

Dismissal of FBiH Finance Minister is legally questionable

The decision of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) President Zivko Budimir of 3 January 2014, by which he dismisses FBiH Finance Minister Ante Krajinina on the basis of a proposal of FBiH Prime Minister Nermin Niksic from 10 December 2012, appears to be legally questionable.

President Budimir previously already decided, on 17 December 2012, not to accept Prime Minister Niksic's proposal for the dismissal of eight Ministers in the Federation government, including the request to remove Finance Minister Krajinina. In addition, the reasons given publicly by President Budimir for his decision to dismiss Finance Minister Krajinina are different from the reasons stated in Prime Minister Niksic's proposal of December 2012.

Under existing legislation, the FBiH Finance Minister has an irreplaceable role in the realization of budget payment transactions in the FBiH, including those to the most vulnerable population and to creditors. These and other functions that the FBiH Finance Minister carries out in an ex officio capacity clearly make the post of FBiH Finance Minister essential for the fiscal stability and functioning not only of the FBiH but also of BiH as a whole.

It is also politically irresponsible to lose yet more time in attempts to reshuffle the FBiH government, instead of tackling the real problems faced by citizens, such as rising unemployment, poor infrastructure and corruption.

The OHR therefore calls on the FBiH President to annul his decision of 3 January 2014 or to amend his decision in such a way as to ensure that the Finance Minister can continue to exercise his functions until a successor is appointed or until

otherwise decided by a court.