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Mr. President,

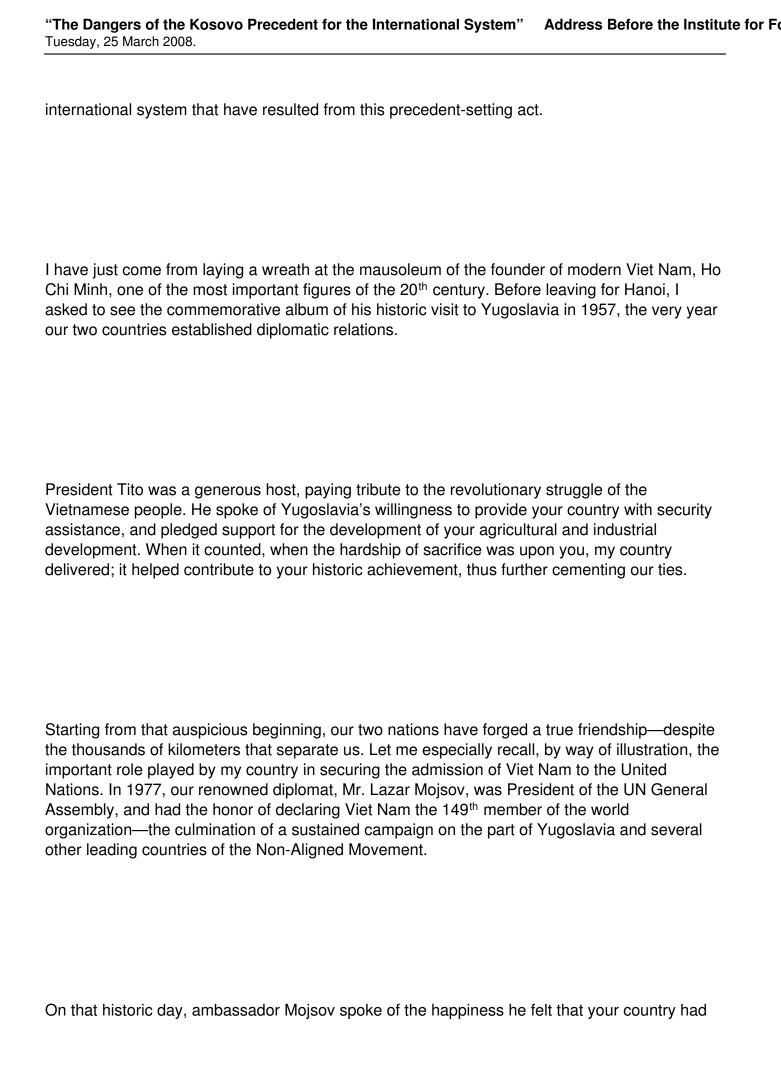
Distinguished Guests,

Excellencies,

Dear Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am honored to address this distinguished audience as part of my visit to your extraordinary country—one that has paid such a high price in securing its rightful place in the global community.
Since Viet Nam re-established its independence and began its colossal struggle for re-unification, you have offered an outstretched hand to all the nations of the world, on the basis of mutual respect, equality, and friendship.
Serbia too is such a country.
This morning, I will try to lay out for you the way we view the international system and our place in it, as well as discuss our relations with the friendly Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. I will touch upon our goal of attaining membership in the European Union, and spend time discussing Serbia's approach to our region, Southeast Europe. I will also discuss the challenge to our sovereignty and territorial integrity posed by the unilateral and illegal declaration of independence of our southern province of Kosovo and Metohiia, and the dangers to the

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assumed its rightful and deserved place in the global community of nations. "The admission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam marks a further step towards consolidating peace and security in the world," he said. "Unjustly and for too long a time", he continued, "this courageous and martyred country was unable to join us. Now all that is past and we must turn to the future", he concluded.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Decades ago, thanks to the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, Viet Nam chose to fix a strategic gaze toward the future. You suffered greatly under succeeding waves of occupation. And out of the ashes of a thirty-year struggle, you re-emerged onto the world stage as a strong regional factor of stability, a leader in economic dynamism, and a pioneer of contemporary poverty reduction policies.
Your courageous people have met adversity with hard work, indomitable spirit and intellectual innovation.
Your commitment to the Non-Aligned Movement, of which my country was a founding member,

and your devotion in helping solidify an international system that is based on the founding principles of the United Nations Charter, is well-known and greatly valued.

