

BiH Failing to Meet Requirements for PfP

High Representative Paddy Ashdown, COMSF0R Virgil Packett, OSCE Head of Mission Robert Beecroft, and the Chairman of the Defence Reform Commission, James Locher have written a joint letter to the members of the BiH Presidency, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic and Minister for Security Barisa Colak warning that “the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to PfP in June will, quite frankly, fail” unless urgent steps are taken to unblock necessary reforms.

The letter highlights delays in implementing key Defence Reform Commission recommendations by June – which will help determine NATO’s assessment of BiH eligibility for Partnership for Peace. These include

- failure to nominate candidates for key State-level positions with qualifications that meet NATO’s expectations;
- failure to secure adequate funds for State defence institutions;
- failure of the Federation parliament to pass legislation required to harmonise Federation defence laws with the new BiH Law on Defence;
- inability of the National Assembly and Council of Peoples of Republika Srpska to conclude the passage of the amendments to their defence legislation; and
- minimal progress on the selection and recruitment of personnel for State-level defence institutions.

The letter attributes this systematic failure to “a lack of political will to do what is necessary – an element of residual obstructionism – and a continued reliance on the International Community to find solutions when problems

arise.”

The letter calls on the BiH Presidency to “lead by example and take all the necessary measures to overcome the problems that threaten to thwart the implementation of reforms.”