

PIC Steering Board Statement on Property Laws

The Steering Board is deeply concerned that the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska have not amended their property laws to make full implementation of Annex 7 of the Peace Agreement possible, as required by the Sintra declaration.

The Steering Board wishes to emphasise that amendment of existing property laws in a manner fully consistent with the Peace Agreement is of the utmost importance. Should these amendments not be made prior to the PIC Ministerial in Bonn, the Steering Board will recommend that sanctions be imposed.

The Steering Board also notes that the Council of Europe is currently considering the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership, and recommends in that regard that amendment of property laws to ensure conformity with the European Convention on Human Rights and Annex 7 of Peace Agreement should be a precondition for accession.

Finally, the Steering Board expresses its dismay at the revisions made by the Federation government to two of the draft laws on property prepared by the Office of the High Representative, and at the Federation's failure to disclose its version of the third OHR draft law. The two laws which the Federation government has proposed to the Parliament do not conform to Annex 7 of the Peace Agreement. The Steering Board calls upon the Federation government to modify both laws in accordance with the amendments suggested by the Office of the High Representative, and to send a proposal regarding the third OHR draft law which conforms to Annex 7 to Parliament forthwith. The Steering Board stresses that the Law on Sale of Socially-Owned Apartments must not be applied until the Federation's property laws are brought into compliance with Annex 7 of the Peace Agreement.