

# Statement on Passports by the Steering Board

The Political Directors of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council decided at their meeting in Brussels that the final cut-off date for the recognition of ordinary passports of the former Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be 30 September 1999.

The Steering Board is aware of the difficult situation in some diplomatic and consular missions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which have only recently been able to start issuing the new travel documents. As the Steering Board members do not want to penalize individual citizens for the failure of their authorities to effectively implement the Law on Travel Documents, which entered into force at the end of 1997, they reluctantly agreed to extend the original deadline of 30 June, 1999, for a second time until 30 September, to avoid difficulties during the summer travel season.

However, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina still traveling with the old passports of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be aware that difficulties at individual border crossings cannot be excluded, as immigration authorities in other countries have already become familiar with the new travel documents.

The new deadline is now final and will not be extended again. The Steering Board urges the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take every necessary measure to ensure that all citizens, whether abroad or in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are able to receive the new travel document, if they wish so, in a smooth and speedy fashion.