

OHR, OSCE Express Concern about Croatian Candidates

Wolfgang Petritsch, the High Representative and Robert Barry, the Head of the OSCE Mission, express their deep concern about a number of the candidates nominated by the HDZ for the Croatian Elections diaspora representation in the Croatian Parliament. Several of these candidates have been removed from office in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the High Representative, and the OSCE, for obstruction of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP).

These persons have already demonstrated their unsuitability for election to office in BiH. As a consequence, these nominations do nothing to foster the belief that the HDZ are supportive of the Dayton Peace Accords – to which the Republic of Croatia is of course a signatory. The HDZ candidates nominated for the Croatian parliament, who have been removed in BiH, are the following:

- Mr. Krunoslav Kordic, the former Mayor of Capljina, removed from all BiH mandates by the High Representative and the OSCE on November 29, 1999;
- Mr. Mijo Tokic, former President of Cantonal Assembly Canton 10, removed by the High Representative and the OSCE for obstructing the implementation of the GFAP on October 20, 1998. Mr. Tokic was also removed from the candidates list by the Election Appeals Sub-commission (EASC) in a 1998 general elections decision;
- Mr. Stanko Sopta, a former HVO general, was dismissed from his post in BiH by the COMSFOR in 1998;
- Mr. Stjepan Mikic, was removed from the candidates list by the EASC in a 1998 general elections decision;

A number of candidates from the HDZ, as well as other parties including the Croat Demo-Christians of BiH and the Croatian

Party of Rights, already hold mandates in BiH elective offices, and if elected to the Croatian Parliament, would be forced to forfeit one of its mandate. Under the PEC Rules and Regulations, candidates must choose, and will be compelled to decide within 48 hours of being certified to a post outside of BiH. If the candidate fails to decide within the timeframe, the PEC will choose the mandate the candidate must forfeit.

The OSCE will continue to check the candidates lists for the Croatian elections against lists being submitted by parties in BiH for the April 2000 Municipal Elections.