



*Stalna misija Bosne i Hercegovine pri Uredu Ujedinjenih naroda u Beču,
OSSE i drugim međunarodnim organizacijama, B E C*

*Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations Office
in Vienna, OSCE and other International Organizations, V I E N N A*

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2 July 2013

**Statement
of the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Ambassador Tomislav Leko, in reply to the statements by the
Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, H.E.
Didier Burkhalter, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Serbia, H.E. Ivan Mrkic
at the Special 958th Plenary Permanent Council
Vienna, 2 July 2013**

Mr. Chairmen,
Your Excellencies, Minister Burkhalter and Minister Mrkic,
Dear Colleagues,

The delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina joins the others in welcoming the Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Didier Burkhalter and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, H.E. Ivan Mrkic to the Permanent Council meeting.

While we fully subscribe to the EU statement, we would like to add few comments in our national capacity.

We wish to thank both Ministers for presenting the Joint Work Plan with the Chairmanships 2014 and 2015 priorities. It is a comprehensive one and foresees a dynamic set of the activities in all three dimensions, upholding the ongoing Helsinki+40 process.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully agrees with H.E. Ivan Mrkic assertion that the chairmanship of the Republic of Serbia in 2015. is honor and acknowledgement for the whole region of the Western Balkans, as well. The region which, in the past, was a space of hostilities and misunderstanding, with struggling countries, is now witnessing the new vectors in a regional cooperation and coordination, where the development of good-neighborly relations, economical liaisons and reconciliation among states and peoples prevail.

The recent Agreement between Belgrade and Prishtina on normalization of the ties is a historical and landmark event, which will contribute to the overarching peace and stability within our realm. It opens an epochal perspective for the further evolution of relations among the peoples of the Western Balkans becoming an area of prosperity and stability which will not



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only obey its commitments but could boost the stability and confidence within the whole OSCE area. We join the others in hailing Serbian courageous decisions and brave and wisdom politics.

This also refers to the bilateral relations, which are seeing a new dynamism and pertinent improvement.

We take this opportunity and wholeheartedly congratulate Serbia on the decision of the EU leaders to give to Serbia the go-ahead for opening the accession talks on EU membership by January 2014, at the latest.

Together with the yesterday's accession of Croatia to the EU, it creates another historic impetus for the Balkans, reconfirming EU perspective for all regions' states. We are convinced that it will stimulate and encourage the countries accelerating its reform processes, as well as fulfilling its accession commitments.

We fully support the projected Serbian Chairmanship to further improving regional cooperation and in that context it is to be seen the role and tasks of the Special Representative for Western Balkans. We regard that his role should be a kind of a fine tuning in the existing trend of intensive cooperation among the countries of the Western Balkan. His mandate should confirm the achievements in stabilization of the region and reconciliation among the peoples. The fact that all countries are deploying OSCE field missions is a connective element for his activities. We stay assured that his tenure through 2014 and 2015 will end up with the higher standards in the principle OSCE commitments.

In closure, the delegation of BiH wishes you successful and productive Chairmanships and expresses firm belief that your lead through 2014 and 2015 will enact visible and tangible results, thus leading our Organization to a new, higher level of efficiency and international recognition.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson