

**Houston Area
Model United Nations
Crisis Committee**

Kosovo Intervention



Crisis Director | Joshua Pietsch
Houston Area Model United Nations 51
February 6 & 7, 2026

Note to Delegates

Hello Delegates,

My name is Joshua Pietsch and I am a freshman economics major at the University of Texas at Arlington. I am so excited to be your Crisis Director for NATO: Kosovo Intervention!

This committee has you going through a pivotal time in NATO's history as the alliance begins to shift towards taking a bigger role in global conflicts. The organization began to see itself not only as a mediator for conflicts but also as a force that could intervene if necessary. NATO already has a precedent of intervening in the conflicts of Yugoslavia, but in Bosnia it was with UN approval after it had already been ruled a genocide. As you enter this committee think about not only the consequences of your actions, but the consequences of inaction.

A couple of tips as you approach this committee: Research, research, research! This topic has a lot of nuances and your characters have many different interests to balance, so having a good understanding of it all will set you up for success in committee; Try to step out of your comfort zone, and use unique methods to approach the problems you'll face in this committee; Most importantly however, have fun! If you have any questions about the committee please feel free to reach out!

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CD for NATO: Kosovo Intervention

HAMUN 51

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Background

Kosovo under Tito's Yugoslavia

The history of this conflict can primarily be drawn back to the creation of communist Yugoslavia under Josip Tito after World War II. As Tito sought to consolidate power in the country, he snuffed out all forms of nationalism from all ethnicities in Yugoslavia. This included splitting the larger Serbian Socialist Republic by creating two Socialist Autonomous Provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo. During this time, Albanian Nationalists were heavily persecuted and silenced, however progress was made in gaining autonomy slowly. In 1974 a change in the constitution gave Kosovo many of the privileges the other republics had, like a seat on the federal presidency and its own assembly.



Map of Yugoslavia 1970. (SR; Socialist Republic) (SAP; Socialist Autonomous Province)

Kosovo after Tito

After Tito's death in May 4th 1980, power in Kosovo still resided with the Communist Party, but it the assembly became dominated by ethnic Albanians. Tito's death also brought a long period of economic and political instability. It started in 1981, when a student protest at the University of Pristina spread throughout Kosovo, only ending after the Yugoslav government declared a state of emergency and sent in the army. The protest led to some Serbs leaving Kosovo and moving to Serbia, leading many Serbs in the Yugoslav government to create plans to reduce the power of the Albanians in Kosovo

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The Rise of Slobodan Milošević

Yugoslavia toiled through the rest of the 1980s with occasional bursts of ethnic conflict, that slowly increased interethnic tensions across the country, but it wouldn't fully implode until the rise of Slobodan Milošević. He was a middling politician for most of his career, but after expressing support for Serbians in Kosovo his popularity amongst Serbian nationalists rose dramatically.

He used this backing to win the presidency of Serbia in 1989, and immediately used his power to crack down on Kosovo autonomy. In March 1989 he declared an "anti-bureaucratic revolution" in Kosovo by stripping the province of many of its privileges, as well as imposing a curfew and state of emergency. He claimed these measures to be necessary to protect Kosovo's Serbs from Albanian harassment.

This culminated with 118 Albanian delegates of the 180-member Kosovo Assembly gathering in front of the barred parliament and declaring Kosovo an independent republic in Yugoslavia. Days later the Serbian Assembly voted to dissolve the Kosovo Assembly and took full control of the province.



Milosevic giving his famous Gazimestan speech; June 28 1989

The Republic of Kosova

In September of 1991, ethnic Albanians held an unofficial referendum on independence in which they voted overwhelmingly in favor. They established the Republic of Kosova, a proto-state entity the began to create parallel institutions not recognized by Serbia. As the Serbian government fired basically all ethnically Albanians from government, many join the Republic of Kosova. The government ran its own taxes, hospitals and schools with relative success from exile.

The Brewing Conflict in Kosovo

Tensions only grew in the years between the start of the conflict, as Serbs fleeing the violence from Croatia, and Bosnia ended up settling in Kosovo and forcing out ethnic Albanians with the help of the Serbian government. This only deepened the hatred between the two groups and set the stage for War in 1998.



