

Communique by the Political Directors of the PIC Steering Board and the BiH Authorities

Communique Issued by the Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board and the BiH Authorities Following an Extraordinary PIC Session to Mark the 10th Anniversary of the Dayton-Paris Peace Accords

The Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, together with the BiH authorities represented by Presidency Chairman Ivo Miro Jovic, Prime Minister Adnan Terzic, and Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic, met in Paris on 14 December in extraordinary session, under the chairmanship of Stanislas de Laboulaye, French Political Director, to mark the tenth anniversary of the Dayton-Paris Peace Accords.

Recalling that at the end of 1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina lay in ruins, its people traumatized and its infrastructure devastated by three and a half years of war, the Political Directors and the BiH representatives stressed that, ten years on, the extent of recovery has been remarkable, and is powerful testimony to the commitment of the International Community and the courage and resourcefulness of the people of BiH since the Dayton-Paris Accords were signed

Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina is at peace, more than a million refugees and displaced persons have returned to their homes, the economy is growing, and the EU has launched Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with the country.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina – by their own efforts and with practical and political help from their partners in the International Community – have placed a distance between themselves and the catastrophe of political collapse and violence. They are on a path that leads to prosperity and security as a full member of the Euro-Atlantic community.

The citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have made sacrifices; they have supported transition; they have accepted the hardships that are unavoidable in the initial stages of reform. Now they are entitled to expect faster and more substantial improvements in living standards. Though much has been achieved, much remains to be done. It is incumbent on the political authorities to ensure that these improvements are delivered.

The Steering Board and the BiH authorities agreed that the priorities now must be overcoming residual inter-ethnic prejudices in favour of a Bosnia and Herzegovina which is home to all its citizens, to

- Modernise the Dayton constitution in order to increase the functionality and efficiency of BiH's institutions and of BiH itself so as to create a state that puts citizens first
- Transfer remaining war crimes indictees, including Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, to The Hague
- Maintain the return process at the forefront of political priorities; this process will not be complete until the last citizen who wishes to return has had an opportunity to do so.
- Complete the administrative process that will provide BiH with a modern and efficient police service
- Complete the implementation of defence and intelligence reform and increase the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the army, bringing them under full state control.
- Complete the unification of Mostar and provide its residents with the services and amenities of a normal European city
- Adopt the process that has been established by the Srebrenica Commission, as a model that can be applied to other episodes that occurred during the war, including through a State Commission, and take related steps to promote truth and reconciliation as indispensable elements in the country's postwar recovery
- Accelerate economic reforms, including debt restructuring, tax reforms, and corporate restructuring, in order to bring prosperity to all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens

- Foster and strengthen civil society so that BiH citizens will participate fully in the democratic process and take the initiative in promoting economic development
- End the damaging delay in fulfilling BiH's obligations under the Bologna declaration, channel desperately needed resources into education, and stop the serious political and administrative neglect of school children and students
- Ensure that the BiH authorities reassume political responsibility for undertaking tasks that are currently being carried out by the International Community, while maintaining the International Community's engagement at a meaningful and constructive level consistent with the needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina's transition to market democracy

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have done much to bind up the wounds of the war that engulfed them. They have shown fortitude and patience, ingenuity and a capacity to forgive. They have won the battle of the last ten years. It is now up to their leaders to guide their country into a new phase.