

fire would hold and that political negotiations could prosper. There followed a temporary calm, permitting those who had been obliged to camp in the open to reach shelter, the gradual return of some of the displaced to their homes and the implementation of a major humanitarian protection and assistance operation. At the same time, on the political front, intensive efforts were undertaken by the Contact Group and other States to bring about a political solution culminating in the Rambouillet and Kleber negotiations. Unfortunately these efforts did not reach the political settlement which had been hoped for.

4. In late December 1998 fighting again broke out in Kosovo, and intensified, eventually spreading to areas previously unaffected by the violence, such as along the border with The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Fresh displacement combined with re-displacement occurred and accelerated. After the Rambouillet round of negotiations, the burning of homes and destruction of villages by Serb forces, not seen since September 1998, started again and KLA provocation in the form of killings and disappearances, as well as attacks on police and other security forces intensified. By 24 March 1999, UNHCR estimated that there were some 260,000 (old and newly) displaced persons in Kosovo.

5. With the commencement of air-strikes against military targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including in Kosovo province, by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on 24 March 1999 to 2 April, 220,000 persons were forcibly expelled from Kosovo to Albania, The former Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro. The number of those fleeing to or displaced within other parts of Serbia is not known, but it can be assumed that displacement has occurred, creating additional humanitarian needs. New arrivals have also been recorded in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania and Turkey, and a number of other countries, as well as Member States of the European Union (see also HIWG/99/3).

### III. SCALE OF THE HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY

6. Despite all efforts, displacement has reached dramatic proportions, placing an enormous burden on receiving States, such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which are ill-equipped to handle mass influxes. The scale of the present emergency goes beyond the worst scenarios previously envisaged in the United Nation's contingency planning for the region and has obliged the United Nations to revise substantially its contingency ceilings for planning purposes throughout the region (see table below). The growing insecurity led the United Nations to oblige all staff to evacuate from Kosovo on 23 March 1999. At that time, there were over 260,000 internally displaced persons. At the same time there remained some 7,000 Croatian Serb refugees in Kosovo and over 500,000 refugees in FRY (other than Kosovo) which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had been hosting for a number of years.

7. Since there has been no international United Nations presence, there has been little information on the number of people displaced inside Kosovo or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia after 24 March. There is little doubt that their number must be high and their suffering great. Once information becomes available and the security situation permits, relief to refugees and displaced in all parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will need to be factored into a revision of the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the region, compiled by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The latest »United Nations Inter-Agency Donor Alert for Urgent Needs related to the Kosovo Crisis in the Region« takes into account present and foreseeable contingencies, but will be revised quickly as the situation evolves, based on modular increases of additional 300,000 arrivals in neighbouring countries and provinces.