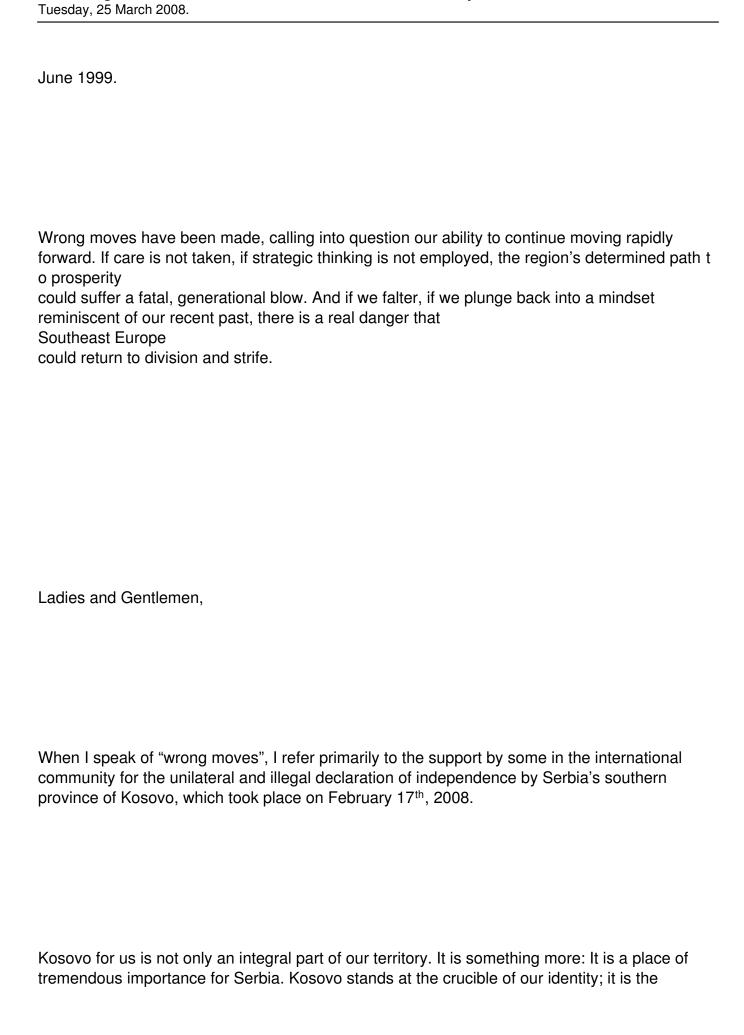
And your significant contribution to the transformation of Southeast Asia from a war-torn and divided region into one characterized by peaceful cooperation through your active membership in ASEAN, as well as your national example of success in reconstruction, is strongly respected.

In this context, I would like to share with you my favorable impressions of the words of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dzung, who spoke recently of the global requirement to increase efforts to maintain peace and stability throughout the world; to promote equal, cooperative relations between states, and to ensure an international environment conducive to the secure development of each and every country. I believe that the construction of a future characterized in this way—a world of continuous reform, enhanced social justice and industrial innovation—provides a firm foundation for the sustainable prosperity of the entire planet.

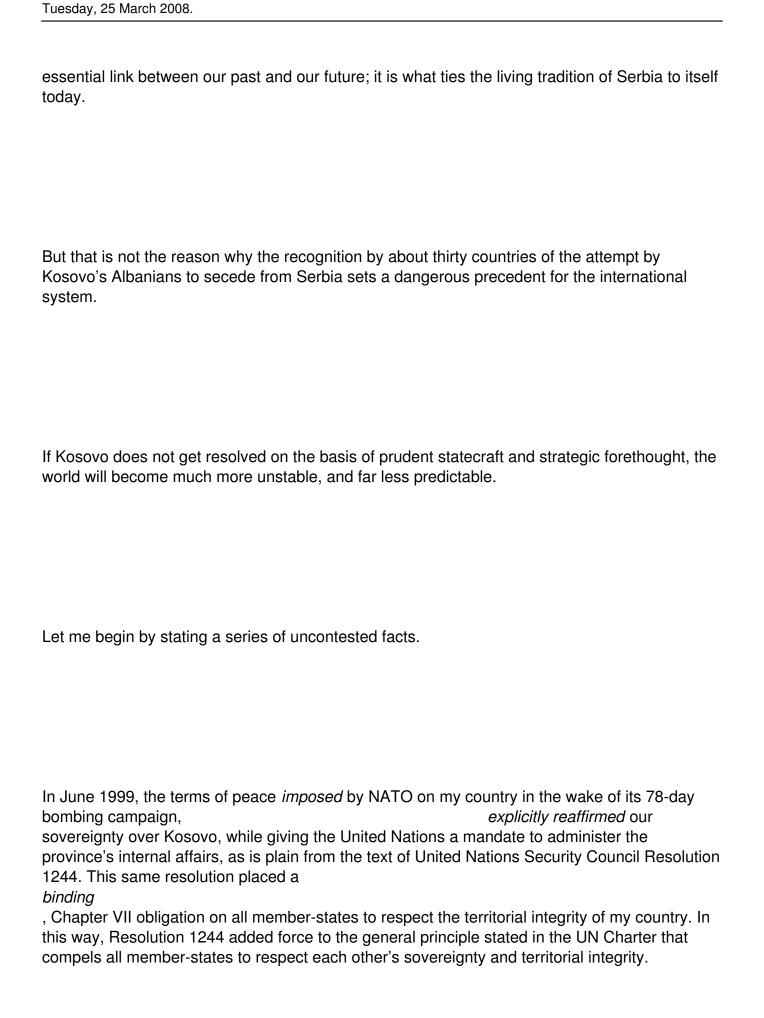
In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has become more interdependent, multipolar, and globalized. At the same time, the global community is, worryingly, less coherent, and less predictable. Humankind is therefore presented with a rare opportunity to develop in peace, but at the same time is faced with severe challenges. One such challenge is the evolution of international security issues. As we know well, the dangers posed by conventional military threats have lessened. Yet dangers posed by unconventional ones—such as terrorism, the proliferation of WMD, religious extremism, and ethnic secessionism—have dramatically increased in recent times.

