



Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesman
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Ten Years of Dayton Progress

On November 21, 1995, the Dayton Peace Accords ended a conflict that claimed over 200,000 lives and drove over two million people from their homes. NATO forces, led by the U.S. military, helped to end the war and U.S. and international negotiators at Dayton laid the framework for a sustainable peace. Over the last ten years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has built on that peace, progressively strengthening its democratic institutions, and beginning to undertake the kinds of reforms needed for its eventual Euro-Atlantic integration. The Dayton Peace Accords made it possible for Bosnia and Herzegovina, with help and support from its international friends, to achieve important goals, setting the stage for the nation to assume its role in President Bush's vision of a Europe "whole, free and at peace."

Building a Stable Future through Euro-Atlantic Integration:

The European Union will open negotiations on a Stabilization and Association Agreement on November 25. That decision recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina's important progress in governance, rule of law, and economic reform, and is a first step in the process toward eventual EU membership.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's adoption of defense reform legislation, which creates a single, unified army under the command and control of the state government, sets the foundation for eventual integration with NATO. Bosnia and Herzegovina has committed to meeting NATO's criteria for membership in the Partnership for Peace, including full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Developing an Effective Nation-State – the Role of State Institutions:

Bosnia and Herzegovina has strengthened the role of the national government through the development of new institutions not foreseen under Dayton: a state-level Ministry of Defense, national law enforcement agency, unified intelligence service, state border service, customs service, tax agency, Central Bank, and Deposit Insurance Agency, among many others. These agencies give Bosnia and Herzegovina the institutional framework its needs to cooperate with, and eventually participate, in Euro-Atlantic structures.

Establishing Justice and Rule of Law:

Once the scene of the worst atrocities in Europe since World War II, Bosnia and Herzegovina has established credible institutions of justice. In recognition of that achievement, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia transferred the first war crimes case to Bosnia and Herzegovina's special War Crimes Chamber earlier this year. Bosnia and Herzegovina has transferred to the tribunal nine indicted war criminals. Two key indictees, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, remain at large.

Healing the Wounds of War – Returning Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons to Their Homes:

Just over one million refugees and internally displaced persons, or about half of all persons displaced by the war, have returned to their prewar homes, many in areas where they are the minority ethnic group. As of July 2005, 93 percent of property seized or occupied during the war has been returned to their lawful prewar owners.

Making the Nation Safe Again - Humanitarian Demining:

Over 50 percent of the area affected by persistent landmines left from past conflicts has been cleared, not only saving life and limb but also freeing up land for agriculture and industry.

Rebuilding the Nation's Capacities:

Much of the physical devastation of the war has been repaired and rebuilt. Rail and border bridges vital to Bosnia and Herzegovina's cross-border trade have been rebuilt. New power projects have helped businesses get back up and running.

Meeting New International Responsibilities – Joining the Global War on Terror:

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been an active partner in the global war on terror, deploying two rotations of troops to Iraq to support Coalition efforts and extending an offer to provide military assistance to the Government of Afghanistan for the development of their defense and security institutions. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been active in stemming the flow of terrorist financing, freezing assets of suspected individuals and organizations. The state Parliament just passed legislation to enhance the government's powers to denaturalize foreign fighters who acquired citizenship during and after the war, some of which, subsequently, have been involved in terrorist activities.

Creating Conditions for Prosperity - Fiscal and Financial Sector Reform:

Bosnia and Herzegovina created a Central Bank and introduced a single currency pegged to the Euro, which has reduced inflation to the lowest levels of any country in the Balkans. The commercial banking system was privatized, attracting substantial foreign investment and resulting in the country's first international credit rating.

Nourishing Fundamental Freedoms - Free and Independent Media:

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress in achieving a free and vibrant press. In addition to public broadcasters, Bosnia and Herzegovina has its first private and independent television network, Mreza Plus.

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