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Deputy High Representative for Legal Affairs
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H.E. Beriz Belkic
Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

H.E. Zivko Radisic
Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

H.E. Jozo Krizanovic
Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

H.E. Zlatko Lagumdzija
Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of
Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Your Excellencies

I recently enjoyed the opportunity of discussing the meaning of certain provisions of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Chiefs of Cabinet of the Presidency and with the Secretary to the Presidency Mr Srdjan Arnaut.

I am not at this point writing about the substantive issues we were then considering but rather about the fact that our discussions highlighted two problems concerning the authentic text of the Constitution itself.

The first problem was that different versions of the text of Article V: 2. (c) are currently in circulation.

The second problem is that there does not exist an official text of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The first problem arises out of what has come to be known as the "Dayton error". When the text of the General Framework Agreement for Peace was signed in Paris on 14 December 1995, Article V: 2 (c) of Annex 4 cross referred in error to Article III: 1 (a)-(e) instead of to Article V: 3 (a)-(e).



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The matter was corrected by means of a letter from the then High Representative Carl Bildt to the Presidency dated 7 December 1996 of which I enclose a further copy for reference. The version of the Constitution which is now to be found in hard copy in the third edition of OHR "Essential Documents" is the correct one in so far as the English language is concerned.

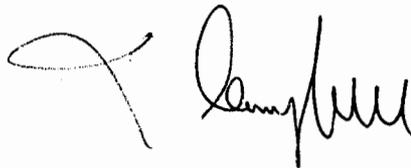
Clearly it is necessary to press on as quickly as possible with the finalisation of translation and publication of the Constitution in the languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina not only so that all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina may have access to the text of the Constitution in an authentic and official version in their own language, but also so that the potential for confusion created by the "Dayton error" may be removed.

In this regard I can inform you that by a separate agreement signed in Paris on 14 December 1995, the French Government undertook responsibility for the provision of official translations in the languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The procedure laid down was that each Party to the General Framework Agreement for Peace was to supply the French Government with the respective language versions which the French Government would then circulate to all the Parties for consideration and comment. After this a meeting of the Parties at expert level would be convened which would confirm the final versions of the texts.

It is my understanding that the French Government has been supplied so far with texts by the Republic of Croatia and by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. So far however no text has been forwarded from the Council of Ministers. I believe that the Council of Ministers has set up a working group tasked to pursue this matter, initially led by Mr Haris Hrle and latterly by Mr Mihajlo Suznjevic.

It would be extremely beneficial for the reasons indicated above if the work of this group could be brought to a speedy conclusion and the required text submitted to the French Government, thereby enabling the important translation process to proceed to the next stage.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Campbell', written in a cursive style.

Ian Campbell

cc.

H.E. Bernard Bajolet, Ambassador of the French Republic

Mr. Srdjan Arnaut, Secretary General of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina