

Communiqué of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council



The Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (PIC SB) Political Directors met in Sarajevo on 6-7 June to review the process of implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP), which remains the basis for a stable, secure, and prosperous Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The PIC SB reminded all parties of their obligation to comply fully with the GFAP, all its annexes, and decisions of the High Representative. It reaffirmed its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity and fundamental structure of BiH as a single, sovereign state comprising two entities. The PIC SB restated that the entities have no right to secede from BiH and only exist legally by virtue of the BiH Constitution. The PIC SB reminded authorities in BiH that the BiH Constitution is an integral part of the GFAP and that the decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court are final and binding and must be implemented. The PIC SB reiterated its full support for the High Representative in ensuring complete respect for the GFAP and carrying out his mandate under Annex 10 and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, which remains unchanged. It underlined that the International Community retains the necessary instruments to uphold the GFAP. The PIC SB emphasized the need to fully implement the 5+2 agenda, which remains necessary for the closure of the Office of the High Representative.

Political Directors met with the leadership of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly to discuss legislative priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and with media representatives on the state of media freedom in the country.

The PIC SB focused on the challenges in the period ahead, and called on the relevant authorities in BiH to deliver on the following urgent priorities:

- Make steps towards improving the overall political atmosphere in the country, to refrain from unilateral actions and to strictly adhere to the fundamental principles of compromise, dialogue and consensus among the three constituent peoples in making decisions, thus contributing to political stability and creating opportunities for economic development.
- Improve the lives of BiH citizens by implementing the Reform Agenda and other requirements, which would, inter alia, allow for advancing their longstanding EU aspirations. These include: moving ahead with reforms to create jobs, advance the rule of law and deliver better and more efficient public administration, as also agreed upon in the Written Commitment to EU Integration; providing a comprehensive and single set of answers to the Commission questionnaire; and continuing to implement the obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
- Meet the outstanding requirements under the IMF Extended Fund Facility with the utmost urgency, in keeping with the clear commitments made by the authorities to the IMF, in order to unlock international assistance to the country's fiscal stability and economic development.
- Address the implementation of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, including the Sejdic&Finci, Zornic, Pilav and Slaku cases.

- Address as a matter of urgency the implementation of outstanding decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court, including the 1 December 2016 ("Ljubic") case, which specifically concerns the elections to the Federation House of Peoples, seeking political consensus and respecting relevant institutions, while preventing further divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Address the implementation of the decision of the BiH Constitutional Court on Mostar and thus enable the holding of elections in this city. Mostar must remain a single, coherent, multi-ethnic unit of local self-government, with some level of local authority/administration below that of the city.
- Create conditions for the development of a free, objective and professional media in the country, as a vital part of democratic society. As a priority, the BiH authorities should ensure the financial stabilisation of the PBS system as a whole, to include an appropriate revenue-collection system.
- Address discrimination and segregation in education throughout the country. Entity, cantonal and municipal authorities, in Jajce and across BiH, should take concrete steps to resolve difficulties without segregating students or creating additional divisions.
- Ensure that all necessary conditions are met, including an appropriate legal framework, to enable the smooth conduct and implementation of the 2018 General Elections. Parliamentary and other institutions must continue to fulfil their mandates and responsibilities.
- Continue efforts to improve coordination and full cooperation, internally and internationally, to counter the common threat of terrorism, and all forms of violent radicalism and extremism.

- Advance reconciliation, mutual understanding and tolerance and refrain from divisive events, actions and rhetoric, including the glorification of convicted war criminals, historical revisionism and the provocative use of symbols.
- NATO members of the PIC SB and Japan encouraged the authorities in both entities to register prospective defense properties. They reiterated their concern over the RS authorities' refusal to comply with decisions taken by the Court of BiH in the case concerning the prospective property location in Han Pijesak ("Veliki Zep"). Also, they encouraged the BiH authorities to implement the Defense Review.

The PIC SB will hold its next meeting in Sarajevo on 5-6 December 2017.