

Joint Statement by the OHR, NATO, EUFOR on Follow up to the Incidents at the Manjaca and Bileca Swearing in Ceremonies

In our statement of 18 April, we called on Minister Stankovic to carry out an immediate inquiry into the incidents at the Manjaca and Bileca swearing in ceremonies.

We regard the measures announced by Minister Stankovic, on the basis of that inquiry, on 6 May in respect of the VRS as wholly inadequate given the serious breakdown in the constitutional obligations of the VRS within the Armed Forces of BiH. The events of 16 April called into question the constitutional loyalty and military professionalism of the VRS chain of command and its commitment to Dayton . It is clear that the RS authorities have significantly underestimated the gravity of these incidents.

There must now be an appropriate response by the RS authorities to this matter. The events at Manjaca and Bileca represent serious failures in the chain of command: the need to take action to address this is a matter of political responsibility. We therefore call on the BiH Presidency to ensure that those individuals with senior command positions are held properly to account. We further look to Minister Stankovic to play his full part in making sure this happens both by identifying those individuals responsible and making appropriate recommendations to the Presidency, through Minister Radovanovic, and by making the necessary systemic changes to prevent any recurrence. We expect all these actions

to be taken by 24 May at the latest.