

Statement by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board*



The Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (PIC SB) condemns in the strongest possible terms the current political discourse centered around the so-called “peaceful dissolution” of Bosnia and Herzegovina, not least the concrete steps by Republika Srpska representatives and state-level officeholders towards dissolution negotiations, including establishing negotiating teams and advocating for the breakup of the country via an online advertising campaign. The PIC SB has previously underscored that irresponsible and divisive rhetoric and actions destabilize the country and distract from the real work leaders must do to build trust and to enact rule of law, electoral and economic reforms to the benefit of all citizens. Insecurity and instability and the consequent need for continued international supervision are the real price that citizens pay as their leaders engage in dead-end pursuits.

The PIC SB reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity and fundamental structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single, sovereign state comprising two entities, in which all three constituent peoples, Others and all citizens are equal, and underlines that the entities have no right to secede from BiH and exist legally only by virtue of the BiH Constitution.

BiH territorial integrity is guaranteed under the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) and international law, and change to its internal structure can only be made in accordance with the BiH Constitution, with which all parties remain obliged to fully comply. Continued inflammatory rhetoric, activities aimed at dissolution or secession and other claims concerning the redrawing of maps pose a serious threat to peace and stability and as such undermine the GFAP. Rhetoric calling into question the existence of either entity or referencing potential for war is likewise destabilizing and unacceptable.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina need their political leaders and representatives to cease this dangerous rhetoric and instead focus their efforts on urgently combating the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening the rule of law, and implementing economic and other reforms that would move the country forward on its European path, to which they have all repeatedly committed themselves.

* The Russian Federation does not agree with this Statement.