Statement of the Contact Group, Brussels, 4/9/97

Statement of the Contact Group

The Contact Group meeting in Brussels, September 4, unanimously reaffirmed the integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single state, and of each of its two entities. It further reaffirmed that all signatories of the Dayton Agreement, which include the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia, are committed to the full and unconditional implementation of the Peace Agreement, including the realization of pluralist democracy and the rule of law. The Contact Group reiterated the decisions of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board to support those parties which are fully implementing the Dayton Peace Agreement, and to levy sanctions against those which are not. The Contact Group agreed that:

First, municipal elections throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina will proceed as scheduled, on September 13 and 14, under OSCE supervision;

Second, Assembly elections have been called for in the Republika Srpska. The Contact Group confirms its determination to support supervision by the OSCE of these and other elections to be held in the Republika Srpska, according to constitutional provisions;

Third, terrorist acts and provocations, including those against international personnel, in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unacceptable and will be met with an appropriate response, as envisaged by the Peace Agreement;

Fourth, the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be impartial, open and truthful. Inflammatory broadcasts, including attacks on the international community, will not be tolerated. The media must be accessible to all political forces; the High Representative will make forceful use of the authority provided to him under Article 70 of the Sintra Declaration to curtail or suspend any media network or program whose output is in persistent and blatant contravention of either the spirit or letter of the Peace Agreement;

Fifth, the Contact Group stresses the need immediately to continue and accelerate reform of the police forces throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the principles of democratic policing;

Sixth, the Contact Group condemns the corruption which is pervasive throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative will report to the next meeting of the PIC Steering Board on actions to be taken to address this problem.

Office of the High Representative