We must work together—developed and developing, North and South, West and East—to ensure a better, cleaner, and more secure world. And we must manage in common the tectonic shifts in the global balance of power that are just around the corner, by rules meant to maintain predictability of action. All other approaches to the future would relegate us to an era of even more unbalanced economic development and dangerous rivalries.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Serbia's destiny lies in the European Union. The president of our Republic, Mr. Boris Tadic, spoke recently of our willingness to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union immediately—an important step in securing official EU candidate status. Were that to happen, Serbia and all of Southeast Europe would be put back on the EU membership fast-track, deservedly gaining entry into one of the world's greatest political projects.
Serbia has always been a part of Europe: geographically, historically, and culturally. Today's Europe has developed into a storehouse of values that creates stability and security in our traditionally divided continent. It has become the antidote to isolation, protectionism, and war. It brings people together, expands markets, and inspires attempts at resolving differences in line with the higher aspirations of humankind, instead of giving in to basest instincts.

It also forms part of the constellation of reasons why we have become so concerned with recent developments in our southern province of Kosovo, under United Nations administration since

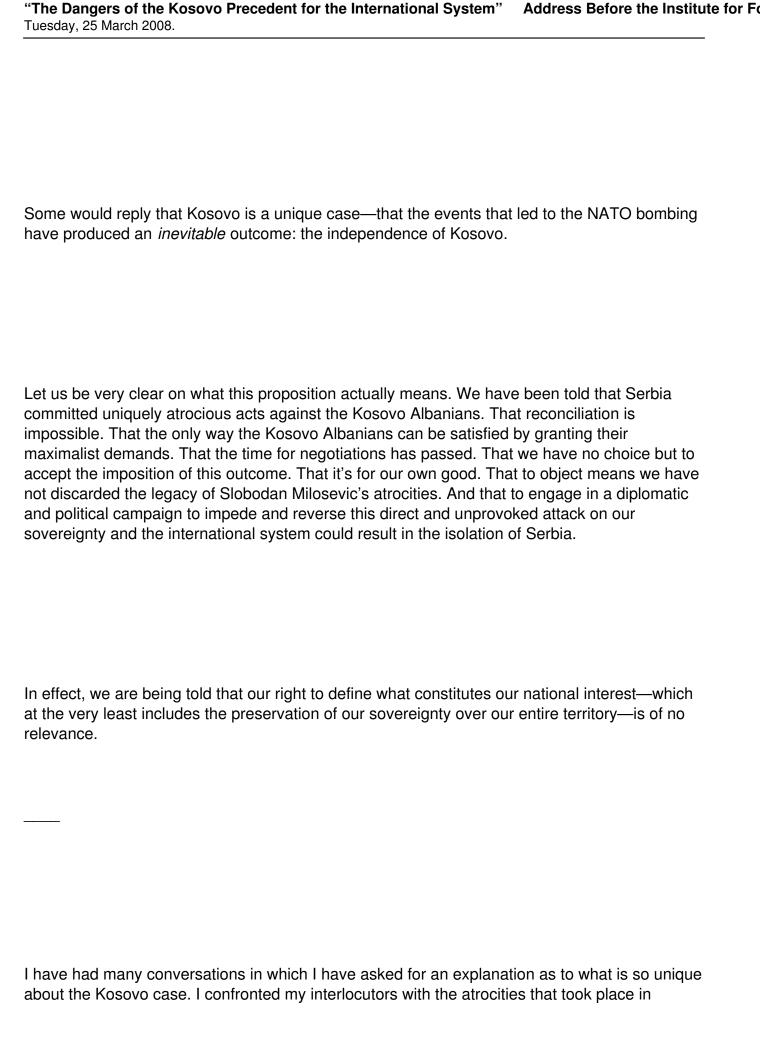


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Resolution 1244 remains in force today, for the Security Council has no part to the support of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. And yet, tragic in a most direct way.	·
Through the recognition of Kosovo's declaration of independence, the f member-state, the Republic of Serbia, has been supported. For that is junilateral declaration of independence amounts to.	•
Through the process of recognition, some countries have chosen to be radical transformation of the right to self-determination into an avowed in the right to self-determination in the right to self-det	
Through the act of recognition, ethnic or religious groups with a grievanthe world over have been supplied with a play book on how to achieve	=
In short, through recognition, acquiescence has been given to the legiti paternalistic doctrine of imposing solutions to ethnic conflicts the world	

