



## **Communiqué of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board**

Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board met in Sarajevo on 22-23 May and welcomed the political dialogue and compromise that has been seen in recent months. This has enabled notable progress and offers hope that 2012 can be a landmark year for Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) journey towards stability, prosperity, recovery and reconciliation.

The Steering Board welcomed, among other positive steps, the formation of a Council of Ministers dedicated to moving the country forwards, including the adoption of key EU-required legislation and progress on resolving defence and state property issues. It welcomed the continued close cooperation between the European Union presence, the OHR, and other international actors. Noting that much work remains to be done to enable the country to continue to make progress, including on the EU agenda, the Steering Board called on leaders in BiH to swiftly:

- a. Implement the Sejdic-Finci judgement of the European Court of Human Rights;
- b. Adopt a comprehensive global fiscal framework for 2012-2014 and a 2012 state budget that will ensure the full functioning of the state-level institutions and the fulfilment of BiH's international obligations;
- c. Agree to a functional EU coordination mechanism between the different levels of authority to enable BiH to speak with one voice on EU-related matters.

The PIC Steering Board members welcomed the 9 March Agreement on defence and state property. The NATO members of the PIC and Japan called upon the BiH authorities to complete the steps necessary to enable the start of the country's NATO Membership Action Plan.

The PIC Steering Board reminded the political leaders and competent institutions of the need to preserve achieved reforms and to complete the 5+2 agenda, which remains necessary for OHR closure.

The PIC Steering Board welcomed the statement of the Supervisor that substantial progress has been made in implementation of the Final Award. On this basis, the Steering Board endorsed the decision of the High Representative to close the office in Brcko established under the leadership of the Supervisor by 31 August 2012. It also supported the decision of the Supervisor to suspend his functions from the same date, and recognized the intent of the Supervisor to exercise his functions under paragraphs 13 and 67 of the Final Award when the conditions set out in those provisions have been met.<sup>[1]</sup> In this context, the PIC SB welcomed the EU's intention to establish an office in Brcko to facilitate Brcko's adoption of reforms required for BiH's European integration. The PIC SB will continue to take a close interest in developments in the District and looks forward to receiving regular progress reports, including from the OSCE. The PIC will review the implementation of the High Representative's and the Supervisor's decisions at its next meeting.

The PIC Steering Board reiterated its full support to the state judicial institutions and welcomed the EU-BiH Structured Dialogue on the Judiciary as an essential tool to strengthen the rule of law. It urged parties to fully cooperate with the process to improve the functioning of judicial institutions throughout BiH. The Steering Board also called on the competent authorities to ensure the budgetary and operational independence of the police while providing for the appropriate level of oversight by elected authorities.

The PIC Steering Board welcomed the results of the international donors' conference for the regional housing program held in Sarajevo on April 24, and associated bilateral support to promote durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons. The Steering Board also called upon the competent authorities in BiH to implement their program for durable solutions and to prevent rollback of existing progress on the return of refugees and displaced persons to their pre-war homes, as guaranteed under Annex 7 of the GFAP.

The PIC Steering Board welcomed the expressed willingness of both Entities to participate in a joint commission on preparing a precise description of the IEBL, as called for in Annex 2 of the GFAP, and urged all parties to form the commission as soon as possible.

The PIC Steering Board urged political parties and leaders to campaign during the forthcoming municipal elections in a forward-looking, constructive, and responsible manner.

The PIC Steering Board 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. Srebrenica and its victims have a particular significance because of the genocide committed there. In light of the upcoming local elections the PIC Steering Board made clear that all leaders and elected authorities should avoid provocative acts and support reconciliation, work in the interests of all residents of the municipality, facilitate the return of former residents to Srebrenica, and promote economic development. Candidates for local elections should avoid inflammatory statements. The PIC Steering Board remains fully committed to ensuring the unimpeded functioning of the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial and Cemetery as well as ensuring that the annual commemoration is held to honor the victims.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Steering Board called on the relevant authorities to implement fully and promptly the BiH Constitutional Court's ruling concerning Mostar. Restraint from inflammatory language and actions, and a commitment to constructive dialogue, compromise, and reconciliation would open the way to municipal elections.

The PIC SB welcomed the successful conclusion of the EU Police Mission by June 2012 and it expressed appreciation for the mission's achievements since 2003.

Recalling its earlier communiqués and declarations, the PIC Steering Board underlined its unequivocal commitment to BiH's territorial integrity and sovereignty. It reiterated its full support for the High Representative, who will continue to ensure full respect for the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) and carry out his mandate under Annex 10 and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, which remains unchanged. The PIC Steering Board reminded all parties of their obligation to fully comply with the GFAP, all its annexes, and decisions of the High Representative. The PIC Steering Board underlined that the International Community retains the necessary instruments to uphold the Dayton Peace Agreement.

The PIC Steering Board will hold its next meeting on 29-30 November 2012 in Sarajevo.

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[1] Turkey is of the opinion that the maintenance of the supervisory regime in Brcko, until the necessary conditions are met, is of vital importance for the unity and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore opposes the decision on the suspension of supervision.

[2] Turkey has requested that the High Representative report the position of Turkey separately.