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Timeline

Fallout From the Yugoslav Wars

The Balkans has long been a flash point for conflict in Europe, however the collapse of Yugoslavia has brought new complications to this centuries old warzone. As new nations have attempted to emerge from the chaos, they have often alienated minority groups living in their territory, forcing mass migrations, and often times resulting in inter-ethnic violence. The new wave of violence in Kosovo is a result of these migrations and attacks. As Serbs fled from conflict in Croatia, Slovenia, and especially Bosnia, many decided to take up residence in Kosovo. These settlers were propped up by the Serbian government and only contributed to the greater economic inequality between ethnic Albanians and Serbians

Outbreak of War

On April 22nd 1996, 4 simultaneous attacks happened against Serbian security personnel across Kosovo. The KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army), claimed responsibility and brought itself into the forefront of the fight for Kosovo's independence. The KLA was a separatist militia that believed in greater Albania, an expanded Albanian state that would encompass parts of Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro. In 1998 the attacks intensified, centering around the Drenica Valley and slowly began taking territory and small settlements like.

The Serbian Response

In April of 1998, Serbia held a referendum on intervening in Kosovo and it was rejected decisively. Despite this Serbian forces still engaged in border raids, and shelled towns thought to be KLA strongholds. September would prove to be the turning point in the conflict, as after successive KLA in the regions around Pristina, and evidence of war crimes had been discovered by the UN force monitoring the situation, drawing the ire of NATO.

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NATO Starts to get Involved

In June of 1998, President Bill Clinton declared a state of emergency due to the threats imposed on national security and US foreign policy by Serbian forces in the Kosovo War. In September the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1199, expressing grave concern at the indiscriminate use of force Serbian forces had been using. In October of 1998 NATO gave orders for limited airstrikes on Serbian forces, however they were withdrawn after the OSCE confirmed Serbia's compliance with the UNSC resolution 1203.

Greater Atrocities Discovered

At the start of 1999, the OSCE was discovering more and more evidence of war crimes being committed by Serbian forces. On January 15th, the OSCE received reports of civilians being killed in Račak. What the team found would later be used as evidence of war crimes against Milošević, and other top officials. When the Račak massacre began to top news headlines across the world, international pressure only ramped up. The Western World turned up its pressure campaign while countries like China and Russia chose question the validity of the claims.

The Present Situation

With conflict only growing, and reports of ethnic cleansing coming in, it seems that NATO is on a direct path to conflict with Serbia. Many countries in the West feel strongly about this, as they feel atrocities on this scale haven't been seen since the Second World War. However many countries in the east and global south don't feel too strongly on an issue like this and are more worried about NATO's mandate to infringe on another countries sovereignty. Unlike their intervention in Bosnia, there is no UN approval for any use of force against Serbian forces. For NATO this puts them into a tough spot as the world is watching to see whether the defensive alliance will attack another country who hasn't attacked them. What precedent will that set for other global powers? How can NATO claim moral superiority when it has no claim to action in Kosovo?. NATO must decide whether to continue to try diplomacy, or take action to prevent another genocide.



Graves of those killed in the Račak massacre



Committee Brief

NATO has long stood as a defensive alliance and bulwark to communism in Europe. With its main geopolitical rival of the Soviet Union gone however, NATO has been left to try and figure out what purpose the alliance should serve in the world.

In Bosnia the alliance already established itself as a force for peace in helping the UN stop the ethnic violence between the Bosnians and Serbs. This time is different however, as less countries in the international community are on board with NATO intervening, with China and Russia standing as supporters of Serbia. Without UNSC approval any actions taken by NATO will likely be seen as an overreach of power, and a violation of Serbia's sovereignty. Can NATO really let another genocide happen on its doorstep when it has the means to act?

