian leadership not to involve Hungarians in the fighting, to exempt Vojvodinian students admitted to Hungarian schools and universities from military service, and to provide an opportunity to refuse military service to anyone who requested it based on their conscience. The Hungarian view was also expressed that the Serbian political elite and the representatives of the Hungarians in Vojvodina should find a solution to the existing problems through political dialogue. Jovanović refused the requests for enlistment, saying that there was no disproportionate enlistment of Hungarians. According to him, Hungarians in Vojvodina had fled due to a mass psychosis brought on by the Hungarian media. He disregarded all the restrictions related to culture and education, and then added that even if there were any shortcomings, they were due solely to a lack of financial resources. Finally, he said that the situation for Hungarians in Vojvodina was the best among the Hungarian minorities living in neighboring states, so there was no cause for complaints about Hungarians living in Serbia. Finally, in a threatening tone, he stated that "the aspirations of minorities for disintegration and separatism cannot be

⁴⁴ *Rejtjeltávirat Belgrádból. Milan Vereš belgrádi külügyminiszter-helyettes demarsa Ószi István belgrádi nagykövetnek Magyarország előterjesztése miatt az Európai Biztonsági és Együttműködési Értekezlet részes államainak a jugoszláv politikai és etnikai konfliktusról. 1991. október 18. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d.*

⁴⁵ Gránátok hullottak Barcsra. Navigációs hiba okozta az incidenst – állítja a HM. Szóvivője. *Magyar Nemzet*, 1991. október 29. 1., 4.

⁴⁶ *Tárgyalások a Magyar Honvédség és a Jugoszláv Néphadsereg légiere és légvédelmi főparancsnokai között Szabadkán. 1991. november 13. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 37. d.*

tolerated, and indeed minorities must show loyalty to the country they live in.⁴⁷

In a letter to US President George Bush later that month, the Hungarian prime minister called for an immediate solution to the Yugoslav crisis. Antall warned the US president that if this did not happen in the short term, war would spread to Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, now accompanied by religious differences, also carried the danger of an international conflict through the Bosnian Muslims. The Hungarian prime minister took the position that the great powers should achieve a permanent ceasefire as soon as possible, summarized his proposals connected to this in seven points. He also indicated that his government would coordinate the recognition of member republics with the decisions of the European Community and other states. Finally, he mentioned the disarray among national minorities and drew the president's attention to the dangers the minority issue posed to European stability.⁴⁸

In a letter to the UN Secretary-General, Pérez de Cuellar, Hungarian foreign minister Géza Jeszenszky presented the Hungarian government's assessment of the Yugoslav crisis and the main elements of related Hungarian policy. The letter came immediately after the Yugoslav airstrike against Barcs.⁴⁹ Jeszenszky noted that his government had pursued a consistent policy from the outset and in many cases had shown a calm, balanced intention to restore peace. In connection with the Yugoslav crisis, the Hungarian government had repeatedly stated in multilateral forums and in bilateral contacts that the right of all peoples to self-determination must be respected, the crisis could not be resolved by violent internal border changes, and national minorities must be involved in developing a lasting solution. He stressed that the Hungarian government was deeply concerned about military activity in the immediate vicinity of its borders, Yugoslav military invasions seriously violating the sovereignty of the Hungarian state, Yugoslav fighting from Hungarian airspace, and the Yugoslav aggression against Hungary with the bombing of Barcs. On behalf of his government, the Hungarian foreign minister called on the UN Secretary-General to use his authority to put an immediate and permanent end to the bombings that were threatening the security of the Hungarian population and the sovereignty of the Hungarian state. He also called on the relevant UN organizations to provide increased support to Hungary to help refugees arriving there.⁵⁰

The next day, the Hungarian prime minister wrote a letter to Dutch prime minister Ruud Lubbers. He summarized his position on the Yugoslav crisis. He pointed out that the escalation of hostilities now threatened to spread not only to Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo, but also to Vojvodina.⁵¹

A few weeks later, Dojčilo Maslovarić, Serbia's deputy minister for national affairs,

⁴⁷ *Jeszenszky Géza jelentése a Kormányynak Vladislav Jovanović szerb külügyminiszter hivatalos magyarországi látogatásáról. 1991. október 30.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 33. d.

⁴⁸ *Antall József levele George Bush amerikai elnöknek. 1991. október 26.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

⁴⁹ After the bombing of Barcs, Washington, through the first deputy of the US Embassy in Belgrade, also warned the Serbian government not to provoke Hungary or further worsen the relationship. See: *Michael Gable-nek, a budapesti amerikai Nagykövetség diplomatájának közlései Timotity Miklósnak, a 4. Területi Főosztály munkatársának Barcs szerb bombázása ügyében. 1991. november 22.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

⁵⁰ *Jeszenszky Géza levele Pérez de Cuellar ENSZ főtitkárnak. 1991. október 31.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

⁵¹ *Antall József levele Ruud Lubbers holland miniszterelnöknek. 1991. november 1.* MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 36. d.

