

# Parish of S. GIACOMO – Medjugorje

**Medjugorje, 12 April 2001**

For the attention of:

**WOLFGANG PETRITSCH**, United Nations representative for the Enactment of the Dayton Agreement

**JACQUES KLEIN**, Office of the Representation of Top Commanders of S-FOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina

**MILLER**, USA Ambassador in Bosnia-Herzegovina (please could you have this delivered to the United States Military Chaplain)

Gentlemen,

The parishioners of Medjugorje, numerous pilgrims coming from every part of the world and all the personnel of the Parish administration in Medjugorje are very surprised by the behaviour of the soldiers and officers of S-FOR:

- On April 10 this year at about 4:00pm, many tanks entered the Sanctuary of the Queen of Peace with their weapons on view.

They went at high speed through the streets of the village accompanied by military trucks and jeeps as well as heavily armed soldiers. In a zone of the sanctuary called Podbrdo, they bumped into a group of 1000 pilgrims.

The aggressive behaviour of the soldiers surprised them and they felt very uncomfortable in that situation.

Honoured gentlemen, is it not sad to see tanks and trucks and soldiers carrying weapons alongside pilgrims with rosary beads in their hands? Who needs such visual scenes?

- On 11 April, S-FOR vehicles, trucks and tanks drove round the sanctuary many times and thus provoked the disapproval and the discomfort of inhabitants and pilgrims.

- The S-FOR:helicopters often fly over the sanctuary, usually during the celebration of Holy Mass or during the recitation of the rosary. This upsets the hearts of the pilgrims and distracts them from prayer.

Gentlemen, you know that Medjugorje is a Sanctuary of the Virgin, the Queen of Peace, well known all over the world.

Millions and millions of pilgrims have found peace here. The crucial part of the message of Medjugorje is peace. Even during the worst moments of the recent war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the pilgrims of Medjugorje have been witnesses of love, peace and reconciliation. This is why we are surprised by the frequent happenings that are out of place in this place. We are particularly surprised because in the last few years, members of the S-FOR: have come to pray at Medjugorje. Think of the Spanish battalion that stayed at Medjugorje for many years and there was never even a single incident.

Honoured gentlemen, we would like to remind you once more that Medjugorje is the Sanctuary of the Queen of Peace, and that its message is to spread peace and reconciliation.

This is why we are appealing to you to stop upsetting the village, the parishioners and the pilgrims who come here to find peace through prayer. If your mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina is to safeguard peace, then we hope that you will understand our appeal. This appeal is sent out to all those prayer groups and centres for peace throughout the world, that are founded on the fruits of Medjugorje, with a request to put pressure on people and on governments of the various countries to put an end to this type of behaviour by the S-FOR army.

The parish priest  
Dr. Fr. Ivan Sesar  
Parishioners and pilgrims