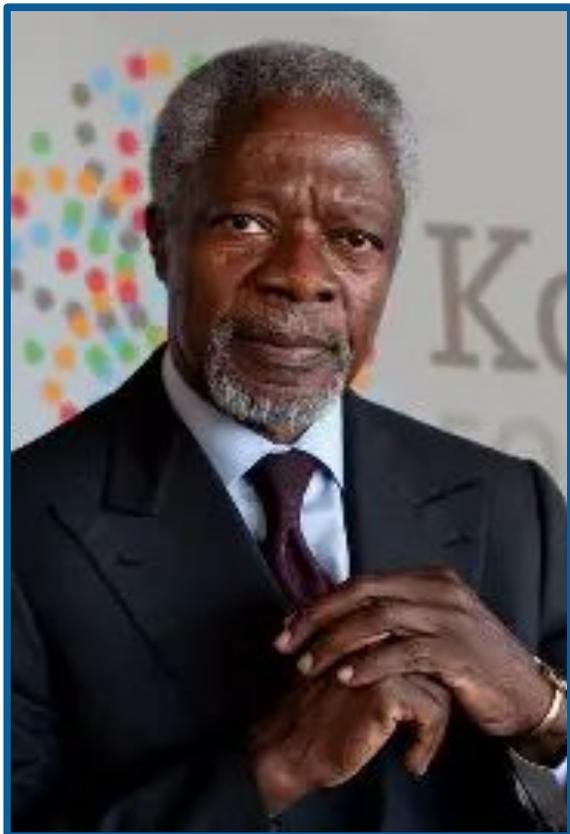
It is up to the countries within NATO, as well as NATO high command, to decide what course the organization should take on this issue. Is the time right to strike Serbian forces? Should NATO be backing a separatist movement that's been spearheaded by a terrorist organization? How would the international community reach to actions taken without the approval of the UN? These are all questions that delegates should consider when entering in committee. Tread carefully, for in this new age anything can happen.

Your Goals

- Prevent any more atrocities from occurring in Kosovo
- Create a ceasefire agreement between the KLA and Serbian forces and ensure it isn't violated
- Ensure that the Albanian and Serbian populations living in Kosovo are treated fairly as equal citizens
- Take action in a way that will not provoke any strong diplomatic response from other countries

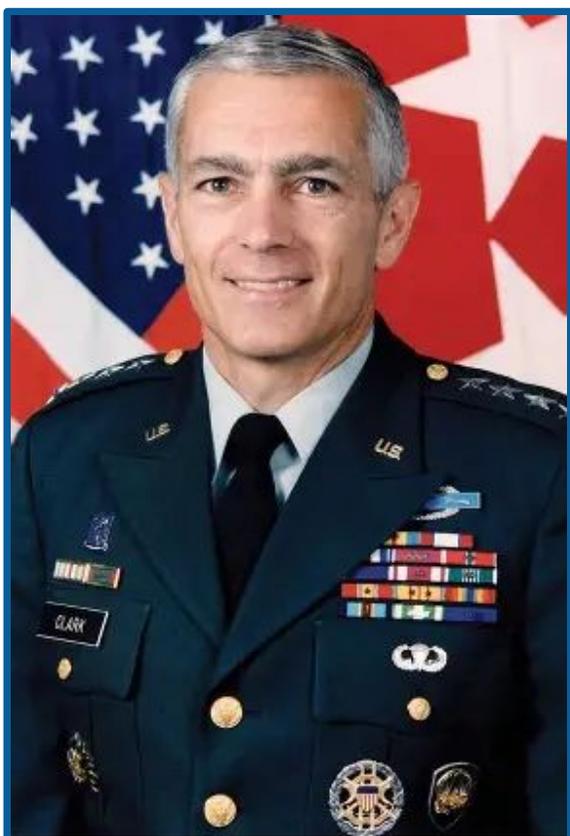


Characters



Kofi Annan

Sworn in as Secretary General of the UN in 1997, the Kosovo War served as one of the first tests of Annan's leadership during a crisis. As a seasoned diplomat he has tried to get international support for intervention in Kosovo, while also promoting a negotiated settlement yet both have seemed far from fruition.



Wesley Clark

Clark served as an army man for basically his entire life. He attended West Point, and was valedictorian of his class. He served in Vietnam where he won both bronze and silver star for his bravery in service. He slowly worked his way up the chain of command before eventually ending up as Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He was known for shrewd military intelligence, and his ability to take decisive action in the right moments

Characters



Rupert Smith

As a long time military man, Rupert Smith found his rise into NATO during the Gulf War. As Major General of the 1st Armored Division, Rupert Smith led the largest British armored force since WWII and won many awards for his service. As Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Smith worked in tandem with the rest of NATO command, and world leaders to decide on the best strategy for a possible intervention in Kosovo.



