

Communiqué of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council

The Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (PIC SB) Political Directors met in Sarajevo on 9-10 June 2015 to reaffirm their strong commitment to a stable, secure, and prosperous Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

The PIC SB welcomed the progress made in implementing the October 2014 general elections. It urged the competent BiH authorities to make improvements to ensure a more transparent and efficient electoral system. The PIC SB called on the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton to form its government without further delay.

In their meeting, the PIC SB congratulated the Chair and Deputy Chairs of the BiH Council of Ministers on assuming office, and welcomed the enthusiasm and commitment of the entire BiH Council of Ministers to implement their reform priorities.

The PIC SB welcomes the entry into force of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between BiH and the European Union on 1 June 2015. The PIC SB calls on the relevant authorities and institutions to engage constructively and show the necessary political will to develop and implement an agenda for reforms that would address issues of direct concern to the citizens, in particular the social-economic situation, rule of law and public administration.

The PIC SB extends to BiH its solidarity in declaring that extremism in any form has no place in democratic societies. The PIC SB encourages competent law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities in BiH at all levels to continue appropriate coordination to prevent threats to public security and to adhere strictly to the applicable laws and human rights standards.

The PIC SB remains concerned over continuing challenges to the provisions of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (Peace Agreement). In this regard, the PIC SB reiterated that the BiH Constitutional Court (Court) is an integral part of Annex 4 of the Peace Agreement, and is key to its implementation. The BiH Constitution explicitly states that decisions of the Court are final and binding. Rejection of the final and binding decisions of the Court, or challenging its authority, conflict with the Peace Agreement. The PIC SB further reminded the authorities in BiH of their obligations to implement all outstanding Court decisions, including the decision concerning the electoral system in Mostar.

The PIC SB underlined its unequivocal commitment to the preservation of BiH's territorial integrity and sovereignty in accordance with international law. Under the Peace Agreement, BiH consists of the two entities, which exist legally by virtue of the BiH Constitution, which does not allow either entity to secede. The PIC SB also recalls that any change to the BiH Constitution must be made in accordance with the amendment procedure prescribed therein.

The NATO members of the PIC SB and Japan welcome the recent progress achieved in the process of the registration of prospective defense property under the ownership of the BiH State, as required by the BiH Law on Defence. They express their full support to all competent institutions in the registration process and for activation of the NATO Membership Action Plan.

With the approaching of the twentieth anniversary of the crime of genocide in Srebrenica, the PIC SB expresses its appreciation for the presentation given by the Mayor of Srebrenica. The PIC SB pays its solemn respect to the victims and their families. The PIC SB reaffirmed that genocide in Srebrenica, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the course of the conflict in BiH must not be forgotten or denied. At the same time the PIC SB believes that this year especially leaders and elected authorities should do their utmost to promote reconciliation work in the interest of all.

The PIC SB reiterated its full support for the High Representative, who will continue to ensure full respect for the Peace Agreement and carry out his mandate under Annex 10 and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, which remains unchanged. The PIC SB reminded all parties of their obligation to comply fully with the Peace Agreement, all its annexes, and decisions of the High Representative. It underlined that the International Community retains the necessary instruments to uphold the Peace Agreement.

The PIC SB emphasized the need to fully implement the 5+2 agenda, which remains necessary for the closure of the Office of the High Representative.

The PIC SB will hold its next meeting in Sarajevo before the end of 2015.