



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1442 Vienna, 21 September 2023

EU Statement on the Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Current issue to be raised by the US)

1. We reiterate our unequivocal commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU membership perspective as a single, united and sovereign country. In the current geopolitical context, the EU underlines the urgency for the country to move forward on its EU path, in particular via fulfilling all 14 key priorities for the opening of EU accession negotiations identified in the Commission's Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership as endorsed by the Council in 2019. The Council also calls on all political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to swiftly implement the commitments set out in the agreement reached on 12 June 2022 and urgently finalise the constitutional and electoral reform in line with the key priorities. In this context, we welcome the recent adoption by the BiH Parliament of some important laws on the EU-related reform agenda as an important step and recall the importance to ensure the full compliance of these laws with EU standards, Council of Europe membership obligations and the recommendations provided by the Venice Commission.
2. The EU is, however, seriously concerned about legislative initiatives and announcements in the Republika Srpska entity that run counter to the EU path of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including secessionist rhetoric and questioning the constitutional order of the country.
3. We deplore the adoption of legislation in the Republika Srpska entity on the inapplicability of the decisions of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the entity. Furthermore, we deplore the entry into force of amendments to the criminal code of the Republika Srpska entity, reintroducing

criminal penalties for defamation. We also regret that the draft laws labelling NGOs as “foreign agents” and pertaining to immovable property are back on the legislative agenda in the Republika Srpska entity.

4. The announcement by the President of the entity, Milorad Dodik, of a decree preventing High Representative Schmidt from entering the entity is unacceptable, undermines the constitutional framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is neither legally founded nor enforceable. The EU reaffirms its full support for the mission of the High Representative and his Office.
5. The EU recalls that through its military Operation EUFOR Althea, the EU supports the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in maintaining a safe and secure environment. The EU welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina’s continued strong support to the executive mandate of EUFOR Althea and its continued presence for maintaining stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Candidate Countries TÜRKIYE, NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.