Harold W. Gehman Jr.

Gehman spent his life in the Navy and was successful at it. He served as the commander on the USS Conserver, USS Dahlgren, before eventually leading Cruiser-Destroyer Group 8. His achievements brought him to NATO, where he became the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, governing the US Navy's role in all NATO Activity.

Characters



James O. Ellis

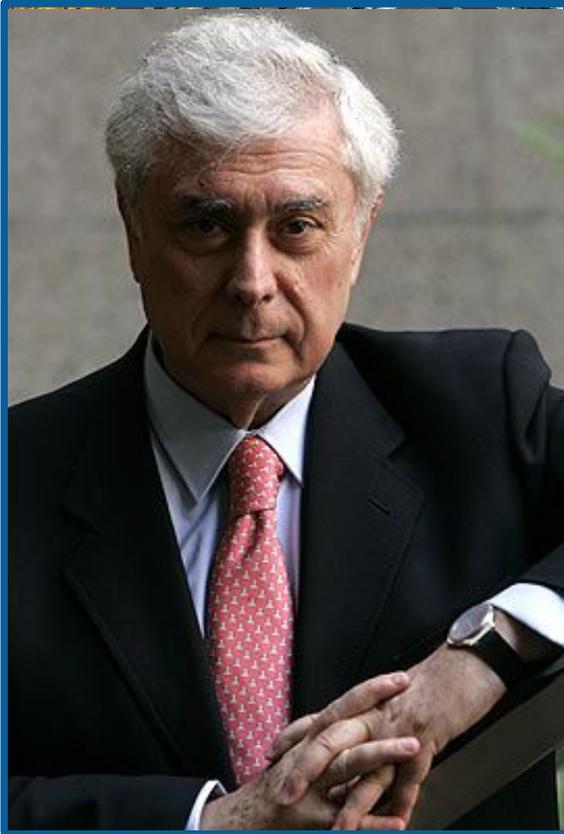
Ellis had a colorful career in the Navy before becoming AFSOUTH commander. He graduated from the U.S Naval Academy, and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1971. His big break came in 1991 when he became the commanding officer aboard the U.S.S Abraham Lincoln during the Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf War. His service in the gulf eventually lead him to becoming a NATO commander, holding the troops and equipment ready to strike if necessary.



Joachim Spiering

Joachim Spiering started his career in the German Army in 1960 as an officer candidate. Starting from 1976 Spiering worked in various NATO offices in various positions. He was eventually promoted to AFCENT commander in April of 1998. His experience in various positions within NATO's command has given him the respect of many in the organization

Characters



Javier Ruperez

A seasoned Diplomat, Ruperez served as the Spanish ambassador Poland, Finland, and Switzerland before becoming President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. He also has strong connections within the Spanish Government, as he was critical in founding the *Partido Popular* party, the party of the current Prime Minister.



Javier Solana

Serving as the Foreign Minister of Spain under Felipe Gonzalez, Javier Solana was a fundamental force in the new government of Spain after Franco's death. After a successful tenure as Foreign Minister he was recommended for NATO Secretary General and took charge at the end of 1996.

Characters



George Tenet

George Tenet spent his entire career making friends in D.C. From his time in Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, to his appointed into the NSC, Tenet made allies where he went. After becoming director of the CIA, he went on a mission to “re-energize” the CIA. He felt that it had lost its ability to see and prevent threats after the Cold-War, and sought to focus on new problems like China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran



Madeleine Albright

Albright was born in Czechoslovakia in 1937, right before the signing of the Munich Agreement, and Germany’s invasion of Czechoslovakia. Because of this she always had a special interest in Eastern Europe, and she carried that after emigrating to the U.S. Her work impressed enough people in D.C. to get her appointed as the first female Secretary of State. To her, Serbia’s constant wars against its neighbors are unacceptable, and all measures must be used to stop them.

