



RESOLUTION:

Bosnia and Herzegovina – democratisation and reform of electoral law necessary for stability and European future

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Belgrade, on 02.12.2017

Recognising that

- The Dayton Peace Agreement effectively ended the war in 1995 and provided a new institutional and political framework within which BiH became a state of the three-constitutive people (Bosnians, Serbs and the Croats).
- Despite the fact that the Dayton agreement brought peace, today it needs crucial updates in order to facilitate a better functioning and overall performance of the economic and political system, because every update and amendment of the Constitution had its implications in the sense of damage for constitutionality. The result of the current political status quo is the inability to provide effective government, to deliver necessary reforms or even form government as is the example of the city of Mostar which has not held elections for local government since 2008.
- Currently, BiH is contracting under an inefficient political system that is unable to support reforms necessary for the improvement of the economy and the wellbeing of the population. For example, it is facing a high rate of youth unemployment (approximately 60%).
- Due to the coming elections it is the optimal moment to reform the Electoral System.

Acknowledging that

- The Constitutional Court of BiH recently decided on the principle of constituency and equality of the three-constitutive people ruling that each constitutive people should elect their own political representatives; whereas currently representatives of one constitutive people could be elected by another constitutive people.

- The European Parliament passed the resolution on the 2016 Commission Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 February 2017¹ in which it is stated that the EU remains committed to BiH's EU perspective, to its territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity. Acknowledging progress has been achieved on the EU integration path based on which the Council asked the Commission to prepare its opinion on BiH's application for membership.
- The Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations delivered the questionnaire to the BiH authorities on 9 December 2016, in Sarajevo.
- The Council conclusions of 20 September 2016 on the application of BiH for membership of the EU² called for BiH to continue its efforts in order to ensure effective implementation of the Reform Agenda in line with the schedule of the action plan agreed by the BiH authorities, to the benefit of its nations and citizens in close cooperation with the EU, international financial institutions and international partners, as well as civil society. This should continue to include, as well as socio-economic reforms, reforms in the area of rule of law and those aimed at the efficiency of public administration.
- The European Parliament passed a resolution on the 2015 Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina on the 14th of April 2016³ stating that consensus on the Reform Agenda is required and the nations and citizens must be placed at the centre of institutional, economic and social reforms.

YEPP calls on:

- BiH to further democratise and transform its political system in order to provide better outcomes for its peoples.
- Political leaders to overcome their particular ethnical positions in order to achieve consensus on the reforms that are necessary for economic growth and the successful fulfilment of the criteria that will allow BiH to achieve EU membership.
- Political leaders to show unity and to restrain from as well as condemn all rhetoric that emphasizes and deepens ethnic tensions and divisions. To address and fight the threat of radical Islam and terrorism.
- All actors to reform the electoral system according to the rulings of the Constitutional Court of 9, ensuring the right of representation and allowing each constitutive people to elect all of its own political representatives.

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2017-0037+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/09/20/conclusions-bosnia/#>

³ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2016-0135+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>