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| **Босна и Херцеговина**  ***Предсједништво*** | **Bosnia and Herzegovina**  ***The Presidency*** | Bosna i Hercegovina  Predsjedništvo |

**THE FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY**

**OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**2018 – 2023**

**Sarajevo, March 2018**

***1 Introduction***

Defining the Foreign Policy Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2023 (in further text: the Strategy) is a process which is both comprehensive and demanding. In addition to the fact that it is of the key importance for this process to include all Council of Ministers' and other relevant institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina in it, as well as to conduct public consultations with the academic community, non-governmental and business sectors respectively, the defining of the present Strategy is comprehensive because, inevitably, it implies additional activities which should both enable and enhance its implementation (i.e. adoption of the *lex specialis* Law on Foreign Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, analysis and rationalization of the diplomatic and consular network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' internal organizational scheme, as well as drafting of the Strategy on exports promotion and attracting foreign direct investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Each of these steps is conditioned by the preceding one, whereas all of them are intertwined in order to enable the very implementation of the Strategy.

Given that it recognized and anticipated the current global developments and challenges, the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina decided to revise “The General Guidelines on and Priorities of Conducting the Foreign Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina“ adopted in 2003. At its 24th regular session held on 5 May 2016, the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina tasked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina with drafting the Strategy in cooperation with the relevant institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was pursuant to the Presidency's conclusion that the Working Group was established and tasked with drafting the Strategy and submitting the principles and plan for the drafting process concerned, including modalities on conducting consultations with the representatives of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, external experts, representatives of the academic community and relevant non-governmental organizations, to the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Strategy should establish a wider framework and guidelines on the activities of the relevant institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the realm of foreign policy. In order to ensure a satisfactory implementation of the Strategy, it is necessary that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina prepares every two years a draft action plan with detailed objectives and priorities on the implementations of the Strategy. Such plan is adopted by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with its constitutional competencies.

The institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which hold such competencies as defined in accordance with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the relevant laws, are obliged to implement the Strategy.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also obliged to monitor the implementation of the Strategy continually, in accordance with the adopted action plans, and to inform the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina annually on the efficiency of its implementation, while suggesting measures on eventual redefining of the Strategy, as well as on the improvement of the efficiency of its implementation.

The updating of the current guidelines is necessary in order to harmonize the activities with the significant changeswhich took place in both domestic and external contexts in the previous period.

Since the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina's document entitled “The General Guidelines on and Priorities of Conducting the Foreign Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina“ was adopted in 2003, some significant political, economic, and social changes have taken place both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and at the international arena. The global, regional, and internal changes which the foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to take into account include the following:

* Economic instability;
* The consequences of the so-called “Arab Spring“ led to some new conflict spots in the Middle East and beyond;
* Refugee crisis;
* Cooling of the Western forces – Russian Federation relations;
* Deteriorated relations in the Persian Gulf region;
* Economic and political growth of the People's Republic of China, as well as strengthening of other developing countries, too;
* The challenges faced by the European Union;
* Departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union;
* Croatia became a member of the European Union, and the neighbouring countries were granted the candidate status;
* Montenegro became a full NATO member;
* Progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the European integration path and an enhanced structural cooperation with NATO.

**Normative framework**

With the purpose of implementing the Strategy efficiently and ensuring a continued follow-up of its activities envisaged that is to be done by the competent institutions, it is necessary to prepare a comprehensive analysis of the quality and harmonization level of the overall normative and legal foreign policy framework in order to make necessary corrections of and amendments to such framework in accordance with the needs of the present Strategy, with the objective of enhancing the preconditions for the more effective and efficient implementation of the foreign policy objectives.

***2 The principles of the Foreign Policy Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina***

**The principles of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy**

The foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina is based on openness, equality, protection and promotion of the country's own basic constitutional principles, and thus on representing, recognizing and respecting the principles of constitutionality, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rule of law in all aspects of relations with the international partners, while providing the respect of mutual interests.

In this sense, to ensure credibility of foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its legitimate implementation, any public appearance of foreign policy character on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be based on the principle of consensus, in accordance with the constitutional arrangements of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Parallel to this, Bosnia and Herzegovina, through the implementation of its foreign policy objectives, should act in accordance with the obligations envisaged by the concluded and accepted agreements and other international instruments, as well as by its membership in the international organizations and associations. The foreign policy principles of Bosnia and Herzegovina are also reflected in the respect for and implementation of the principle of reciprocity, as well as the principle of peaceful cooperation and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries.

It is through the implementation of the Strategy concerned that Bosnia and Herzegovina will position itself as a credible subject at the international arena.

Bosnia and Herzegovina underlines its commitment to resolving inter-state disputes in a peaceful way, while respecting the principles of the international law. Furthermore, Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to a constructive dialogue in finding mutually acceptable solutions for all open issues, which also represents one of its basic foreign policy priorities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has inherited, nurtured and continually developed the key values of the respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the respect for human rights. The respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as fight against all forms of violent extremism, also fall into the priority principles of the foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose implementation is reflected in intensified activities at the multilateral level, in timely and close implementation of all its international commitments, and in ensuring the highest standards of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms through the adoption and implementation of domestic regulations.

