Decision to remove Dragomir Keserovic from his position(s) as Head of Department for Intelligence and Security, Republika Srpska Ministry of Defense, and from other public and party positions he currently holds

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In the exercise of the powers vested in the High Representative by Article V of Annex 10 (Agreement on Civilian Implementation of the Peace Settlement) to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to which the High Representative is the final authority in theatre regarding interpretation of the said Agreement on the Civilian Implementation of the Peace Settlement; and considering in particular Article II.1.(d) of the last said Agreement, according to the terms of which the High Representative shall "[f]acilitate, as the High Representative judges necessary, the resolution of any difficulties arising in connection with civilian implementation";

Recalling paragraph XI.2 of the Conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997, in which the Peace Implementation Council welcomed the High Representative's intention to use his final authority in

theatre regarding interpretation of the Agreement on the Civilian Implementation of the Peace Settlement in order to facilitate the resolution of any difficulties as aforesaid "by making binding decisions, as he judges necessary" on certain issues including (under sub-paragraph (c) thereof) measures to ensure the Peace Agreement throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Entities which "may include actions against persons holding public office";

Noting that in paragraph X.4 of the Annex to the Declaration of the Peace Implementation Council made at Madrid on 16 December 1998 it was stated that the Council acknowledged that leaders whom the High Representative bars from official office "may also be barred from running in elections and from any other elective or appointive public office and from office within political parties until further notice";

Mindful of the fact that the peace implementation process, which continues to be pursued under the aegis of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is not yet complete;

Further mindful of the fact that the peace implementation process requires to be completed in order that a stable political and security environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is established which is conducive, *inter alia*, to fundamental economic reform and to the return of refugees and displaced persons;

Recalling that under Article II, Paragraph 8 of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, all competent authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are legally obliged to cooperate with and to provide unrestricted access to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and are further legally obliged, in particular, to comply with orders issued pursuant to Article 29 of the Statute of the Tribunal;

Recalling further all relevant resolutions of the Security

Council of the United Nations and in particular Resolution 1503 of 28 August 2003 and Resolution 1534 of 26 March 2004 by which the Security Council called upon all States, especially Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and on the Republika Srpska within Bosnia and Herzegovina, to intensify cooperation with and render all necessary assistance to the ICTY, particularly to bring Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, […] and all other indictees to the ICTY;

Noting that Bosnia and Herzegovina's failure to meet its international obligations towards the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia increasingly constitutes an obstacle to Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration into Europe and that such failure is largely attributable to failures on the part of Republika Srpska;

Further noting, by way of illustration, the Istanbul Summit Communiqué issued on 28 June 2004 by which the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council expressed their concern that Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly obstructionist elements in Republika Srpska, , has failed to live up to its obligation to cooperate fully with ICTY, including the arrest and transfer to the jurisdiction of the Tribunal of war crimes indictees, which obligation a fundamental requirement for the country to join Partnership for Peace;

Recalling that the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, at its meeting held in Sarajevo on 25 June 2004, noted that Republika Srpska has failed to locate or apprehend even one war-crimes indictee in the nine years since the Dayton Accord and emphasized that Republika Srpska an Entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina guaranteed under Dayton, is failing to carry out a key obligation under Dayton and international law, for which the relevant individuals and institutions must be held accountable;

Regretting that a number of persons indicted under Article 19

of the Statute of the ICTY have been able, at least prior to the date hereof, to elude just prosecution, and that such elusion of just prosecution cannot have occurred without the assistance of other individuals and entities;

Mindful that the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been obstructed as a result of such assistance;

Ever conscious of the need to balance in due proportion the public good with the rights of individuals;

For the reasons hereinafter set out the High Representative hereby issues the following

DECISION

To remove Dragomir Keserovic from his position(s) as Head of Department for Intelligence and Security, Republika Srpska Ministry of Defense, and from other public and party positions he currently holds

and to bar him from holding any official, elective or appointive public office and from running in elections and from office within political parties unless or until such time as the High Representative may expressly authorise him so to do or to hold the same. Any entitlement to receive remuneration or any privileges or status arising out of his post(s) ceases forthwith.

This Decision has immediate effect and will not require any further procedural steps.

Dragomir Keserovic must vacate his office immediately and is barred from the date hereof from further entering the same.

This Decision shall be published without delay in the Official Gazette of Republika Srpska.

REASONS FOR REMOVAL

Bosnia and Herzegovina has singularly failed to discharge its international obligation to bring closure to arguably the most lamentable chapter of its history. It has failed especially and egregiously in the territory of the Republika Srpska to apprehend and deliver to just prosecution a number of persons indicted under Article 19 of the Statute of the ICTY.

Said failure could not have occurred without the active assistance of individuals and entities, or indeed without the general culture of both overt and secret complicity and of silence prevalent in the one Entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina where such individuals are believed to have found sanctuary, *i.e.*, Republika Srpska.

Despite its constitutionally mandated duty to fully co-operate with ICTY – which duty was impressed upon Republika Srpska further by the Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council referenced above – indicted individuals remain at large within Republika Srpska and have been and are presently assisted in evading justice by individuals in positions of authority and by institutions of a state and political character. That this state of affairs has continued for nine years following the end of the war without a single war criminal being arrested in the territory of the Republika Srpska by the authorities of the Republika Srpska, is a source of deep and abiding concern not only for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina but for the international community as a whole.

It now falls on the international community to redress this intolerable situation by initiating direct and sweeping action against those public office holders of Republika Srpska who obstruct international law in the Entity. By dint of their nefarious conduct or failure to carry out their functional responsibilities while associated in differing capacities with public institutions, these individuals have demonstrated that they are not worthy of entrustment with public responsibility.

Based on the foregoing and upon solid information and belief, it is deemed necessary to remove from public office Dragomir Keserovic. Dragomir Keserovic holds the position of Head of Department for Intelligence and Security, Republika Srpska Ministry of Defense. Dragomir Keserovic is, whether through his actions or his failures to act in a position of responsibility an integral part of the common scheme within Republika Srpska to foster a culture of silence and deceit wherein war crime indictees are protected from justice.

As a constituent of the current political culture within Republika Srpska, Dragomir Keserovic is derivatively culpable for contributing to the institutional failure to purge from the political landscape of conditions conducive to the provision of material support and sustenance to individuals indicted under Article 19, as aforesaid. Such failings are inimical to stability and the rule of law. Dragomir Keserovic , therefore, obstructs the process of peace implementation and must be removed from public office. The principles of proper governance and transparency, protection of the integrity and reputation of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and active support for the rule of law and for the international obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina – so essential to the peace implementation process – mandate this outcome.

Sarajevo 30 June, 2004
Paddy Ashdown

High Representative