



United States Mission to the OSCE

On Recent Developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina

As delivered by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Tracey Newell
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 2, 2024

The United States is fully committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and multi-ethnic character. We share the desire of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina for a stable, secure, and prosperous country fully integrated into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

The corruption and pursuit of narrow self-interests by some ethnonationalist politicians remains a serious problem in the country. We are compelled to reiterate that Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik's actions and divisive rhetoric, as well as those by his political partners, present a grave threat to Bosnia and Herzegovina's territorial integrity and regional integration.

Mr. Dodik's escalatory, secessionist behavior undermines the Dayton Peace Agreement, the country's constitution and institutions, and the interest of its citizens in peace, stability, and economic integration. The election law adopted by the Republika Srpska National Assembly on April 19th threatens Bosnia and Herzegovina's constitutional order and would be destabilizing if implemented. Dodik's April 22nd claim that adoption of the draft UN Assembly Srebrenica resolution would be "incompatible" with the country's continued existence is alarming and provocative. We condemn Dodik's statement that he cannot "share the same air with Bosniaks" and Muslims. We also condemn Dodik's verbal attacks on the judiciary of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Office of the High Representative, and High Representative Schmidt himself.

Dodik's statements and actions clearly are aimed at undermining and weakening state-level institutions. We cannot allow Dodik and others who seek to advance their own political interests to splinter the country. To that end, we welcome High Representative Schmidt's March 26th intervention to use his powers to impose necessary electoral law amendments. These amendments address ODIHR recommendations and will help ensure Bosnia and Herzegovina's October elections meet international standards, increase transparency, and prevent electoral fraud. Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens deserve free and fair elections.

Madam Chair, the United States remains committed to safeguarding Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and multi-ethnic character. Attempts to undermine progress towards realizing Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU aspirations must stop.

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