

Statement on decision taken by the Arbitration Tribunal

STATEMENT by the High Representative, Carl Bildt

Rome, 14 February 1997

The decision by the Arbitration Tribunal today represents an important further step in the process of implementing the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

I trust that all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Republika Srpska as well as the Federation, will fully respect and implement the agreement in accordance with their undertaking in the Peace Agreement.

According to the decision, the Inter-Entity Boundary Line in the area will not now be changed, but arrangements for supervision of the full implementation of the peace agreement in the Brcko area will be set up.

It is my intention to nominate a Deputy for this task. I have asked the United States to propose candidates, and a discussion on this is already underway. The Deputy will operate within the existing structure of the Office of the High Representative in accordance with the mandate given the High Representative under Annex 10 of the Peace Agreement.

Three tasks will be of paramount importance in the area during the coming period of supervision.

There must be confidence in full respect for freedom of movement in this area in light of its central and strategic importance to both Republika Srpska and the Federation. We will take measures to repair and improve the road and rail infrastructure of the area in order to facilitate movements both from East to West and North to South.

There must be established procedures for the phased and orderly return of refugees and displaced persons to the area, which also fully recognise the rights and interests of those displaced persons presently there. There must also be a major effort towards economic reconstruction in the area, reviving jobs, building houses, implanting hope among the people. I foresee procedures broadly similar to those currently used to facilitate the return of refugees and displaced persons to the Zone of Separation.

There must be municipal elections according to the rules and regulations decided by the Provisional Election Commission, and there must be prompt and complete installation of a new municipal leadership of Brcko based on the results of the election as certified by the OSCE.

Taken together, these measures should during the coming year make it possible to transform Brcko from an area of confrontation to an area of cooperation between the different constituent nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will also take into account the over-all structure of the Peace Agreement and the strategic importance of the area.

To support these efforts, there must be a reinforced presence of international police in the area. There must also be an accelerated program of training and equipping adequate RS police forces in the area in accordance with international democratic policing practices. To ensure this will be one of the most immediate tasks of my Deputy in the area.

Although different alternatives concerning the international police presence are still under discussion, it is my view that the overall purpose would best be served by a substantial augmentation of the UN-IPTF in the area, preferably under a subordinate command specific for this area. I will urge the UN Security Council to authorize an increase in the IPTF to take into account both the extended tasks given to UN-IPTF as a result of the London Conference and as a result of the demands in the Brcko area.

The reinforced presence of the international police will only be possible in close cooperation with the Stabilization

Force (SFOR) in accordance with the practice we have developed between the Office of the High Representative, SFOR and UN-IPTF. I foresee an undiminished presence by SFOR in the area for the entire supervision period.

It will, as indicated also by the Arbitration Tribunal, take some time to mobilize the resources necessary to support the supervision called for. It is only when they have been mobilized and are in place that the supervision period called for can be started.

The Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council will meet in Brussels on 19 February to discuss the further steps necessary in order to be able to undertake the supervision tasks laid down in the decision of the Arbitration Tribunal. Naturally, I will consider all proposals concerning the structures and procedures for supervision which come from the Arbitration Tribunal before taking decisions on the details for these.

It is my firm intention to complete the supervision phase after one year. After this period, and after review by the Arbitration Tribunal, the area must find its place within the structures laid down in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**OHR Statement by the High Representative
Rome, 14 February 1994**