The principles of the implementation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy are efficiency, responsibility for the results achieved, and transparency, in accordance with the universally endorsed principles of international law and the general principles of diplomatic practice alike.

**The institutional framework**

**of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy**

The conduct of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy is based on Article V of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Pursuant to this article, the conduct of foreign policy falls within the competencies of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The constitutional competencies of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina include representing Bosnia and Herzegovina in international and European organizations and institutions, seeking membership status in the international organizations and institutions in which BiH is not a member, conducting negotiations on concluding international agreements on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina, cancelling, as well as ratifying such agreements pursuant to the endorsement of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to the said article of the Constitution, the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also a competent institution for appointing ambassadors and other international representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Pursuant to the regulations set out in the Law on Ministries and Other Administrative Bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the guidelines of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is in charge, primarily, of the conduct of the set foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, development of international relations, representing Bosnia and Herzegovina in diplomatic relations, direct communication with foreign diplomatic and consular representative missions (DCM) accredited in Bosnia and Herzegovina, cooperation with the international organizations, guiding and harmonizing the work of the DCMs of Bosnia and Herzegovina abroad, preparing and organizing international visits and meetings, preparing bilateral and multilateral agreements, implementing activities related to the protection of rights and interests of the nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina residing abroad on either permanent or temporary basis, as well as of domestic legal persons abroad, and, in accordance with the competent ministries and institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, monitoring and analyzing the international economic developments, as well as enhancing, developing and harmonizing the cooperation with the diaspora from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In order to achieve this, it is necessary to train diplomatic cadre continually, which, in addition to an intense cooperation with the diplomatic academies of the partner countries, also implies undertaking necessary steps by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina to establish the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Commission on Foreign Affairs of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, being a part of the legislative body, is in charge of supervising the conduct of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy, monitoring and controlling the conduct of foreign policy by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and discussing the issues on inter-parliamentary cooperation with the counterpart parliamentary commissions of other countries.

Other institutions and organizations participate, within their respective constitutional and legislative competencies, in the implementation of the foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**The pillars of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy**

The pillars of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy are the strategic directions of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy operation based on the said principles and institutional arrangements, within which the priorities and objectives concerned will be pursued. It is necessary to view these priorities and objectives not as static descriptions of foreign policy but as dynamic trajectories and guidelines within which active policies are developed towards the European Union, NATO, the region, global issues, international organizations, etc. Therefore the priorities and contents of the foreign policy pillars are mutually intertwined and compatible, while at the same time reflecting the complexity of current international relations, as well as the position of smaller countries within these relations.

Pursuant to the said global, regional and local changes, as well as the analysis of the current Bosnia and Herzegovina's position in Europe and the rest of the world alike, and based on the political consensus on the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in international relations, the pillars of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy are:

1. Security and stability,
2. Economic prosperity,
3. Protection of the interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina's nationals abroad, and international legal cooperation,
4. Promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the world.

It is evident that Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy pillars are not only isolated segments, but one comprehensive and complex system in which its individual aspects complement each other. Thus, for example, the security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a precondition for strengthening of economic activity and improvement of living standards, which leads to enhancement of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy position and its reputation in the world.

**a) Security and stability**

Security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its immediate neighbourhood, the European continent, as well as of the entire world is a necessary precondition for both economic and cultural development, international trade, and a better quality of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other countries in various fields. In today's world, security and stability of sovereign states have been endangered in both traditional and very non-traditional ways by various actors at the international scene, which indicates that the foreign policy dimension is becoming more and more important. A growing nonconventional character of contemporary threats to security and safety requires comprehensive responses.

The stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the domain of its constitutional foundations of foreign policy, is primarily conditioned by a full and close implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and its Annex IV, i.e. the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* ***The European Union***

One of the main strategic objectives of Bosnia and Herzegovina is its full membership in the European Union. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a signatory to the Stabilisation and Accession Agreement (SAA) with the European Union, as a country which filed its request for membership in the European Union and submitted its answers to the European Commission's Questionnaire, strives to obtain the candidate status as soon as possible, and to open its accession negotiations on membership. The institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina competent for the implementation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy will pay additional attention to the activities which will follow after the candidate status is obtained in order to embark on the negotiations with the European Union with adequate preparation and harmonized standpoints. In this sense, it is necessary for all administrative levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina to, in accordance with their constitutional competencies, and by acting through the bodies established by the Coordination Mechanism on the European Integration, fulfil all necessary obligations, as already defined by the Master Plan on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s integration into the European Union, adopted by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Particular attention will be paid to the initiatives set out in the document entitled “A Credible Enlargement Perspective and Enhanced European Union's Engagement with the Western Balkans“, which was presented by the European Commission to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 6 February 2018. The initiatives concerned refer to the following issues:

* Enhanced support to the rule of law;
* Enhanced engagement in the field of security and migration;
* Support to social and economic development;
* Enhanced transport and energy connectedness:
* Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans;
* Support to reconciliation and good neighbourly relations.

