

U.N. urges Bosnia to calm Serbian fears of Muslim control

■ **UNREST:** Serbs in Sarajevo are still protesting against the peace agreement initialed last week

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — U.N. officials urged the Bosnian government Monday to soothe the fears of Serbs panicked over the prospect of living in a city controlled by their enemies.

Serbs in Sarajevo have protested for days against the peace agreement initialed last week in Dayton, Ohio, which calls for some of their leaders to step down and for the capital to be unified under a Muslim-Croat federation.

Residents of Serb-held suburbs are afraid of reprisals for nearly four years of war.

"A Muslim shell killed my 14-year-old son. Our shells killed their children," said Snezana Zugic, whose suburb, Otes, saw thousands flee when the Serbs

took it over in December 1992. "We can't live together. Can't the world see that?"

But she added, "There is nowhere to go."

U.N. refugee officials predict many of the estimated 40,000 to 60,000 people in Serb-held districts — Serbs say the number is double — would leave the capital if the accord goes through.

"They've been through so much propaganda, and there is so much hostility and so much hatred, that I don't think they will be taking chances," Kris Janowski, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, said Monday.

In a statement addressed to residents on both sides of the confrontation line, President Alija Izetbegovic promised Monday to provide "full security to the (Serb) civilians, and also efficient and energetic pursuit of the guilty ones."

The government-held part of

Sarajevo was the most heavily shelled in the Serb siege that began in April 1992. But front-line areas were badly battered on both sides.

"They are chasing us from here, and we have been dying to keep our homes," said Nenad Veljkovic, a 57-year-old resident of the Serb-held suburb Ilidza.

Some of his neighbors said they would remain at all costs.

"You see how we have lived," said a woman who identified herself only as Radenka. She gestured to half-burned houses with shattered windows. "If we haven't left in the past four years, why would we now?"

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic grudgingly accepted the deal worked out by his former mentor, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Karadzic was barred from the Dayton talks because a U.N. court has accused him of war crimes.

For the same reason, under the

accord, he and Serb military commander Gen. Ratko Mladic cannot hold leadership positions in the new government.

In an interview with *Info Matin*, a Paris daily, Karadzic vowed "carnage" if NATO soldiers try to arrest him on war crimes charges.

Karadzic is demanding renegotiation of the Sarajevo issue and international protection for Serb-held districts. He promised the Serbs his troops will remain in Sarajevo until that protection is guaranteed.

"[The Serbs] would never accept the presence of Muslim soldiers and policemen in their neighborhood. If that were the case, Sarajevo would become the Beirut of Europe," he told *Info Matin* Monday.

On Monday, Bosnian Foreign Minister Muhamed Sacirbey reiterated government assurances that Serbs who have not committed crimes will be given the same

rights as other Sarajevo residents. But he ruled out any renegotiation of the Dayton agreement.

"The Sarajevo arrangement is one of the most complex and difficult aspects of the overall Dayton agreement," he told reporters in Zagreb, Croatia. He warned that any attempt to renege on or redefine the accord would destroy it.

The United States, which oversaw the Dayton deal, has also ruled out any changes.

At a meeting with U.N. representatives and foreign diplomats, government officials debated ways of convincing Serbs to stay in a unified Sarajevo.

They came up with such ideas as weekend family visits across confrontation lines under U.N. supervision; restoration of telephone links between the two parts of the city and TV talk shows with residents from both sides participating.

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Canada tries to pacify Quebec

■ PROPOSALS:

Canadian officials are hopeful Quebec will decide not to secede

TORONTO (AP) — Seeking to head off another secession attempt, the federal government proposed Monday to recognize Quebec formally as a distinct society and offered to give it a veto over constitutional change.

The widely expected initiatives have been rejected in advance by Quebec's separatist government, which narrowly lost an independence referendum Oct. 30 and intends to repeat a breakaway attempt within the next few years.

Still, Prime Minister Jean Chretien hopes the gestures toward Quebec will persuade a majority of voters in the French-speaking province that their interests will be served if they remain in Canada.

Chretien announced his plan at a news conference after briefing members of his ruling Liberal Party. The package is likely to win approval easily because of the large liberal majority in the House of Commons.

The plan includes:

- Recognition in a Commons resolution that Quebec is a distinct society within Canada that includes a French-speaking majority, a unique culture and a tradition of civil law.

- Passing a law in Parliament giving four regions — Quebec, Ontario, the Atlantic provinces and the Western provinces — a veto over any constitutional change.

- Withdrawal by the federal government from job training, leaving this program in the hands of provincial authorities.

None of the changes would be entrenched in the Constitution.

Chretien said his plan was just the start of changes promised during the referendum campaign.

"We must all work together to build an even better Canada," he said.