Characters



William Cohen

Cohen was a veteran politician by the time he was appointed as Secretary of Defense. He served in the House from 1973-1979, before making a successful bid for the Senate and serving there from 1979-1997. His time in congress helped him to get connected with many important people, leading to his appointment as Secretary of Defense in 1997. He believed that intervention in Kosovo might be necessary but wanted it to only be done when absolutely necessary.



George Robertson

Robertson began his career in politics as a Labour MP in 1978. He was re-elected 5 times, served as the chairman of the Labour Party in Scotland, as well as being appointed to the privy council. After Labour won the 1997 General Election, Robertson served as the Secretary of State of Defense for Tony Blair. He was a staunch supporter of Kosovo and believed that inaction would set a poor example.

Characters



Robin Cook

Cook's career in politics began when he successfully ran to become an MP in 1974 for the Edinburgh Central Constituency. Cook's ability to debate led him to become a frontbench spokesman in 1980. With the election of the Labour Government in 1997, he was appointed Foreign Secretary by Tony Blair. In regards to Kosovo he originally favored a diplomatic solution setting up the Rambouillet Conference with French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine. However after it's failure he began pushing for intervention.



Hubert Védrine

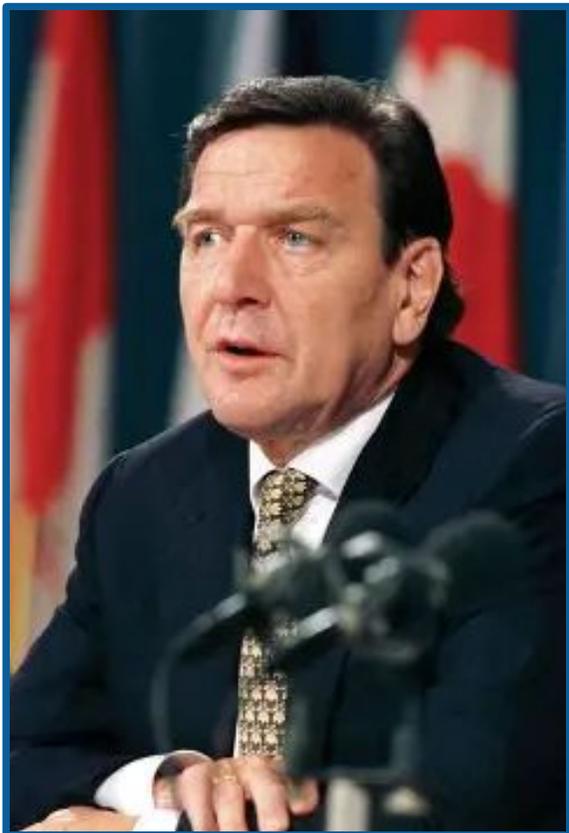
Védrine was one of the longest serving aides of former President François Mitterrand, and in that position he gained lots of experience in diplomacy. After President Chirac's conservatives lost the 1997 parliamentary elections, Védrine was called to serve as foreign minister for the Cohabitation government of liberal Prime Minister Jospin. Like Cook, Védrine favored diplomacy at first but as the situation has continued to deteriorate intervention might be necessary

Characters



Alain Richard

Richard began his career in politics by becoming mayor of Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône, before successfully running to become a member of the National Assembly. After President Chirac's conservatives lost the 1997 parliamentary elections, Richard was called to serve as Minister of Defense, where he focused on cutting costs in the military. He gave tentative support towards NATO actions, though preferred no direct intervention.



