

TRILATERAL POSITION TOWARDS THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

JOINT STATEMENT MADE BY THE PRESIDENT OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDENCY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

CONTINUING on the practice established through the participation of the President of the Republic of Croatia and the President of the Presidency of BiH in the 9th session of the Igman Initiative, which took place in Zagreb in September 2004, we – the Presidents of Serbia and Montenegro, Republic of Croatia and the Presidency of BiH - participated in the 10th meeting of Igman Initiative, held in Belgrade on 27 June 2005.

WELCOMING the role and engagement of non-governmental organisations in initiatives, such as the Igman Initiative, in fostering and motivating the organs and institutions of the three states in the continuation of the policy of normalisation of relations among the states of the so-called Dayton triangle, with the aim of making restored confidences and mutual understanding a basis for building peace, stability and security in this key segment of southeastern Europe,

CONFIRMING their determination to contribute, through their personal engagement, to the creation of confidence and "good neighbors" climate, and thus help the overall stabilisation of circumstances on the territory of former Yugoslavia,

EXPRESSING ASSURANCES that there is no alternative to the complete renewal of good neighborly relations, regional cooperation based on full equality and the principle of fulfilling mutual interests and joining the EU, as the ultimate goal that all three states are striving for,

AFTER HAVING REVIEWED the current situation referring to the interstate relations in an atmosphere of openness, and after having given a positive assessment of the Igman Initiative efforts in contributing to the expansion of the bilateral agreement network among the states, We, the President of Serbia and Montenegro, the President of the Republic of Croatia and the President of the Presidency of BiH, agree on the following:

- 1) There has been significant progress in the relations between the Republic of Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as between Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina since the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia ended, so the normalisation within the so called Dayton triangle currently encompasses virtually all spheres of life;
- 2) As all three countries have an identical long-term goal, namely inclusion in the European Union, it is required that the remaining residues of the wars, in which the former Yugoslavia broke apart, be removed in order to further improve the normalisation of relations, this being one of the key preconditions for joining the EU;
- 3) Impartial attitude towards the past, both recent and the one dating from the period of World War II and passing the truth about the past events on to the young generations, are some of the key preconditions for our countries to cease to be the hostages of the past and turn to future, unburdened with historic myths and aspirations of the history revisionists;
- 4) Cooperation between the state, state institutions and the non-governmental sector should be continued, in particular in the area of establishment and strengthening of the rule of law, reform of judiciary, modernisation of public administration, whereas it is necessary to pay special tribute to the non-governmental organisations, which, on numerous occasions, proved to be valuable leaders, in particular in the policy of peace and stability and dealing with the past with the aim of opening the doors of future;
- 5) Process of the return of all refugees and exiles who wish to return should be accelerated, equally supported and assisted by all three states at all levels, with the creation of conditions not only for the return, but also for their remaining, which implies economy revival and the development of the regions where the exiles would return, with the valuable, both past and future, assistance from the international community ;
- 6) Efficient affirmation of the idea that national minorities and communities are an integral part of the society and state in which they reside, that they enrich both the material and intellectual culture of the state, epitomize bridges of joint communication and furthering of friendship and cooperation among citizens and states of the so called

Dayton triangle, and a consistent implementation of inter-state agreements on the protection of rights and freedoms of national minorities in accordance with the best practices and international agreements, will contribute to political and social stability of each state and consolidate the European perspectives of the entire region;

- 7) Full and unconditional cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, not just in cases of voluntary surrenders of the indictees, but also in cases of indictees, who seek their rescue from justice in hiding, is an inevitable step towards the complete elimination of the "collective guilt and responsibility" theory, and also a precondition for the individualisation of guilt and responsibility for crimes committed during the recent wars on all three sides; it is of utmost importance to ensure all preconditions for fair and just proceedings in both cases processed before domestic courts and those which will be transferred from the Hague, including the statements of witnesses as well as their protection;
- 8) A regime of visa-free border crossings of should be permanently institutionalised, as this would also help that the renewal of relations does not apply to representatives of state and business subjects only, but that it should grow into one of the key components in the renewed network of links and contacts in the relations among the three states;
- 9) Traffic relations among the Republic of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina should be restored and built, which will, needless to say, contribute to an improved movement of people and goods, not just among the three states, but also between the three countries and Europe, ie. the world;
- 10) All disputable issues should be resolved by means of conversation and negotiations, even through temporary solutions as a step towards the permanent ones, with the aim of making lives of those living in border areas easier - ensuring that the interests of each state's environment and citizens be preserved, but also starting from common interests in the framework of both bilateral and regional policies, taking into account the fact that successful cooperation of the three states is a pattern of the relations in the EU in which the three states wish to integrate and that Europe needs to be built in the region if we wish to turn the region into a part of the united Europe;
- 11) Mental, culture, historic, economic and all other barriers that could hamper the successful normalisation within the so called Dayton triangle, should be removed through patient work, with presence of good will of all three parties, in cooperation and with assistance from the international community, whenever such assistance is available and required;
- 12) All three parties are accountable for undertaking necessary steps and measures with the aim of gradual overcoming and elimination of hatred and mistrust, roused by recent wars, in order to facilitate all processes of individual and group contacts establishment among the citizens of the three states.

Presidents of Serbia and Montenegro, Republic of Croatia and the Presidency of BiH intend to continue with the practice of occasional participation in the meetings of Igman Initiative and therefore appeal to Igman Initiative to continue with its activities aimed at creating conditions and circumstances in which our region will definitely break away from the past and its legacy, and also, through accepting the European standards, intend to create conditions for the accession of the three states to the EU, in accordance with their individual achievements and results.

President of SaM

President of Croatia

President of the Presidency of BiH

Belgrade, 27 June 2005

This statement has been made in three originals in Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian languages, each version having the validity of an original.