

**Remarks given by H.E. Mr. Paul Heinbecker
before the U.N. Security Council Open briefing
on Bosnia and Herzegovina
Tuesday, 12 December 2000**

Monsieur le Président,

Le Canada est heureux de souhaiter aujourd'hui la bienvenue à l'Ambassadeur Klein au Conseil de sécurité.

Nous le remercions pour son exposé et pour l'excellente contribution qu'il a apportée à la Bosnie-Herzégovine dans les domaines de la réforme de la police, de la restructuration de la police, de l'entraide policière et judiciaire, des services frontaliers et d'autres activités conjointes, depuis son dernier rapport présenté le 2 juin.

We particularly want to thank UNMIBH for its contribution to judicial reform through its Judicial System Assessment Programme (JSAP) which ceased operations on December 1st.

We support the continuing work of the Office of the High Representative in this area which is essential for ensuring respect for the rule of law and maintaining an appropriate balance of power with the executive and legislative branches of government.

Canada appreciates the preparations Ambassador Klein has made for the fulfilment of the UNMIBH mandate by December 2002.

The successful conclusion of a mission is often the under-appreciated but most challenging phase of an operation.

Of course, the need for international technical assistance will not end with the UNMIBH mission.

We hope that regional organizations such as the OSCE will continue to assist.

For its part, Canada intends to continue doing its share through bilateral initiatives such as our RCMP police training assistance programme.

Mr. President,

Canada would like to highlight UNMIBH's success in making the police an example to their communities.

Two specific examples are the tight scrutiny by police of illegal occupancy and the inclusion of minority officers -- 225 minority recruits have graduated thus far and 321 are in training.

These steps enable the police to reflect their communities and encourage return.

We will continue to support the work of International Police Task Force (IPTF) until the completion of its mission.

We have one question for the Special Representative, on Bosnian events more generally, we would appreciate your views on the recent elections?

Do you expect the efforts of the SDP to form a coalition against the nationalist parties to succeed?

BACKGROUND

The role of UNMIBH is to ensure the restructuring of the police, police reform and an assessment of the judicial system; over 320 minority police officers have graduated from academies or are currently completing training. In 1996 there were over 40 000 police; today, this number has been reduced to 20 000. There are fewer heavy weapons being carried, illegal checkpoints have been curtailed and the common licence plate policy has been implemented.

The UNMIBH mandate implementation plan is intended to provide the strategic framework for the fulfilment of the UNMIBH mandate by December 2002; however, specific details are unknown. The number of IPTF personnel required as technical advisers should be reduced by 50% by June 2002 and end by December 2002. However, it is not assumed that the need for an international police presence will end in December 2002. Rather, it is felt that there will be a continued, long-term requirement for international police resources to provide technical assistance through a regional organization such as the OSCE and bilateral training initiatives such as those managed through the RCMP police training assistance programme.

Bosnia Update:

General elections were held on 11 November 2000. In general, the vote itself passed smoothly. However, there were localized incidents of voter intimidation and fraud on the part of the SDS in Srebrenica, and the HDZ organized a simultaneous “referendum” concerning the future of Bosnian Croats within the Federation which constituted a violation of the electoral silence period. Although support for moderate parties increased slightly, the Croat “referendum” exacerbated existing ethnic fears and the resultant vote favored ethnically-based parties more than had been anticipated by earlier polls. The divisive nature of the vote means that the direction of the future governments will depend on coalitions. Canada supports a coalition of moderate parties -- SDP is currently trying to bring together an “Alliance for Change” -- over the nationalists.

Canadian contribution

The increase of the Canadian police contribution from 10 to 15 in September 2000 is a clear demonstration of Canada’s much-needed support to UNMIBH. Canada will focus on the core programmes of police reform and police restructuring. Our contribution will evolve in three phases: Phase I with an increase of resources to 15; Phase II with a reduction to 10 (based on an evaluation of Phase I); and Phase III from July to December 2002 during which Canada would retain only five personnel.

Canada currently heads the major crime task force and seconds one person to the Anti-Fraud Unit of the Office of the High Representative in Mostar.