Steering Board Ambassadors Express Support for High Representative Decision on Srebrenica-Potočari

Peace Implementation Council

Steering Board Ambassadors

At today's meeting, Steering Board Ambassadors from Canada, France, Germany, as the EU Presidency, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, representing the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Commission today underlined their support for the High Representative's Decision to enact a new *Law on the Centre for the Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide*.

The Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial Centre is a legal entity established by the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and registered as such under the relevant legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Memorial Centre is one of the core elements in meeting the country's needs to come to terms with and acknowledge the terrible suffering resulting from the genocide that was committed at Srebrenica in 1995.

These Steering Board Ambassadors note that certain political reactions to the Decision have misinterpreted both its substance and intent. The Decision defines the state's responsibilities with respect to the Foundation, thereby securing its future operations. The decision does not involve or imply either directly or indirectly any form of change in the status of Srebrenica municipality, nor in Republika Sprska, or the constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Neither does it affect the responsibility of the Republika Srpska Police for maintaining public peace and order in Republika Srpska. The competent institutions, including SIPA and the Republika Srpska Police, shall provide overall security for the commemoration on 11 July in accordance to their respective legal obligations. It is imperative that these agencies coordinate their efforts as in the past.

These Steering Board Ambassadors also highlighted last week's PIC Declaration, which expressly stated that the status of Srebrenica and that of any other unit of government within Bosnia and Herzegovina can only be changed in accordance with the relevant constitutions and laws. They reiterate that the PIC will not accept any changes or calls for such changes made in contravention of such legislation.

These Steering Board Ambassadors remind all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina of their obligation to fully respect and abide by the Decision of the High Representative, and expect them to do so.