

Decision on the use of inoffensive insignia and symbols by the police and judicial institutions in the Federation

In accordance with my authority under Annex 10 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (GFAP) and article XI of the Bonn Document;

Noting the April 1996 Bonn-Petersberg Agreement on Restructuring the Police in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina whereby the signatories agreed that police uniforms are important symbols of commitment to the restructuring process;

Affirming that certain authorities in the Cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have failed to meet their obligations in providing for common insignia and symbols of a neutral or inoffensive nature, which in their absence and, as the case may be, with the continued use of nationalist insignia and symbols, results in a climate of intimidation and discrimination in the eyes of the general public and serves as a means of political control inconsistent with professional law enforcement standards, I hereby issue the following

DECISION

From the day of entry into force of this Decision, public officials of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including public officials of any Canton, City or Municipality (hereafter: public officials) shall order the immediate display and use of common insignia and symbols of a neutral or inoffensive nature, including but not limited to uniform badges, patches, and belt buckles, flags and coats-of-arms, and administrative seals and stamps, as determined by the Office of the High Representative and the Commissioner of the International Police Task Force, for all police and judicial institutions operating on the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In specific reference to police uniforms, all Ministry of Interior police in the Cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall wear the metal badge with the coat of arms of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the official cap.

It is understood that any public official failing to comply with the above shall be considered to be liable and punishable in terms of existing legislation regulating the responsibility of public officials in administrative procedures, including provisions against a person illegally impersonating a police officer or other judicial or law enforcement official. In order to monitor compliance, I reserve the right to have full access to the premises, records and personnel of the competent administrations. I also reserve the right to further exercise my powers against public officials found to obstruct compliance with the present Decision, as may be necessary. Public officials in violation of this decision, as determined by the Office of the High Representative, also may be subject to the non-compliance and de-certification protocols of the Commissioner of the International Police Task Force.

This Decision supersedes all inconsistent legislative and other legal and administrative provisions presently in force at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or any Canton, City or Municipality.

This Decision shall enter into force with immediate effect and it shall thereafter be published in the Official Gazettes of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Official Gazettes of each of the Cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina without delay.

Sarajevo, 30 July 1999

Carlos Westendorp
High Representative

Office of the High Representative