

Communique by the PIC Steering Board

The PIC Steering Board at the level of Political Directors met in Sarajevo on October 20, 1999, with the High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission.

The Steering Board welcomed and endorsed the draft election law for Bosnia and Herzegovina that was drafted under the auspices of national experts, the OHR and the OSCE. The Steering Board noted with satisfaction that the draft law contains many new elements that will foster greater accountability by politicians, including open lists at all levels, multi-member constituencies, a strong role for women in BiH politics, limits on campaign spending, and a preferential voting system for the Presidency. The law recognises the constitutional and legal rights of all citizens of BiH in both entities, from all constituent peoples, including others.

The Steering Board welcomed the continuing ability of displaced persons and refugees to vote for their pre-war municipalities.

The Steering Board welcomed the various provisions in the draft law that require all political parties and candidates to co-operate fully with the ICTY process.

The Steering Board also noted that it is now the responsibility of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina to act with urgency in passing the draft law and the importance of such passage for BiH becoming a member of the Council of Europe. The High Representative, the OSCE Head of Mission and the Steering Board emphasized that the draft law was very much a joint creation of the citizens of BiH – through the involvement of national experts – and the international community.

The Steering Board, the High Representative and the OSCE Head of Mission agreed that the election law is a major step forward in establishing the sole source of legitimacy in a complex world – free elections that ensure government by the consent of the governed.

The Steering Board expressed its appreciation to the election law working group for the successful conclusion of a long and complex task.