Decision removing Dr. Ahmed Smajic from his position of Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dr. Ahmed Smajic
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry
Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dear Dr. Smajic,

For reasons outlined in the attached Decision, I herewith notify you that under the powers vested in me, you are removed from your office with immediate effect.

It is with great regret I am forced to acknowledge that during your term in office you have failed to aid in the adoption of much needed reforms in the important economic sectors of agriculture, water, and forests in an expedient manner within the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Yours sincerely,

Wolfgang Petritsch

cc: Mr. Edhem Bicakic

In the exercise of the powers vested in the High Representative by Article 5 of the Annex 10 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

according to which the High Representative "*is the final authority in the theater regarding interpretation of [the] Agreement on the civilian implementation of the peace agreement*";

Endorsing the interpretation of these powers given in paragraph XI, 2 of the Conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 10 December 1997, in particular, sub-paragraph c thereof, by means of which the High Representative is entitled to take actions against persons holding public positions who are found by the High Representative to be in violation of legal commitments made under the Peace Agreement or the terms of its implementation;

Noting the reiteration of the acknowledgement of such powers by the Peace Implementation Council in Chapter X of the Annex to the Madrid Declaration of 16 December 1998;

I hereby issue the following

Decision

To remove Dr. Ahmed Smajic from his position of Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This Decision has immediate effect.

Reasons for removal

Dr. Ahmed Smajic has persistently and seriously obstructed in numerous cases the process of economic recovery in the Federation of BiH in his capacity as the Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In particular, Dr. Ahmed Smajic is responsible for:

- Personally obstructing the identification and treatment

of outbreaks of infectious animal diseases. The knowledge of such outbreaks has been known to Dr. Smajic since 1998, and a lack of appropriate action has resulted in widespread sickness among domestic livestock and cross-infection to human beings.

- Disregarding the strong advice of the Office of the High Representative to assume his responsibility to propose and make recommendations concerning outbreaks of infectious animal diseases within the scope of his Ministry, in light of his constitutional responsibility to do so.
- Insisting, against the advice of domestic and international experts, on the release from quarantine of sick imported livestock before the animals have been determined to be disease-free.
- Various acts of corruption through the introduction of Q-Fever via imported goats and sheep.
- Demonstrating poor leadership by insisting on making misleading and unfounded public statements, which avoid or downplay the urgency of action to protect human and animal health for the good of the people of the Federation.

These points subsequently resulted in the destruction of numerous livestock and documented cases of human illness which has stultified the agricultural economy and put the population of the Federation of BiH at risk.

The High Representative has repeatedly been compelled to intervene on behalf of the international community, in order to de-block on-going obstruction of reform and development within the economic sectors for which Dr. Smajic is responsible.

- Under the guidance of Dr. Smajic, resistance to IC-led water reform produced two years of stalemate and lost economic opportunity. Again, only after immense IC pressure was brought to bear, did Dr. Smajic reluctantly

commit to an agriculture policy based on free market initiatives. The implementation of genuine agricultural reform continues to be held back.

All of the above establishes a disturbing and unacceptable pattern of inaction, and statements and actions that subvert economic reform. By reason of his proven resistance to perform his statutory duties, I hereby remove Dr. Ahmed Smajic from the position of Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources, and Forestry. The decision will be effective immediately and will not require any further procedural steps.

The position left vacant by the removal of Dr. Ahmed Smajic will be filled in accordance with this decision. The Deputy Minister will serve as acting Minister immediately, as and until such time a new Minister takes office. In order to protect the institution, if position of Minister shall be not be filled within 30 days, the High Representative shall designate an individual who will serve in the capacity of Minister until such time as the vacancy shall be filled by Constitutional procedure.

27 July 2000

Wolfgang Petritsch
High Representative

Office of the High Representative