Gerhard Schröder

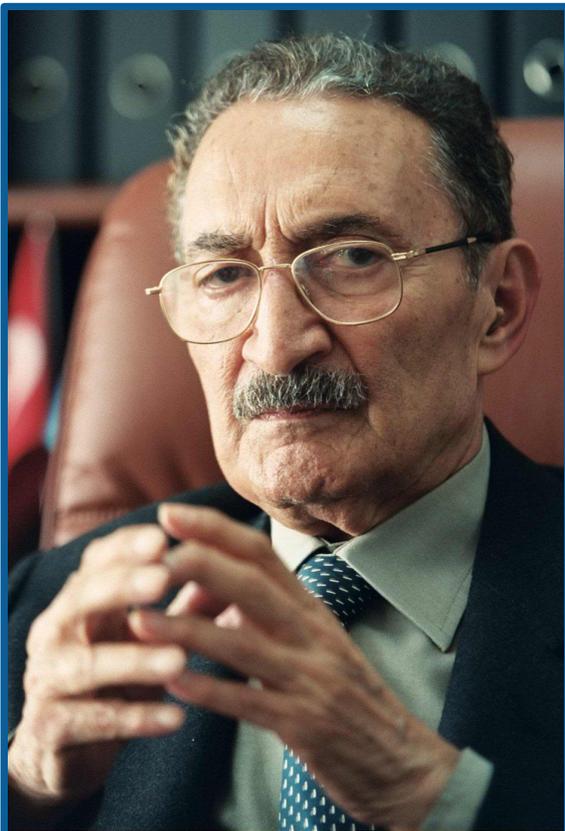
Gerhard Schröder became Chancellor of Germany after defeating the longest serving Chancellor in German History Helmut Kohl. He campaigned on lowering unemployment while strengthening social welfare. As Chancellor, Schröder focused primarily on domestic affairs and felt that interfering in Kosovo would only further destabilize the situation.

Characters



José María Aznar

Jose Aznar was elected as Prime Minister in 1996 and led the first conservative government since democracy was restored in Spain after the death of Franco. During his first term he maintained Spain's commitment to join the European Union's single currency, as well as selling the countries stake in major telecom and petroleum companies.



Bülent Ecevit

By the time, Bülent Ecevit became Prime Minister in January of 1999, He had already served as Prime Minister on 3 separate occasions. His long career as the head of the CHP, made him a force to be reckoned with in Turkish politics. As Prime Minister he focused a lot on fixing Turkey's economic issues, and really pushing for accession into the EU in order to help stabilize Turkey's economy after years of turmoil.

Characters



Jean-Luc Dehaene

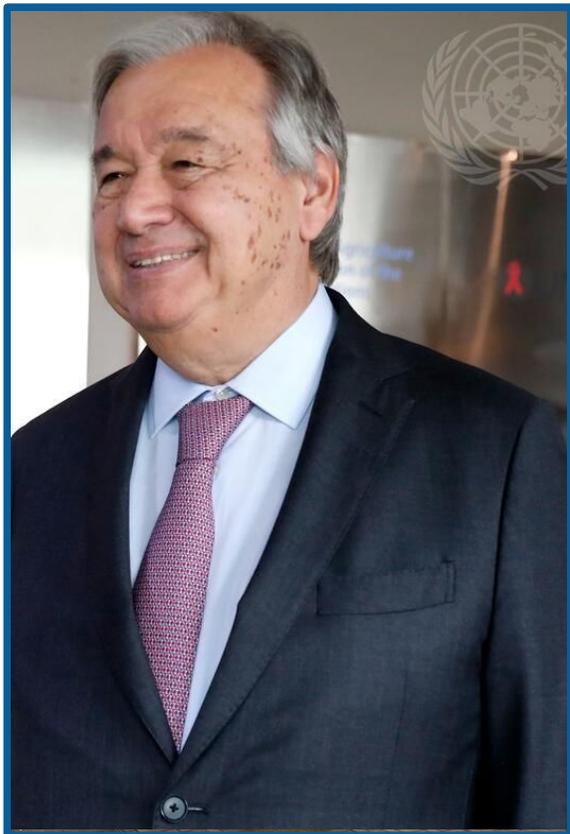
Jean-Luc Dehaene was a well accomplished politician entering the end of his second government coalition. In 1992 he successfully formed a governing coalition between the Christian Democrats and Socialist Democrats, which eventually helped transition Belgium into a federal state in 1993.



