

OHR/EUSR Statement in Response to ICG Report



The ICG Report *Ensuring Bosnia's future: A New International Engagement Strategy* is one of a large number of advocacy pieces that have been published in the lead-up to the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board meeting on 26 February.

The analysis and conclusions are at odds with the recommendations, and the report contains factual errors. The paper argues that the only way that progress has been achieved in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been through imposition and use of the Bonn Powers, inaccurately crediting several advances to imposition, yet recommends giving up these powers and closing OHR at the end of 2007.

Claims of a deterioration of conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are contradicted by the analysis presented in ICG's own monthly publication *Crisis Watch*. According to ICG's *Crisis Watch*, conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina either remained the same or improved in the course of the past year.

The Report fails to analyse properly the case of successful reforms that were not imposed, including those relating to defence, the introduction of value added tax and intelligence services, all of which ICG attributed incorrectly to imposition. This failure of omission, choosing to ignore what is arguably the most important and relevant experience for future policy-making, contributes to erroneous conclusions.

The Report presents an especially flawed analysis of the policy of rehabilitation, stating that it can and should simply be handed over to domestic authorities. The review process was endorsed by the PIC and is necessary to uphold international law.

The Report is also littered with unsubstantiated and gratuitous comments about individuals and institutions that are not worthy of further comment.