

Statement of High Representative and OSCE Head of Mission endorsed by Provisional Election Commission

Sarajevo, 11.11 2000 The High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission call upon political parties to promptly convene the inaugural sessions of the various legislative bodies elected on November 11. They ask that the newly elected bodies act quickly, and within their constitutional deadlines, to elect representatives to indirectly elected bodies and form governments at the state, entity and cantonal levels. The voters of BiH deserve a smooth, quick, democratic transition from the old authorities to the new.

A smooth transition to new authorities will require Canton Assemblies to convene quickly in order to elect representatives to the Federation House of Peoples, which will in turn elect members to the BiH House of Peoples. Likewise, the RS National Assembly must convene in order to form a new government and elect the RS members of the BiH House of Peoples. Disrespect by the political parties for the deadlines to convene the first session of the newly elected assemblies will be treated as serious violation of the Rules and Regulations by the High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission.

In the wake of developments in Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the region is moving more quickly toward stability, democracy, and economic reform. It is essential that BiH play its part in this process. In order for this to happen, the new executive and legislative bodies in BiH must begin work as soon as possible following the elections.

Until the new authorities are established, full respect for accepted democratic rights and constitutional procedures will continue to be a responsibility of any the outgoing authorities. It is the duty of these caretaker authorities to care for the democratic institutions they serve. Outgoing authorities are obliged to ensure that the country's institutions are able to fulfill their obligations in a continuous and uninterrupted manner and thus fulfill the needs and rights of the citizens. Unfortunately, this has not been the common practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the recent years. Outgoing authorities and political parties have sometimes abused their caretaker role by looting country's institutions of assets and resources.

We have already witnessed how the political parties in the assembly of Una Sana Canton conspired to increase the allocation for political parties by 250.000 KM one week before the election while decreasing services to citizens by over 200.000 KM. That abuse of power was only prevented by decisive action of the International Community.

The OSCE and the Office of the High Representative will monitor the implementation of the November election results to ensure that the process is conducted in accordance with article 119 of the Rules and Regulations of the Provisional Election Commission. Under the Rules of the Provisional Election Commission, the High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission, in his capacity as Chairman of the Provisional Election Commission, may refer a matter to the Provisional Election Commission or the Election Appeals Sub-Commission where implementation is not in accordance with the Rules and Regulations or with accepted democratic principles.

The High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission expect the commitment of all political parties, outgoing authorities and newly elected officials to fulfill their obligations towards the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to establish the new authorities responsibly.

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