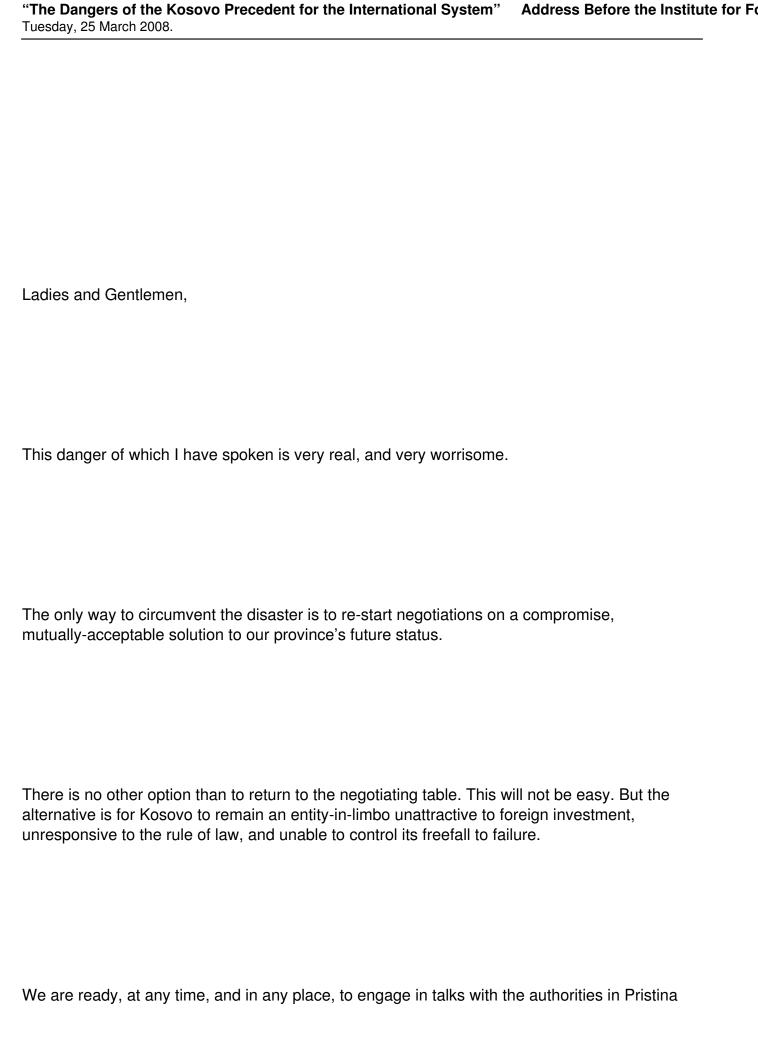


Ask yourselves: with a pre-set time limit coupled with a pre-announced outcome that

corresponded to their opening, maximalist negotiating position, what incentive did the Kosovo

The dangers for the peaceful development of many parts of the world—Southeast Asia included—could not be more apparent. Think of the use that separatists in Aceh and Papua could make of the Kosovo precedent—as well as those in the Philippines, Thailand or Sri

Lanka.



under the auspices of the United Nations.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
We cannot acquiesce to a unilateral declaration of independence. Were we to give our consent—were we even to imply the acceptance of an imposed outcome by a constellation of powers stronger than we—we would become complicit in posing a fundamental threat to our own democratic development, and the European future of Southeast Europe.
This we cannot do. Such a concession we can never make. That responsibility to our country, and to the global order, we will on no account renounce.
Kosovo shall remain a part of Serbia forever.

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Let me conclude on a personal note. When I was in school, I learned a Vietnamese people, about Ho Chi Minh, and about the millions who pe	
sacrifice so that future generations could live in peace and prosperity. A Nguyen Thi Binh, about her almost legendary exploits in the south, and reunify your homeland. And then one day she came to Belgrade. The y	d about her efforts to
I vividly recall watching the television coverage of her visit. I recollect hand her message of peaceful development and self-reliance. I remembershe had come to my country.	=
My memories of that visit have reached back across almost twenty year of this, long in coming, visit by a foreign minister of Serbia to Viet Name	
Ladies and Gentlemen,	

"The Dangers of the Kosovo Precedent for the International System"