

Communique by the PIC Steering Board

The PIC Steering Board at ambassadorial-level met on 27 March 2002 to consider the progress of the leading BiH political parties to reach an agreement on the implementation of the Constituent Peoples' Decision.

It is with satisfaction that the Steering Board welcomes the agreement reached by the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina on implementation of the Constituent Peoples' Decision on 27 March 2002. This represents a decisive step forward in terms of Bosnia and Herzegovina's democratic development and commitment to the rule of law. The Steering Board notes that some of the leaders have signed the agreement with specific reservations and strongly urges them to accept it in full.

The Steering Board expects the process of implementing the Constituent Peoples' Decision to be taken decisively forward by all parties through an urgent and fast track adoption of constitutional amendments by the entity parliamentary assemblies. The Steering Board expects that all parties actively ensure that the content of this agreement is fully implemented in the constitutional amendments to be adopted by the parliaments of both entities. The amendments to the entity constitutions must be adopted fully in line with the agreement reached by the political parties on 27 March 2002. In order that sufficient time is available to bring the Election Law in line with the amendments to the entity constitutions, the entity parliaments are requested to adopt amendments by the first week of April 2002.

The Steering Board welcomes the readiness of Bosnia and

Herzegovina's political leaders to finally engage each other in a spirit of good with the aim of taking the country forward towards a European future built on the rule of law. It expects this level of political maturity to be displayed in the future as Bosnia and Herzegovina undergoes economic and social reform on its way to European integration.

It commends the High Representative for his exhaustive efforts to facilitate a domestic agreement. With this agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina stands on the verge of taking a major step towards taking ownership of its future.

The Steering Board re-iterates that it stands fully behind the principles of democracy, non-discrimination, and peoples' and citizens' rights. It notes that by adopting amendments in line with the political party agreement of 27 March 2002, these principles will be implemented to the Highest European standards.