

High Representatives names Members of the Constitutional Commissions of the Entity Parliaments

In accordance with his Decision of 11 January 2001, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, yesterday appointed the members of the Constitutional Commission of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the Commission on Constitutional Issues of the Republika Srpska National Assembly. Each Commission comprises 16 members: four Bosniaks, four Serbs, four Croats and four Others.

All the individuals have been selected from lists of candidates proposed by the political parties represented in the Federation House of Representatives and in the RS National Assembly. Not all parties put forward candidates, although they all had been asked to in a letter sent by the Office of the High Representative via the Speakers of the two Parliaments on 16 January. The deadline for submission of candidate names was 26 January.

The Commissions are broadly representative of the said parliaments. The members of the Commissions are delegates or experts. The Constitutional Commission in the Federation House of Representatives shall be chaired by Jakob Finci while the Constitutional Commission in Republika Srpska will be chaired by Miroslav Mikes. Both are from the groups of Others.

It will not pass without notice that there are no representatives of the HDZ (Croat Democratic Union) in either Commission. The reason for this is very simple: despite numerous requests to the HDZ to forward candidates for these

important bodies for ensuring the rights of the constituent peoples, the HDZ has failed to rise to the task of defending the interests of the Croat people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It seemingly does not care about protecting Croat interests in the Federation or in BiH as a whole. The Croat positions have thus been filled with BiH Croats from other parties.

The High Representative is astonished by the contrast between the rhetoric of the HDZ on the need to defend the interests of the Croat people and the behaviour the party displays when it actually supposedly comes to their defence. This is nothing short of negligence toward the BiH Croat people. Not only does the HDZ refuse to participate in the Constitutional Commissions but it also tramples on the dignity of the highest Court in Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Constitutional Court – and ignores the will of its electorate through its refusal to participate in the formation of the Federation House of Peoples. In short, the HDZ is turning its back on its duty to protect the interests of BiH Croats. The High Representative appreciates that there are other BiH Croats, outside the HDZ and its satellite parties, who are genuinely ready to work actively in the interests of the BiH Croats and their future generations.

In accordance with his Decision of 11 January 2001, the High Representative expects the Chairmen to call a meeting of the Commissions immediately. Work must begin in earnest on the implementation of the decision of the Constitutional Court commonly known as the “Constituent Peoples Case”. The amendment of the Entity Constitutions in accordance with this ruling will provide the framework for the adoption of the long overdue election law, which is the main precondition for Bosnia and Herzegovina’s accession to the Council of Europe and one of the requirements on the “EU Road Map”. At its Zagreb Summit on 4 November 2000, the European Union asked Bosnia and Herzegovina to fulfil the requirements of the “EU Road Map” by mid-2001, so a feasibility study for a

Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and BiH be conducted subsequently.

The High Representative and his staff look forward to working with the Commissions to take Bosnia and Herzegovina towards a European future where individual as well as group rights and other freedoms are guaranteed and enforceable. Bosnia and Herzegovina belongs to Europe. There is no other future for the country, nor for any of its peoples – so much is certain.

Constitutional Commission of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Commission for Constitutional Issues of the National Assembly of Republika Srpska
Bosniacs
Mirsad Ceman

Sahbas Dzihanovic

Seada Palavric

Sabrija Pojskic

Bosniacs
Senija Bubic

Remzija Kadric

Halid Kulenovic

Sulejman Tihic

Croats
Ivan Brigic

Slavo Kukic

Senka Nozica

Mato Tadic

Croats
Mirko Colic

Niko Jurinic

Pejo Krnjic

Tomislav Tomljanovic

Serbs
Velimir Kunic

Dusko Milidragovic

Slavisa Sucur

Sreto Tomasevic

Serbs
Dragan Kalinic

Radomir Lukic

Dragan Mikerevic

Krstan Simic

Others
Jakob Finci

Dragan Ivanovic

Igor Rajner

Mehmed Suljic

OthersVladimir Blaha
Mihajlo Brelak
Miroslav Mikes
Branko Morait