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October 7, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

Your upcoming trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina presents a unique opportunity to highlight one of the greatest legacies of the Clinton Administration. President Clinton made significant contributions to promoting world peace and addressing worthy humanitarian causes. Among his administration's most consequential accomplishments were its leadership, steadfast commitment, and active role in directing a successful conclusion to the Dayton Peace Accords at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), near Dayton, Ohio, on November 21, 1995.

On that momentous day, the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia all agreed to a breakthrough peace settlement which sought to halt conflicts that began in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in April 1992. The Dayton Peace Accords, supported by the world, created a multi-ethnic country in the Balkans and addressed topics crucial to the future of BiH, including regional stabilization, a constitutional framework, the repatriation of refugees, and internal security.

This remarkable legacy of the Clinton Administration is now at risk. The lasting peace the Administration worked tirelessly to broker could end if problems brought on by unresolved issues continue to fester. Unless BiH's constitution is reformed and its government streamlined, that country may not be able to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic institutions, and more alarmingly, could plunge back into ethnic conflict.

The unprecedented success of the Dayton Peace Accords notwithstanding, the present political divisions of BiH and its ineffective government structure were approved as part of a transitional constitution agreed upon 15 years ago. In order to assure that Europe remains whole, free and at peace, a more concerted effort must be undertaken on both sides of the Atlantic to help this nascent democracy reform its governing structure and resolve other lingering issues. Under your leadership, inspired by President Clinton's success in Dayton, representatives of the Balkan states and other regional players should again gather at WPAFB, for a Dayton II to tackle the remaining challenges:

- Amend the BiH constitution to transition its government from an unmanageable bureaucracy to a more effective central, yet democratic, government. Other structural reforms should also be sought.
- Assist BiH in building civil society to allow parties (other than national/ethnic) to win political rights and shape the fate of the state.
- Help BiH and its neighbors to chart a viable path to integration with the Euro-Atlantic entities, including NATO and the EU.
- Address Wahhabi influence/funding that could radicalize the Balkans, including BiH and Kosovo.
- Assist Serbia with taking steps to welcome independent Kosovo.
- Decouple Macedonia's "name issue" from that country's bid to join the EU and NATO (blocked by Greece) and ultimately, help both countries to agree on a name.

On October 3, Bosnia and Herzegovina held general elections. International observers reported that these elections represented further progress and were mostly conducted in line with the principles outlined by the Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe. The new government and parliament should be encouraged to vigorously pursue constitutional and structural reform.

These elections, the upcoming NATO Summit in Lisbon, and the 15th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Accords all offer great opportunities to renew the international community's efforts to assure lasting peace in the Balkans. With the EU and U.S. leadership, and involvement from all in the region, Serbia should be incentivized to play a role in this transition to reassure Bosnians that it is not pursuing disintegration of their country. Given their influence on the leadership in Banja Luka, the Russian and Turkish governments should contribute resources to help integrate their constituencies into a sustainable and unified BiH.

As we are both committed to the success of BiH and the Balkans, I look forward to working together toward a common goal of seeking a permanent resolution of these issues. If you or your staff has any questions, please contact Maggie Sadowska on my staff at Maggie.Sadowska@mail.house.gov, or at (202) 225-6465.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress

Cc: Ambassador Mitar Kujundžić
Cc: Ambassador Jakob Finci