

Communiqué by the PIC Steering Board

The PIC Steering Board met today at the ambassadorial level to discuss the positive developments with regard to the implementation of the Constituent Peoples' Decision of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Steering Board welcomes the historic progress made by both the governments and parliamentary institutions in the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in implementing the 27 March Mrakovica-Sarajevo Agreement. It welcomes the adoption of the constitutional amendments in the Federation House of Peoples and the finalization of the constitutional amendments in the Republika Srpska, which will lead to the full implementation of the Constitutional Court's Decisions on the Constituency of Peoples (5/98) and the Mrakovica-Sarajevo Agreement. The Steering Board notes positively that a majority of delegates in the Federation House of Representatives voted in favor of the amendments.

The Steering Board fully supports the Decisions promulgated today by the High Representative closing a limited number of lacunae that would have prevented the full implementation of the 27 March Agreement. They remedy a few shortfalls in the RS amendments as well as uproot the obstructionism demonstrated by nationalist parties in the Federation. This will allow elections to be held on schedule under clear rules, fully in conformity with the revised Entity constitutions.

The Steering Board applauds those political leaders in both entities who initiated and sustained the Mrakovica-Sarajevo process. This engagement of a majority of political leaders in this country is a welcome sign of increasing ownership based on negotiation and compromise – living proof that it is taking root in responsible quarters of the political scene in Bosnia

and Herzegovina. The Steering Board also regrets the unconstructive attitude displayed by both the SDA and HDZ in this process, which calls into question their commitment to a European future for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Steering Board calls upon all parties, including SDA and HDZ, now fully to support the implementation process and carry it forward.

The Steering Board commends the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and his team for their inexhaustible efforts to facilitate homegrown solutions. This progress is a decisive step forward in terms of Bosnia and Herzegovina's democratic development and commitment to the rule of law. It also allows Bosnia and Herzegovina to concentrate again on pressing issues such as economic and social reform on its way to European integration.