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*Stalna misija Bosne i Hercegovine pri Uredu Ujedinjenih naroda u Becu,
OSSE i drugim medjunarodnim organizacijama, B E C
Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations
Office at Vienna, OSCE and other International Organizations, V I E N N A*

**Statement by
Edin Dilberovic, Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the OSCE
in response to the
High Representative of International Community and EU Special Representative
to Bosnia and Herzegovina
H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajcak**

**683rd Meeting of the Permanent Council
Vienna, 25 October 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina I would like to join others in welcoming High Representative and EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina Dr. Miroslav Lajcak to the Permanent Council and thank him for his report about my country.

There is an age old Bosnian proverb which perhaps best sums up the one fundamental law presiding over our journey through this difficult, and often times hostile, region of Balkans in which we live. It is simple and to the point - **"Tell the truth and run"**. Obviously, the faster a person can run the more up-front and honest they can be. So Mr. Lajcak thank you for telling the truth about the situation in my country and the region and not running.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has come a long way since devastating war and the Dayton-Paris Accords were signed. The progress achieved by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the assistance of the international community, has been tremendous. There is no question that the Office of High Representative has played a key role in helping build democratic institutions and fostering a greater sense of nationhood.

We in Bosnia and Herzegovina are grateful to international community and its involvement and help. Without international community and our friends we would not be able to reach this stage of development and stability.

If we should try to find out the shortest description of nowadays problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we should refer to the message "in the bottle" which the greatest German poet Heinrich Heine once had sent to his divided countryman: "Deutschland, das sind wir selber".

"Bosnien und Herzegowina, das sind wir selber" That is, to my opinion, the most important message one could send throughout my country. But, the problem is that in fact there are very few or almost none of such messengers, except for few representatives of International Community who, with doing their utmost, cannot claim themselves as Bosnians.



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To my humble opinion, all problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina starts and ends within that very fact of identification with the state. It is very much so due to the destructive war, but it is even more due to the very complicated and strange constitutional system.

I could speak as diplomat about half-full or half-empty glass, optimistic or pessimistic scenarios. But if I do speak as a citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnian Ambassador than I should take a realistic course by saying that my country today needs a deep social introspection. Foreigners and diplomats in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot do that part of job on our behalf. We must face that challenge and until we face it seriously we will not be able to cope with all problems that are floating on the surface.

Disharmonized state-building process created an effect of 'institutional layering' in which pre-war, wartime and post-war institutions have been allowed to coexist, with serious mandate and authority overlaps. In order to function, this web of interconnected and interdependent authorities would require a high level of political will and consensus, an accountable political and administrative leadership and a sophisticated civil service capable of managing delicate inter-governmental relations and institutions. In the absence of these criteria in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community has been the glue holding the system together to some extent.

Martin Luther King said that *Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere*. Mr. Chairman today is also 4,334 days or more than 11 and a half years that indicated war criminals Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic are free and at large.

The very fact that spirit of these two remaining fugitives and indicted war criminals is very present is more than recognizable during today's statements and political processes in the whole region.

Our region of Western Balkan is lucky to have EU perspective as a real political goal and I can only hope that politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina are smart enough to strengthen the reform processes towards our EU integration. Not just because of the EU but especially because of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their secure future.

Of course that time is precious but "step by step" approach in political circumstances of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only answer. Efforts to strengthen state-level institutions and thereby providing a unified and coherent governmental system need to continue. Concept of political compromise and consensus is only solution to overcome political differences in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Not less important is that message of international community especially of European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be coherent, accurate, timely and one-voice message. It helps a lot.

We are all aware of the political statements in Bosnia and Herzegovina after Mr. Lajcek announced some measures few days ago. I am not in a position to comment them but on the end I can only refer to old Chinese proverb *Better to light one small candle than to curse the darkness*. It says enough.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.