Third Reprot of the High Representative for Implementation of the Bosnian Peace Agreement to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Sarajevo, 9 October 1996

The High Representative, Mr Carl Bildt, has submitted to the United Nations Secretary General his third report on his activities in implementing the Peace Agreement. This has now been released in New York as an official Security Council document.
Following the certification by the OSCE of the 14th September elections, Mr Bildt agreed in this report that conditions had been met for decisions on the lifting of sanctions (in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1022).

The report includes sections on institutions, elections, human rights, Federation issues, Brcko, media, the return of refugees and displaced persons, mass graves, the International Tribunal in the Hague, economic reconstruction, regional stabilization, cooperation with IFOR, and other issues.

In its conclusions the report stresses that the fourth phase of peace implementation this year, which began after the elections, will be the most difficult and decisive.

The report to the United Nations goes on to say that the election campaigns of the different political parties have confirmed how all of them continue to pursue their original long-term national aims, thus underlining the fragility of the

peace process in the months and years ahead. Nationalist issues – both offensive and defensive – were at the forefront of the campaigns of the major parties, while the pressing economic and social issues of the country were sorely neglected. The elections were dominated more by fears from the past than by hopes that should be generated by the future. In Bosnia and Herezegovina the forces of ethnic separation are still stronger than the forces of ethnic integration.

The report concludes that the peace process in Bosnia has now entered its most critical phase. “What is at stake during the weeks and months ahead” is not the question of war and peace in the short term, but the question of continued partition or gradual reintegration. But without a gradual reintegration of the country, the threat of renewed conflict will always be there and the peace process will remain extremely fragile.