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### **Forum**

Winning the Peace Under the Dayton Peace Accords: Military Lessons learned and  
Sustaining Democracy in Bosnia  
House Armed Service Committee  
Washington, July 12, 2004

It is my privilege and pleasure to have the opportunity to address today the House Armed Service Committee. I want to express my gratitude to the Honorable Michale Turner for organizing Forum *Winning the Peace Under the Dayton Peace Accords: Military Lessons Learned and Sustaining Democracy in Bosnia*.

#### ***The Status of the Dayton Peace Accords implementation***

First of all, it should be underlined that DPA has been almost completely implemented. The main goal has been achieved which means not only stopping the war, but bringing stability to the country. Well balanced, equally acceptable for all sides, the Agreement represents a good and viable formula, creating stability that could be described as firm, leading Bosnia and Herzegovina toward European family.

Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels with strong support of the international community have succeeded in fulfilling all provisions of the Accords, including annexes. Even the most difficult one, which is number VII dealing with refugees and internally displaced persons issue. According to the report of UNHCR, overwhelming majority of Bosnian refugees repossessed their prewar properties even in the areas where the most enthusiastic optimists did not expect.

It has to be emphasized the paramount importance of the role of UNMIBH and OHR in the police and judiciary reform, streamlining the efforts of our domestic institutions, allowing Bosnia and Herzegovina to approach European standards by creating modern police forces capable to fight crime but at the same time to respect human rights and dignity of every person. Judiciary reform is the complex one, but we are proud to say that advancement in that area is visible.

Even though that Bosnia and Herzegovina has achieved better political environment, tolerance, security etc. sluggish economy with high unemployment rate, low personal income and widespread poverty may undermine positive outlook.

Immediate and deep implementation of economic reforms should lead to vigorous growth, increase of direct foreign investment as well as toward poverty reduction. Only such a development may secure positive political trends.

Dayton Peace Agreement serves as a good foundation for Bosnia and Herzegovina on its way toward Euro-Atlantic integrations. Defense reform that has just been completed represents a huge step forward to the membership in PfP, and later to NATO structures. I am very pleased to mention an extremely constructive visit by Bosnian Prime Minister Mr. Adnan Terzic accompanied by Defense Minister Mr. Nikola Radovanovic.

During the visit, the Secretary of State Mr. Collin Powel, National Security Adviser Ms. Condoleezza Rice as well as Defense Secretary Mr. Donald Rumsfield praised Bosnian authorities for excellently performed defense reform.

In the conclusion it should not be forgotten that main challenge for Bosnia and Herzegovina remains communist heritage in all its aspects, i.e. transition from socialist society with planned state controlled economy to fully completed privatization and free market economy. This process will represent tough obstacle rather than any other derived from the post conflict transition.

### ***The threat of terrorist influence in Bosnia***

The rising of international terrorism that culminated in 9/11 attack in the United States of America triggered not only condemnation but strong reaction from the world. Struggle against terrorism has become main topic in the international agenda. As it is well known, Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately joined antiterrorism coalition.

There have been lot of rumors and indications about the presence of Al Qaeda's terrorist cells in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the activities of its network. Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina are proving again its commitment to fight terrorism by prompt actions and full cooperation with international community representatives, especially with FBI and CIA experts, to curb and investigate every indication of it. It has to be mentioned the prompt action by our authorities in freezing all suspect "humanitarian" funds designated by American and other Western experts as potential financial support to terrorist activities worldwide. Authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are deeply engaged in monitoring any suspect moves and State Border Police has got clear instructions in preventing of suspects designated by Security Council antiterrorist Committee established pursuant to the resolution 1373 to enter our country.

Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to have closest ties with American agencies in this regard.

***The shift from a significant US military presence to a predominantly diplomatic presence***

Immediately after Dayton Peace Agreement was signed over 60.000 NATO led foreign troops entered Bosnia and Herzegovina. Foreign troops were necessary to guarantee the implementation of the military part of the Agreement. With positive developments on the ground, foreign military presence sharply declined, and now its number is 7.000. United States has reduced its proportion from 33% of the total to less than 13% (from 20.000 to 900 respectively).

It is obvious that excessive military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not needed any more. Nonetheless, symbolic number of foreign troops should continue to be present throughout the country for certain period of time.

American military presence has played so far an extremely important role in achieving full implementation of the Peace Agreement, as well as in creating a peaceful and secure environment in the country. People and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina are deeply grateful to American presence over last nine years, considering it as a main contribution to the overall stability in the region.

At the same time, while having great respect for American military contribution to the peace and stability, we are happy to see European Union Mission in Bosnia (EUFOR), because it is a fresh signal to the people that our country is firmly on the road toward the membership in the EU.

Further NATO HQ presence in Sarajevo likewise is a clear sign that we are going to be in the foreseeable future member of the Alliance, another reason to feel better protection from any attempt to destabilize the situation on the ground.

Thus, I am taking this opportunity to underline once again that closest cooperation with American experts and agencies, especially those responsible for fight against terrorism, will continue in the strongest way.

***U.S. military role in demining efforts***

Even though that SFOR will be replaced by EUFOR in December 2004, every kind of further U.S assistance in demining activities will be more than welcomed. Modalities of assistance should be discussed, because success in demining process will be of great importance for security, economy and good signal to the world that we are getting back to entirely normal life.

***Status of Persons Indicted for War Crimes***

Regarding ICTY, Bosnia and Herzegovina has strong obligations in accordance with the international law. Initial steps already undertaken by entity and local authorities

demonstrate visible commitment and readiness to fulfill remaining task from Dayton Peace Accords.

The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina on their own will continue doing what they can under obvious circumstances, and they will continue their cooperation with others in this regard. But we note that the international community's obligation to remain itself active on this issue precedes even Dayton.

In connection with the question of these fugitives and other war crimes issues, Bosnia and Herzegovina pledges itself to provide full access for appropriate institutions of the international community to documents, archives and other relevant materials.

### ***Transferability of Bosnia lessons to other conflicts (Iraq, Afghanistan)***

Similarity of Bosnia and Herzegovina case with Iraq and Afghanistan is in the fact that all these countries are multiethnic and have three main ethnic groups.

One of the lessons learned that could be used in preventive diplomacy as well, is the following: any constitutional arrangement to be made in the above-mentioned countries has to take into account interests of all ethnic groups, every proposal has to be equally acceptable to all. If that is not the case, if interest of one ethnic group is neglected in favor of the other one, there is no doubt that future conflict is inevitable.

If major issues are to be resolved without consent of main ethnic groups within the country, it will be hard to prevent trouble in the future.

If commons and tradition of the civilizations are ignored it will be hard to maintain order and to create a long lasting solution.

International community must streamline the efforts, avoiding overlap responsibilities among different organizations and agencies.

Without full commitment and readiness to be engaged for as long period of time as needed, there will be no success.