

Grave Concern of the Growing Crisis in Republika Srpska

November 1, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Serbian Unity Congress expresses its strong disagreement with the latest proposals by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina to fundamentally revise the laws governing the state-level Council of Ministers and Parliament. It is critically important to retract these proposals in their current form for the following reasons:

- a) The general attitude of current HR, Miroslav Lajcak, clearly appears to continue, instead of abandoning, the detrimental practice of many of his predecessors in crudely overstepping boundaries of their mandate and thus stifling democracy and responsibility of the local political process, its body politic and elected officials. This threatens to fully discredit the authority of the OHR and their ability to provide any constructive oversight function, concurrently making a mockery of the very democratic institutions that UN presence was meant to facilitate during the past 12 years.
- b) The said legislative changes as proposed, irrespective of their source, are clearly unconstitutional in both letter and spirit, as they represent an obvious breach of the US-backed Dayton-Paris accords and their very pillars - the principles of entity and constituent nation parity - that provided the balance between central and regional government needed to end hostilities and usher a prospect of peace for Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- c) The said legislative proposals, both in content and method of delivery, have produced in practical terms a very serious crisis that threatens to widen, with unpredictable and grave consequences that directly threaten the very stability that US interests mandate, and its foreign policy has been heavily invested with.

Based on all of the above and the key role that the US has in influencing the OHR, the Serbian Unity Congress calls on the State Department to immediately take positive action to redress the matter, and urges Congress to provide clear guidance and support in this matter.