Costas Simitis

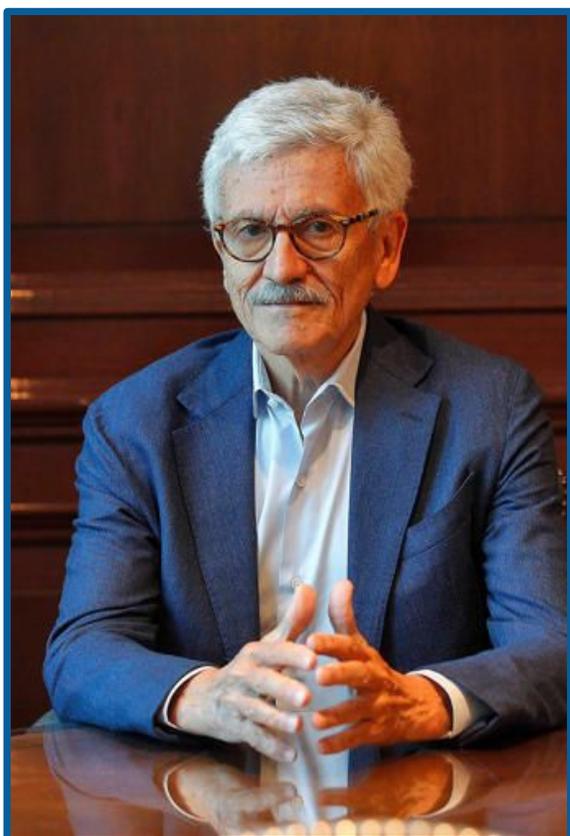
As leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, Simitis did not have the charisma of his predecessor, but was well known as a technocrat who gets the job done. His previous roles as Minister of Agriculture and Minister of the National Economy, helped him to usher in a period of relative stability with economic growth from his modernization efforts.

Characters



Antonio Guterres

Antonio Guterres entered the world of politics when he joined the socialist party in 1974. He slowly worked his way up, eventually becoming secretary general of the socialist party in 1992, and leader of the opposition. In 1995 Antonio Guterres was elected as Prime Minister. On the international stage he was seen as a skilled diplomat, who was negotiated many things through the UN.



Massimo D'Alema

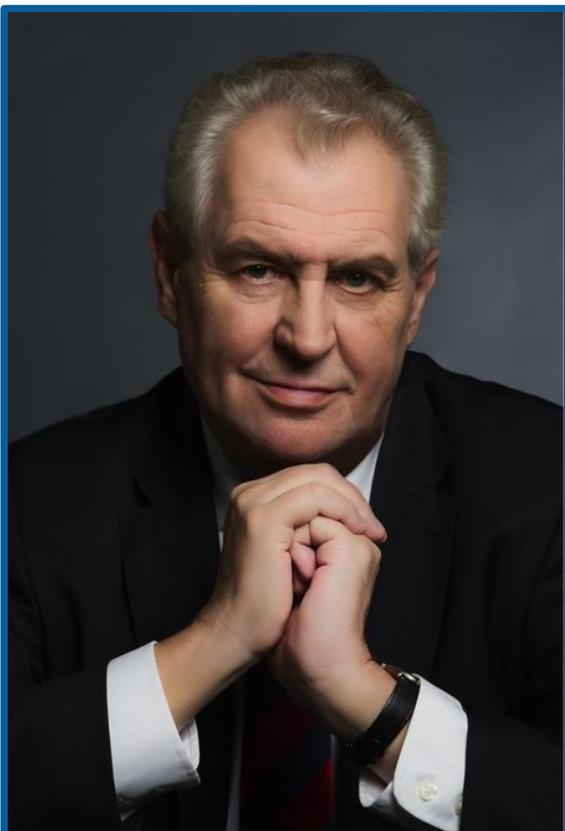
Massimo's road to the Premiership of Italy was a long of convoluted one. He started off in the Italian Communist Youth Federation, transitioning to the Democrats of the Left, which helped springboard D'Alema into the political limelight. Through his expansive coalition talks, D'Alema was able to form a government and become Prime Minister in 1998.

Characters



Poul Nyrup Rasmussen

Rasmussen began his career like many Danish prime ministers by running to be a member of the Folketing. He was deputy for the Social Democrats, before becoming the chairman in 1992. In 1993 Rasmussen successfully created a coalition Social Democrats, Social Liberals, Centre Democrats and Christian Democrats, becoming Prime Minister.



