

Contact Group Statement, The Hague, 2 July 1997

Contact Group Statement on the Republika Srpska

The Contact Group, at its 2 July meeting in The Hague, expressed its sharp concern over the current political crisis in the Republika Srpska. Recent developments have a direct bearing on implementation of the Peace Agreement and on the prospects for the growth of democracy throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The legitimate authorities and institutions of Republika Srpska must be respected. Radovan Karadzic, for his part, has been indicted for war crimes and should be handed over by the Republika Srpska authorities for trial in The Hague. In the meantime, as he himself has agreed, he is banned from political activity or influence.

Any recourse to force or violence in the present circumstances will not be tolerated by the international community. It is the responsibility of those concerned to come to a peaceful resolution of their differences under the terms of the Constitution; and of the authorities in Belgrade, who are committed to implementing the Peace Agreement, to support this process. Republika Srpska otherwise risks even greater isolation from international sympathy and assistance.