

PIC Steering Board Statement on the Impact of Croatian Elections on Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Government of Croatia is a guarantor of the Dayton Peace Agreement. In this respect, the way it will conduct the upcoming Croatian electoral process has direct implications for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The PIC Steering Board urged the Croatian government to establish transparent procedures for their conduct and to facilitate, rather than discourage, voting for all Croatians, including those in Bosnia and Herzegovina who have rights to citizenship.

The Steering Board called on the government of Croatia to take rapid steps to this end, including:

- The urgent introduction of streamlined procedures for verifying citizenship and voter registration both within Croatia and abroad;
- the agreement on procedures for out-of-country voting in embassies and consulates, and early agreement with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative, and the OSCE on voting procedures within Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- the centralization and publication of voter lists, and the introduction of clear, simple procedures for making corrections to those lists;
- an agreement on guaranteed seats in parliament for national minorities.

Failure by the Croatian government to take action along these lines, particularly where voting in Bosnia and Herzegovina is concerned, will make it highly unlikely that the forthcoming

elections in Croatia will be deemed to have been free and fair.