

EURO - YELTSIN WARNS NATO AHEAD OF EUROPEAN SUMMIT

BY NICHOLAS DOUGHTY

BUDAPEST, DEC 4 (REUTER) - RUSSIA RAISED THE STAKES IN A DISPUTE OVER EUROPEAN SECURITY IN ADVANCE OF A SUMMIT ON MONDAY, ATTACKING WESTERN PLANS TO EXPAND NATO AND RAISING THE PROSPECT OF A RETURN TO COLD WAR-STYLE TENSION.

THE COMMENTS BY RUSSIAN PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN AND THE APPARENT LACK OF SUCCESS IN A NEW DIPLOMATIC DRIVE FOR PEACE IN BOSNIA THREATENED ANY PROSPECT OF HARMONY AT THE TWO-DAY SUMMIT OF MORE THAN 50 COUNTRIES.

THE MEETING OF THE 53-NATION CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (CSCE), WHICH U.S. PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON IS ALSO ATTENDING, WILL TRY TO AGREE WAYS TO PREVENT FURTHER YUGOSLAV-STYLE CONFLICTS ON A DIVIDED AND TROUBLED CONTINENT.

UKRAINE WILL FORMALLY RENOUNCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT THE SUMMIT ON MONDAY, A BIG STEP FORWARD FOR SECURITY.

BUT RUSSIA'S CONCERNS THAT NATO PLANS TO TAKE IN EASTERN EUROPEAN STATES WOULD LEAVE IT ISOLATED COUPLED WITH DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT PEACEKEEPING IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND DIFFERENCES OVER BOSNIA ARE LIKELY TO DOMINATE THE MEETING.

"RUSSIA IS AGAINST THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE EXPANDING THE SPHERE OF ITS INFLUENCE TO THE EAST, SINCE THEN NATO'S FRONTIERS WILL APPROACH THE BORDER OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION," YELTSIN SAID BEFORE LEAVING FOR BUDAPEST.

"AS YOU KNOW WE ARE AGAINST SUCH HUGE MULTINATIONAL GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS. WE HAVE ONLY JUST STOPPED EXISTING AS TWO BLOCS AND WE'RE ON THE POINT OF GOING BACK INTO IT. OF COURSE THIS IS INADMISSIBLE AND WON'T BE EFFECTIVE IN SECURITY QUESTIONS."

ON ARRIVAL IN BUDAPEST, THE KREMLIN LEADER HELD TALKS WITH HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER GYULA HORN. HUNGARY, HOSTING THE SUMMIT, IS ONE OF MOSCOW'S FORMER SATELLITES AND NOW KEEN TO JOIN THE 16-NATION WESTERN ALLIANCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

NATO AGREED LAST WEEK TO START FORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON TAKING IN NEW MEMBERS, UPSETTING MOSCOW. THE ALLIANCE SAYS RUSSIA, EUROPE'S BIGGEST POWER, CANNOT INFLUENCE WHO JOINS.

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN CHRISTOPHER PLAYED DOWN SUGGESTIONS OF A CRISIS WITH RUSSIA.

"RUSSIA AND THE U.S. SHARE A DETERMINATION TO TRY TO ACHIEVE AN INTEGRATION OF EUROPE AND TO AVOID DRAWING ANY MORE LINES OR THE CREATION OF ANY BLOCS," HE TOLD REPORTERS.

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI KOZYREV SAID THE DISAGREEMENT WITH NATO WOULD NOT SOUR MOSCOW'S APPROACH AT THE SUMMIT BUT HE UNDERLINED HIS COUNTRY'S CONCERN THAT IT COULD BE LEFT WITHOUT A SAY IN MAJOR SECURITY ISSUES.

"WE WANT HONEST, EQUAL AND CLEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH NATO," HE SAID.

IN MOSCOW, THE ITAR-TASS NEWS AGENCY QUOTED KOZYREV AS SAYING RUSSIA'S DIFFERENCES WITH NATO WERE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE BUT MOSCOW WAS STILL NOT READY TO FINALISE A COOPERATION PLAN WITH THE ALLIANCE.

HE MADE CLEAR IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CLEAR UP THE MATTER IF CAREFUL STUDY PROVED NATO WAS STILL INTERESTED IN WHAT HE CALLED A FAIR AND EQUAL PARTNERSHIP WITH RUSSIA.

WORRIED BY THE CRISIS IN THE BREAKAWAY REGION OF CHECHNYA AND OTHER CONFLICTS LAPPING AT RUSSIA'S SOUTHERN FRONTIERS, MOSCOW WANTS THE CSCE TO BECOME EUROPE'S DOMINANT SECURITY ORGANISATION SINCE IT IS A LEADING MEMBER.

THAT IS OPPOSED BY WESTERN ALLIES WHO DO NOT WANT TO HAVE THEIR FREEDOM OF ACTION LIMITED BY MOSCOW OR OTHERS.

CHRISTOPHER SAID THE UNITED STATES WANTED TO STRENGTHEN THE PAN-EUROPEAN SECURITY BODY "SO IT WILL BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH FUTURE CRISES LIKE BOSNIA IN A MORE EFFECTIVE WAY".

MOSCOW IS ALSO RESISTING CALLS FOR THE CSCE TO MONITOR AND CONTROL ITS PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS IN TROUBLED FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS AND HAS BLOCKED PLANS TO APPROVE A 3,000-STRONG MULTINATIONAL (PTO)

FF0134

B-WIRE

04-DEC-1994 22:37:02

EURO - (2) YELTSIN WARNS NATO AHEAD OF EUROPEAN SUMMIT

PEACEKEEPING FORCE FOR NAGORNO-KARABAKH.

OFTEN CRITICISED AS UNWIELDY BECAUSE IT FUNCTIONS ONLY IF ALL MEMBER STATES AGREE, THE CSCE WOULD RECEIVE A BOOST IF THE SUMMIT AGREES TO SEND TROOPS TO THE THE TROUBLED ENCLAVE -- ITS FIRST INVOLVEMENT IN A MILITARY OPERATION.

THE CRISIS IN BOSNIA ALSO POSES SERIOUS PROBLEMS, WITH GROWING TALK THAT U.N. PEACEKEEPERS WILL HAVE TO BE WITHDRAWN IF A FINAL EFFORT TO NEGOTIATE PEACE FAILS.

THE BOSNIA "CONTACT GROUP" OF FIVE COUNTRIES, WHICH MAY MEET IN BUDAPEST, RELAUNCHED ITS PEACE DRIVE LAST WEEK BUT THE BOSNIAN SERBS SHOW NO SIGN OF ACCEPTING ITS PROPOSED PEACE PLAN.

BORN OUT OF A 1975 HELSINKI CONFERENCE, THE CSCE IS LARGELY A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES AND BORDERS.

IT LINKS ALL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA -- UNLIKE THE MORE EXCLUSIVE WESTERN CLUBS OF NATO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION.

HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LASZLO KOVACS SAID ON SUNDAY THAT THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SECURITY COOPERATION WAS AT STAKE.

"THE FATE OF THE CSCE WILL BE DECIDED AT THIS SUMMIT," HE TOLD HUNGARIAN TELEVISION.

"IF IT IS A FAILURE, WHICH I DON'T BELIEVE IT WILL BE, THAT WILL BE THE END OF THE ENTIRE PROCESS.

RF