sharply criticized the Hungarian government's policy toward Serbia during a conversation with the Hungarian ambassador. He brought up the Kalashnikov case, said he considered the statements of Hungarian politicians to be unfriendly, and accused the government of inciting the Hungarians in Vojvodina against the Serbian leadership. Maslovarić accused the Hungarian media engaging in anti-Serb propaganda. Finally, he accused Hungary of "training Croatian terrorists" within its territory. In his reply, the Hungarian ambassador confronted Maslovarić about the Hungarian gestures made to Serbia regarding shipping, transportation, and communications, and then gave him a detailed account of the Hungarian efforts made on behalf of Serbian refugees.⁵²

On 7 November 7 1991, former US secretary of state Cyrus Vance⁵³ met with Prime Minister József Antall and Foreign Minister Géza Jeszenszky in Budapest. During the talks, Vance stressed that the situation in Yugoslavia was only getting worse with the federal government essentially disbanded since 3 October.⁵⁴ Vance was particularly concerned that at any time the war in Croatia could spill over into Bosnia. Antall informed his guest of the incident in Barcs and the series of violations of Hungarian airspace. He then pointed out that, if the international community could not urgently and effectively address the Yugoslav issue, its effects could trigger a chain reaction that could destabilize all of Central and Eastern Europe. Antall also pointed out that there was a psychological war in Yugoslavia to persecute certain ethnic groups. He also emphasized that a disproportionate number of ethnic Hungarians were being enlisted in the JNA. Jeszenszky said that tougher measures should be taken against Yugoslavia than previously had been, and that the international community should make it clear to the opposing parties that the world would not tolerate this war.⁵⁵

On 13 November, Alexander Arnot, German ambassador to Budapest, requested a reception from the Hungarian foreign minister. At that time, he officially informed Budapest of his government's decision to recognize the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. He also announced that Germany would now be ready to take this step alone. He then clarified his government's call for Hungary to put pressure on Slovenia and Croatia over minority issues to prevent possible revenge against Serbia. In his reply, Jeszenszky explained that his government attached great importance to guaranteeing the fate of national minorities, which he expected not only for Hungarians living in Yugoslavia but also for all ethnic groups.⁵⁶

On 2 December, state secretary Tamás Katona requested a meeting with ambassador

⁵² Ószi István belgrádi nagykövét főnöki levele Jeszenszky Gézának Dojčilo Maslovarić-tyal, a nemzetiségi ügyekért felelős szerb miniszter-helyetessel folytatott megbeszéléséről. 1991. november 26. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d.

⁵³ At the time, Vance was the UN Secretary-General's special envoy for Yugoslavia.

⁵⁴ It refers to the decision of four members of the Presidency of the SFRY from Serbia and Montenegro from October 3 on the work of the Presidency in conditions of imminent danger of war. The Presidency also took over the function of the Assembly of Yugoslavia, and Janez Drnovšek, the representative of Slovenia, was expelled from the Presidency. The presidency was thus unconstitutionally reduced by one member, so that the „legal” majority for the decisions made was four votes - Nikolić 2020: 207–208.

⁵⁵ A magyar kormányfő fogadta az ENSZ-főtitkár megbízottját. A jugoszláv válság destabilizálja a kelet-közép-európai térséget. Magyar Nemzet, 1991. november 8. 3; Veszélyes helyzet. Jeszenszky Géza magyar külügyminiszter és Cyrus Vance nyilatkozata a jugoszláviai háborúról. Magyar Szó, 1991. november 9. 2; Vance-interjú. Tisztában látok. Népszabadság, 1991. november 8. 1, 2.

⁵⁶ Jeszenszky Géza fogadta Alexander Arnot budapesti német nagykövetet a Külügyminisztériumban Horvátország és Szlovénia függetlenségének német elismerése ügyében. 1991. november 13. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 33. d.

Rudi Sova. He informed him that a Yugoslav anti-aircraft missile had crashed into Hungarian territory 4.5 kilometers from the border. The Yugoslavs had refrained from investigating the case, so Hungary was forced to express its resentment without widely announcing it, and the same was expected of the Yugoslavs, especially for the sake of the Hungarians living there. Katona also reflected on the Serbian foreign minister's speech in Subotica, in which Jovanović mentioned Croatian mercenary training centers and refugee camps in Hungary. In response, he said that there were no training centers in Hungary and the assumption was pure fantasy. The establishment of refugee camps, however, was necessary due to the deterioration of events, and maintaining them had placed a heavy financial burden on the country.⁵⁷

Following an agreement reached at the EC Council of Foreign Ministers on 16 December 1991 about recognizing the Yugoslav republics, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared a related written government proposal two days later. The document proposed a decision by which the Hungarian government would recognize all Yugoslav republics that requested it in the manner and under the conditions set by the EC, and they would be recognized by the EC member states, or by most of them, on 15 January. This presentation prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also stipulated that the government coordinate its recognition with the EC member states and with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Bulgaria, and the United States. Finally, it stated that the notification of Hungarian recognition would take place on 16 January, twenty-four hours after recognition by the EC member states. The plan included the possibility of limited Serbian armed action against Hungary, a terrorist attack on Yugoslav refugees in Hungary, violent attacks on Hungarians in Vojvodina, and another wave of refugees.⁵⁸

