

STATEMENT OF THE PEACE IMPLEMENTATION COUNCIL STEERING BOARD ON THE ACTIONS TAKEN ON 13 APRIL BY THE RSNA *

Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board strongly support the BiH state level judicial institutions. Furthermore, the PIC Steering Board condemns in the strongest possible terms attempts such as the action taken by the RSNA on April 13 to undermine these institutions. These attempts will undermine the rule of law and are therefore contrary to the Dayton Agreement.

We underscore that a capable, independent and impartial judicial system is fundamental to the rule of law, which is an essential element of a functioning democracy. Effective and independent state judicial institutions are a fundamental requirement for EU and Euro-Atlantic integration. Officials who undermine state level judicial institutions hurt BiH's potential for EU accession.

The PIC Steering Board welcomes the timely statement issued by High Representative Baroness Ashton on this issue, including her call on the political leaders not to undermine the progress achieved to date and to address their concerns through the appropriate institutional channels.

The BiH Constitutional Court, itself a Dayton institution, has explicitly and unequivocally upheld the constitutionality of the State Court. We further note that the Laws on the BiH State Court in 2002 and on the Prosecutor's Office in 2003 were adopted by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly. No deputy from either entity voted against these laws in the State Parliament. We remind that under the Dayton Agreement entities have an obligation to comply fully with the BiH Constitution and with the decisions of the institutions of BiH.

We would like to remind that the High Representative's authorities, including recourse to executive powers, have a firm legal basis in the Dayton Agreement and relevant Security Council Resolutions.

The PIC Steering Board Ambassadors once again call on all parties to support BiH state institutions and to support the rule of law in the interest of the citizens of BiH. All parties should be working to strengthen the judicial institutions, not to undermine their effectiveness and jurisdiction. We strongly condemn any attempt to undermine those institutions or to question their legitimacy. We will not allow such attempts to succeed.

*The Russian Federation is unable to join this statement