



Tirana Tries To Impose Control on The South

**Security Forces Move
On Rebellious Cities;
U.S. Assails Policy**

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TIRANA, Albania — The government moved to regain control of towns in southern Albania on Tuesday as President Sali Berisha met with political opponents on the nation's crisis.

Security forces with orders to shoot armed protesters on sight have been moving south from Tirana to quash violence since a state of emergency was declared by Parliament on Sunday.

The disorder erupted after a wave of protests, mainly in the southern part of Europe's poorest country, was sparked by the collapse in January of high-risk pyramid investment schemes.

The authorities said that the Adriatic port of Vlore and the coastal town of Sarande remained out of their control, despite a government ultimatum that forces would shoot without warning if weapons were not surrendered. At least 19 people have been reported killed in Vlore since Friday.

The United States said it strongly regretted Albania's imposition of a state of emergency as well as a vote by Parliament to re-elect Mr. Berisha.

"We strongly regret the measures taken by the Parliament and government today to, in effect, introduce a state of emergency and to introduce censorship of the Albanian press," the State Department's spokesman, Nicholas Burns, said.

"We're very concerned that the state of emergency declared by the Parliament today is being used to stifle legitimate free expression."

In Rome, Italian news agencies reported that two Albanian pilots flew a military aircraft to an Italian military base Tuesday and asked for political asylum.

The plane was a two-seater MiG of the sort made in China and used by the Soviet air force in the 1950s. It is generally armed with 23mm cannon.

The news agency ANSA said the plane landed without permission at the southern Italian base of Galatina at 12:30 P.M.

The two pilots were escorted by the police to administrative offices where they were to request asylum, the agency said.

There was no immediate confirmation from the Italian Defense Ministry.

In London, the NATO secretary general, Javier Solana Malanaga, ruled out any military operation in Albania but left open the possibility that the alliance

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The Dollar			
New York	Tuesday @ 4 P.M.	previous close	
DM	1.7141	1.697	

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could conduct unspecified "new missions of peacekeeping."

"Diplomacy is being done; now is not the time for a military operation by NATO or anybody else," he said, repeating that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was "not the world's policeman."

Diplomats in Brussels acknowledged that the European Union had few options available to it as it sought to contain yet another destabilizing crisis in its Balkan backyard.

In Macedonia, Defense Ministry sources said the army had raised its level of readiness along its border with Al-

bania, fearing an influx of refugees. The border has not been closed, but traffic has been reduced.

Government officials said Albanian soldiers and police forces controlled the main north-south road as far as the hill-top town of Koshovice, beyond the trouble spot of Fier and within 30 kilometers of Vlore.

The Interior Ministry said residents in Fier had surrendered 1,500 weapons and a quantity of ammunition in accordance with a government ultimatum.

Farther south, the chaos showed little sign of ebbing, and television reported that "terrorists" in Vlore killed four people Monday as they tried to give up their guns. While security forces at-

tempted to regain control, Albania's main opposition Socialist Party said it had appealed to Mr. Berisha at a meeting to agree to a new broad-based government to help end the violence.

Parliament, which is controlled by the Democrats, declared the state of emergency after an announcement by Mr. Berisha that his unpopular prime minister, Aleksander Meksi, would resign failed to calm the southern disturbances.

Other state-of-emergency measures included a dusk-to-dawn curfew and tight controls on the media.

Western television broadcasts resumed from Albania after Tirana bowed to criticism over curbs on press freedom.

a European Broadcasting Union official in Geneva said.

It was the first suspension of the broadcasting union's links since 1989, when China interrupted Western reports of the military crackdown at Tiananmen Square, according to Tony Naets, head of Eurovision News Services.

A Justice Ministry spokesman said journalists of foreign media organizations were free to report but advised against any travel to the south. Roadblocks have been set up around Tirana to prevent the noting south from reaching the capital. A curfew was enforced, but gunfire could be heard in the deserted streets Monday night and early Tuesday. (Reuters, AFP)

