



Statement by the Ambassadors of the PIC SB on the Draft Law on Special Register and Transparency of Work on Non-Profit Organizations

The Republika Srpska (RS) Government has been trying since 2013 to introduce a law that would place civil society organizations under the government's close scrutiny and restrict their ability to exercise their democratic rights. The Draft Law on Special Register and Transparency of Work on Non-profit Organizations will limit the civic space for a functioning and independent civil society further and pose a significant threat to the overall state of human rights and democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The recent re-criminalization of defamation in the RS and this new law go against the very notion of democracy. They limit political pluralism and serve to intimidate political opposition. It will prevent free, critical debate, further narrowing an already shrinking civic space in the RS. The Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board (PIC SB) strongly support an independent media and civil society, and underscore the right of both to work without harassment, fear, or undue pressure.

The proposed law has no place in a democratic society and contradicts the repeated commitments of the Republika Srpska leadership to advance European integration. The PIC SB urges RS delegates to vote against the proposed law.