



## Church of the Brethren General Board

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# Resolution on Conflict in the Balkans

October, 1992

**WHEREAS** the Church of the Brethren, having always believed that peace is the will of God, stands in opposition to the tremendous evil that war brings upon human beings wherever it occurs, and reacts with sorrow and deep concern to the tragic conflict that now engulfs the people of the former Yugoslavia and

**WHEREAS** the church firmly rejects ethnic bigotry, nationalistic pride and religious intolerance, which results in senseless killing, massive starvation and heinous violations of basic human rights, and

**WHEREAS** the church is convinced that armed conflict only escalates tensions and human suffering and that no crime against humanity by one side justifies retaliatory crimes by the other,

**THEREFORE** the Church of the Brethren General Board, meeting in Elgin, Illinois, October 17-20, 1992, calls its members, congregations and institutions to pray for all people experiencing conflict in the Balkans that they may receive God's gift of peace and to strongly encourage our governmental leaders, international authorities and world leaders to:

- appeal forthrightly for respect for life and religious tolerance on all sides of the dispute and the easing of suffering for the people of the Balkans;
- promote nonviolent initiative and resolution of the conflict rather than the imposition of military force in seeking and securing the peace;
- clearly separate humanitarian actions from political and military agendas involved in the dispute;
- pursue and support intense international diplomatic efforts to establish and maintain negotiations between all parties in the controversy;
- advocate for a fully funded and expanded infusion of UN Peacekeeping personnel in order to de-escalate armed conflict, to ensure the access of UN and International Red Cross staff to refugee and prisoner of war camps, and to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian relief material to all victims of the conflict;
- establish, maintain and support a full embargo on weapons and munitions to the combatants of the dispute;
- promote and seek through non-military means to support the legitimate rights of self-determination for each republic and ethnic minority in the Balkans; and
- support individuals and organization working within these Balkan communities to reject warfare and ease the suffering of all peoples in this war-ravaged region of the world.

*The following Annual Conference Statements form the policy base for the resolution:*

*Peacemaking: The Calling of God's People in History, 1991*

*Covert Operations and Covert War, 1988*

*Justice and Nonviolence, 1977*

*The Church of the Brethren on War, 1970*