

Communique by the PIC Steering Board

The PIC Steering Board met at the level of Political Directors with the High Representative in Brussels on 5 and 6 December 2001. The Steering Board welcomed the opportunity to meet with UNMIBH, OSCE, UNHCR, UNDP, and World Bank (also representing IMF) for a discussion on the re-calibration and streamlining of the international civilian implementation effort in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also welcomed the briefing by SFOR.

The Steering Board commended OHR for the IC Draft Action Plan presented, and welcomed the thorough consultations undertaken with PIC embassies and all concerned agencies in BiH during its preparations. The Steering Board welcomed the endorsement of the concept of enhanced peace implementation coordination by all involved agencies .

The Steering Board acknowledged that a continued, but re-calibrated IC presence remains crucial to complete the objectives necessary to achieve the common vision of the international community and the BiH authorities about ownership – a self sustainable BiH, serving its citizens, meeting its international obligations, and integrating into Europe. In this respect, the Steering Board discussed the suggested structural reforms to complement the coordination role of the High Representative in order to ensure an efficient and coherent implementation of the civilian aspects of the peace settlement, while respecting the mandates and autonomy of governing bodies of the other civilian agencies on the ground, as outlined in Annex 10 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP).

The Steering Board asked the High Representative to prepare a refined version of the Action Plan including an assessment of matching multi-year funding requirements with a view to have it adopted at its first meeting early next year. This Action Plan will duly reflect the central role of the Stabilization and Association Process for Bosnia and Herzegovina's aspirations to their future in Europe. The Steering Board endorsed the concept of policy coordination task forces (Rule of Law, Institution Building, Economic Policy, and Return & Reconstruction) to be complemented by a cabinet of lead agencies chaired by the High Representative. It underlined the special importance of the clear benchmarks and concrete end-states presented in the Draft Action Plan, allowing the Steering Board not only to review and evaluate progress in each respective area but also providing timelines for the transition of ownership to BiH authorities or other IC agencies. It urged the High Representative to ensure that lead agency competency is clearly defined within this framework and that further comprehensive benchmarks be developed in each of the task forces . It confirmed that the High Representative will continue to be provided with appropriate structures and independent advice to perform his role as foreseen in Annex 10 and subsequent PIC declarations.

The Steering Board also endorsed the recommendations for the initial steps in streamlining of the IC field presence in BiH, and urged all implementing organizations to aim for the rationalization of their regional areas of responsibility.

The Steering Board recognized the need for a robust police mission, combining crisis management and capacity building, and taking into account the recommendations of the Monk Report and PIC discussions to follow the end of the IPTF mandate. It stressed that preparations must begin as early as possible to ensure a seamless transition. The Steering Board noted the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to the rule of

law, and emphasized that the police follow-on mission should be closely coordinated with judicial reform efforts. The Steering Board asked the High Representative to develop options in this regard to be presented at its next meeting at Political Directors level. It also notes that the mandate for this follow-on mission could require a United Nations Security Council endorsement.

The Steering Board took note of the progress achieved in resolving issues raised by the European Commission, related to previous budgets. Countries whose budgeted contributions have been and still are overdue are called upon to pay. The Steering Board approved the minutes and recommendations from the meeting of the Financial Experts in Sarajevo on November 15, including its approval of the proposed OHR Budget for 2002.