Miloš Zeman

Miloš Zeman found his way into politics when criticizing the Communist party's handling of the economy in Czechoslovakia, which led him to join the civics forum and help lead during the velvet revolution. In 1990 Zeman was elected to the federal assembly and in 1998, he became Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. His personal experience with an oppressive communist government has made him have a personal stake in the Kosovo War.

Characters



Jerzy Buzek

Buzek was born in 1940, in Nazi Germany. His family was once prominent in the politics of the Second Polish Republic, before it was conquered. Buzek was part of the anti-communist movement in Poland during the 1980s, acting as chairman for 4 of the national general meetings. His position in the anti-communist movement is what eventually helped him become Prime Minister in 1997 with the centre-right AWS coalition.



Viktor Orban

Viktor Orban's ascent into the halls of power in Hungary is like many other leaders in Eastern Europe. When studying law in 1988, he founded the alliance of young democrats (FIDEZ), and fought for political change in Hungary. Eventually his work as party leader led to FIDEZ's coalition winning the 1998 elections and Orban becoming Prime Minister. He was the first Prime Minister elected in Eastern Europe who was not a former communist party member.

Characters



Jean Chrétien

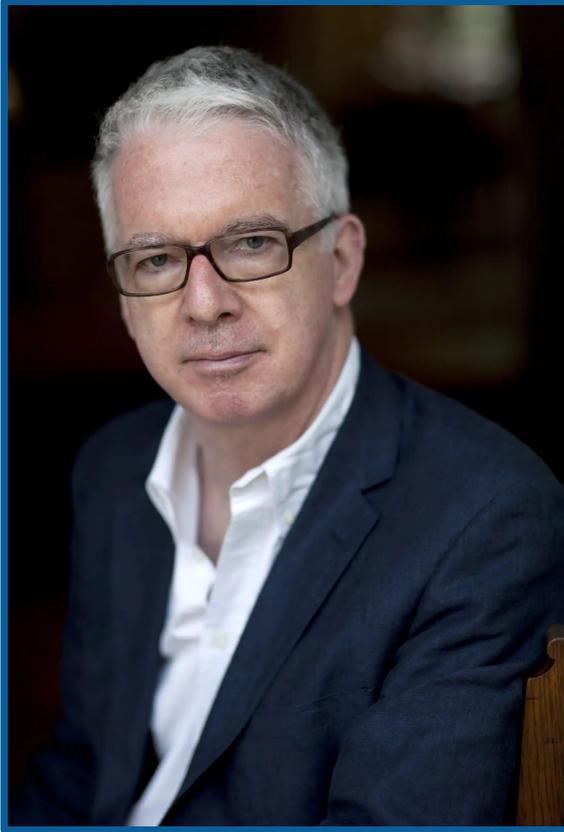
Jean Chrétien was probably one of the most experienced politicians by the time he became Prime Minister. He previously served as Minister of National Revenue, Finance, and Energy. After taking a break from politics in 1986, he came back in 1990 to win leadership of the liberal party, and become the leader of the opposition. He then led the liberals to victory in the 1993 election to become Prime Minister of Canada.



Joseph Lelyveld

Lelyveld was born with a passion for journalism. He attended Harvard University for his Bachelors and Masters, before beginning to work for *The New York Times* in 1962. In 3 years he went from a copy editor to foreign correspondent and began to report on various international issues. In 1986 he received a Pulitzer prize for his book *Move your Shadow*, based on his reporting on South Africa during the 1960s and 1980s. He became executive editor of the NYT in 1994.

Characters



Peter Stothard

Stothard's journey into journalism began at Oxford when he became editor of the school's newspaper *Cherwell*. In 1992 he became Editor-in-Chief of *The Times* and helped its revenue reach new highs. He is well known for his reporting on the inner workings of political machines, and used the power of the press to keep governments in check.



Kenneth Roth

A human rights activist, Kenneth Roth originally started his career as a private litigator. Finding work sparse, he worked as a lawyer during the day, and spent his nights and weekends doing human rights work. Eventually he joined Human Rights Watch in 1987 as deputy director, later becoming executive director in 1993. Since then he dedicated his life to upholding and spreading human rights around the world.

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