

Decision removing Mr. Elvedin Hrelja from his position of Mayor of Goradze

To: Mr. Elvedin Hrelja
Mayor of Gorazde

Sarajevo, November 29, 1999

Dear Mr. Elvedin Hrelja,

For reasons outlined in the attached Decision, we herewith notify you of the following: under the powers vested in the High Representative, you are removed from public office with immediate effect. In addition, in accordance with the Provisional Election Commission Rules and Regulations, this Decision bars you from being a candidate in the upcoming municipal elections.

It is with great regret that we are forced to acknowledge that during your term in office not only have you failed to show any commitment to the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace, but you have also seriously and persistently obstructed its implementation.

Wolfgang Petritsch
High Representative

Robert L. Barry
Chairman of the PEC
OSCE Head of Mission

In the exercise of the powers vested in the High Representative by Article 5 of the Annex 10 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to which the High Representative *'is the final authority in the theatre regarding interpretation of [the] Agreement on the civilian implementation of the peace agreement'*;

Endorsing the interpretation of these powers given in paragraph XI, 2 of the Conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 10 December 1997, in particular, sub-paragraph c thereof, by means of which the High Representative is entitled to take actions against persons holding public office who are found by the High Representative to be in violation of legal commitments made under the Peace Agreement or the terms of its implementation;

Noting the reiteration of the acknowledgement of such powers by the Peace Implementation Council in Chapter X of the Annex to the Madrid Declaration of 16 December 1998;

Considering the mandate entrusted with the Provisional Election Commission under Article III of the Annex 3 to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the article 7.10 of the Rules and Regulations adopted thereafter which provides that *no person who has been removed by the High Representative shall be permitted to be a candidate in the elections.*

We hereby issue the following

Decision

To remove Mr. Elvedin Hrelja from his position of Mayor of Gorazde and to ban him from being a candidate for the next municipal elections or to hold any executive office at any level, unless authorised to do so.

This Decision has immediate effect.

Reasons for removal

Mr. Elvedin Hrelja has abused his power by persistently and seriously obstructing the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace. By pursuing an extra-legal agenda, he has consistently refused to take ownership of the laws of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In particular,

- Mr. Hrelja Elvedin has totally failed in the policy of Gorazde as an Open City. Despite huge international investment and the categorization as an Open City, City Gorazde has seen minimal return. Specifically, the authorities have failed to eliminate blatant abuse of housing financed by the international community.
- Mr. Elvedin Hrelja has actively worked against creating genuinely democratic and transparent municipal authorities by ignoring the authority and legitimacy of the Municipal Council.
- Mr. Elvedin Hrelja, in his capacity as Mayor of Gorazde, has obstructed various initiatives to promote cross-IEBL co-operation with the municipality of Srpsko Gorazde. The recent IEBL crisis is indicative of Mr. Elvedin Hrelja's ill will towards reconciliation when he refused and aborted a number of initiatives taken by the international community in order to find a solution to the crisis. Mr. Elvedin Hrelja preferred to use every possible opportunity to radicalise positions rather than to ease already high tensions.

All of the above establishes a disturbing and unacceptable pattern of deliberate attempts to obstruct the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace. For these reasons, we hereby remove Mr. Elvedin Hrelja from the position of Mayor of Gorazde. The Decision will be effective immediately and will not require any further procedural steps.

The position left vacant by Mr. Elvedin Hrelja's removal will be filled by the Municipal Council in accordance with the appropriate regulations. In order to protect the institution to which a replacement is to be elected, no further actions are to be taken by the relevant authorities until OHR and OSCE communicate that there are no objections and that the proposed name can proceed through the appropriate process.

Sarajevo, 29 November 1999

Wolfgang Petritsch
High Representative

Robert L. Barry
Chairman of the PEC
OSCE Head of Mission

Office of the High Representative