On 28 December, the Fourth Regional Department's proposals for the recognition of member republics and protection for the Hungarians in Vojvodina were spelled out. Accordingly, Hungary would recognize the Yugoslav republics after they were officially recognized by the EC member states, provided that they negotiated this with Poland and Czechoslovakia. The proposal also stated that Hungary should not take a public position on the issue of legal succession, and that the embassy in Belgrade should be headed by a temporary administrator until the status of the Serbian state was settled. To protect the Hungarians in Vojvodina, the proposal suggested that the Hungarian government make it clear to Serbia that if there were no change in its hostile behavior toward Hungarians living in Vojvodina, and if Serbia refused to guarantee the security of the Vojvodinian Hungarians, the Republic of Hungary would be ready to use restrictive measures against Serbia.⁵⁹

The independence of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized by the international community in early 1992.⁶⁰ However, the Federal Republic of

⁵⁷ *Katona Tamás, a Külügyminisztérium politikai államtitkára bekérte Rudi Sova budapesti jugoszláv nagykövetet a szerb rakéták magyarországi becsapódása és a délszláv háború kiterjedése ügyében. 1991. december 2. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 34. d.*

⁵⁸ *A Külügyminisztérium előterjesztése a Kormánynak a volt jugoszláv tagköztársaságok függetlenségének elismerésére. 1991. december 18, in Sáringner 2018: 790–793.*

⁵⁹ *A 4. Területi Főosztály javaslatai a tagköztársaságok elismerésére és a vajdasági magyarság védelmére. 1991. december 28. MNL OL XIX-J-1-j 33. d.*

⁶⁰ The Arbitration Commission (the so-called Badinter Commission) of The Hague Peace Conference announced

Yugoslavia (FRJ), which consisted only of Serbia and Montenegro after 27 April 1992, was not considered the successor to the former Yugoslavia. Thus, Hungary did not recognize the FRJ's international legal personality de jure, so bilateral relations were based on de facto recognition instead. These relations will be the subject of a later study.

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Sáringér J. *Iratok a az Antall-kormány külpolitikájához és diplomáciájához II. (1991. január–1992. december)*, Budapest: VERITAS Történetkutató Intézet/Magyar Napló, 2018.

its views on the recognition of the Yugoslav republics on January 11, 1992. The commission concluded that only Slovenia and Macedonia meet the criteria and recommended that their independence be recognized. The Arbitration Commission recommended that Croatia's independence be recognized, but with the significant remark that it did not legalize the agreement on guaranteeing minority rights. However, the European Community ignored those reservations and accepted that Croatia would gain independence without special conditions, but not Macedonia, because Greece vetoed its request, explaining that the country's name implies territorial claims to northern Greece and the area that has the same Name. The decisions of the European Community were announced on January 15, 1992. The independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized on April 6, 1992.

МАЂАРСКА ДИПЛОМАТИЈА И РАСПАД ЈУГОСЛАВИЈЕ 1990–1991

Резиме

У данима промене режима у Мађарској 1990, новим властима је било јасно да јужни сусед доживљава озбиљну унутрашњу кризу. Дубока криза југословенске државе постала је очита током првих контаката и преговора између две државе. Преговори одржани 21. и 22. јуна 1990. током дводневне посете мађарског министраспољних послова Гезе Јешенског, утицали су не само на могућности економске сарадње и ситуацију мађарске мањине, већ и на југословенске унутрашње проблеме.

Уз дијалог са југословенским федералним властима, мађарско-српски дипломатски односи постали су повећано напети и потпом су се покварили због „калашњиков скандала“ и погоршања положаја Мађара у Војводини.

Пошто су Словенија и Хрватска прогласиле независност 25. јуна 1991, мађарска влада је постала активнија у међународној дипломатији у вези са кулминацијом југословенске кризе. Од да су високи мађарски владини званичници били у контакту са водећим западним силама и Совјетским савезом. Мађарско-југословенски (српски) дипломатски односи суштински су достигли ниску тачку до тренутка избијања рата у Хрватској. Међусобне оптужбе, позиви упућени амбасадорима, протестна писма са обе стране у вези са убрзано одвијајућим догађајима била су на агендама обе стране. Односи две државе били су све више затегнути због положаја мађарске мањине у Војводини и мобилизације повезане са сукобом, која није мимоишла ни Мађаре у Војводини. Сукоб између две земље достигао је врхунац октобра 1991. када је Југословенска народна армија бацила две касетне бомбе на мађарски град Барч.

Када је оружани сукоб избио, мађарска влада је испрва била опрезна поводом признавања независности републикама које су намеравале да се отцепе од југословенске федерације. Ипак, позиција Мађарске се променила пошто је постигнут договор на састанку Савета министара спољних послова Европске комисије 16. децембра 1991. који се тицао признавања југословенских република. У првој половини 1992. све ово је додатно погоршало мађарско-српске односе, које су до тада већ биле изразито затегнуте..

Кључне речи: Југославија, Србија, Војводина, Мађарска, распад, Антал Јозеф, Анте Марковић, мађарска мањина, случај Калашњиков.