Given the non-questionable perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina's membership in the European Union, Bosnia and Herzegovina should follow actively the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy. In this sense, it is necessary to advance the system of adherence to the foreign policy statements and restrictive masseurs of the European Union towards the third countries and subjects. This certainly implies a close inter-sector cooperation as well as a shared risk assessment.

Starting from the fact that the integration into the European Union is a complex process in which internal and foreign policy are intertwined, the Bosnia and Herzegovina’s diplomacy will also, in the context of EU integration, follow internal political, economic and social reforms through increased diplomatic activities and interpretation of developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, promote the progress achieved, advocate for a continued support of the European Union and its member states to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and stress the importance of the European Union's enlargement for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the Western Balkans, as well as for the European Union itself. Therefore, in addition to more frequent visits to the European Union institutions, and an active participation in as many conferences, roundtables, lectures and similar events as possible, it is also necessary to intensify mutual bilateral visits between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU member countries, as well as to support and enable continuous activities of its diplomatic and consular network in this direction. Bilateral support of the member states will continue to have a huge importance for Bosnia and Herzegovina in the forthcoming period, not only in relation to the decision makers, but also to the wider public. Therefore, it is also necessary to intensify the activities of the diplomatic and consular network in the field of public diplomacy. In short, it is necessary to increase the visibility of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Brussels and in the EU member countries alike by promoting positive developments taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. It is important to encourage the activities of representative offices of all administrative levels from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. Moreover, it is important to support activities of the representative missions of all administrative levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina to adequate bodies of the European Union, and their cooperation with the competent administrative levels in the European Union member states, particularly those activities aimed at improving the utilization efficiency rate of the European Union and its member states' assistance programmes.

Furthermore, it is necessary, as much as possible, to make a joint use of the planned European Union's and its member states' financial support in all fields, which will directly affect the infrastructural connectedness, i.e. a more intense economic cooperation. It is necessary that the competent institutions develop plans and micro strategies for as much efficient as possible utilization of the Community Programmes to which Bosnia and Herzegovina has access.

This will enable not only a withdrawal of significant funding from the EU funds, but also a better quality of preparation for a higher level of the future integration.

* ***NATO***

A continued implementation of the activities related to NATO remains a priority of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The priority activities will be primarily directed to activating and implementing the Membership Action Plan (MAP). The activation of MAP, on which there is a wide political consensus in Bosnia and Herzegovina, enables all actors in the field of defence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (within their respective constitutional and legal competencies) to continue to implement the activities related to NATO, as determined by the Law on Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By activating MAP, Bosnia and Herzegovina will advance further both its institutions and its efficiency in the realm of defence and security, and thus affirm further Bosnia and Herzegovina as a safe and desirable country for foreign investment.

Since Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the NATO Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP) in 2006, a lot has been done on achieving the standards necessary for the implementation of the said objectives. In addition to the Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, almost all institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina have become involved in the process concerned by now. The cooperation with NATO will be intensified not only in its military and defence - focused dimensions, but also in all the activities related to the overall understanding of security: the economic dimension of security, transport, the rule of law, fight against the corruption, natural disasters, fight against all contemporary and nonconventional security threats, cyber defence, e.t.c. The diplomatic and consular network of Bosnia and Herzegovina will place a particular focus in its activities on fulfilling this foreign policy priority.

In the meantime, Bosnia and Herzegovina will, through a proactive approach, continue to fully utilize all mechanisms and instruments available for its cooperation with NATO, e.g. a further implementation of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), the Planning and Review Process (PARP), the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), the implementation of the communication strategy, etc.

Participation in the United Nations, NATO, the European Union or in the coalition forces within the peace support missions, including the fight against terrorism, are a part of the overall effort aimed at preventive activities on elimination of contemporary forms of security threats. By its participation in these programmes, Bosnia and Herzegovina has contributed to democratization and enhancement of security and stability in a wider arena.

In this context, the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina will strive to achieve the necessary levels of readiness and interoperationability, compatibility and capability to perform joint combined operations with the partners. The challenges related to migration, organized crime, illegal arms and drugs trade, human trafficking, terrorism, and an increasing climate change and ecological disasters demand modern, efficient and joint Armed Forces. In the course of 2016, the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted “The Survey of Defence-Focused Issues“ and “The 2017-2027 Plan on Development and Modernization of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina“. Pursuant to the latter document, the Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue their activities aimed at enhanced efficiency and modernization of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the forthcoming period.

Based on the principles of shared values – i.e. democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, as well as on the principle of mutual respect and cooperation, Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to enhancing its role and importance in the regional cooperation through both firm and friendly relations with all interested countries, as well as through strengthening of the public diplomacy elements aimed at promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress at all levels of cooperation with the NATO Alliance members, as well as with other democratic countries.

* ***Countering terrorism and all forms of violent extremism***

Fight against terrorism and all forms of violent extremism both outside Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, potentially, within its borders, is one of the main instruments for enhancement of the country's security. In addition to the international missions, which Bosnia and Herzegovina will participate in as in accordance with its capabilities and interests, the strengthening of cooperation in the field of fight against terrorism is reflected in the active sharing of information within the regional, European and global platforms.

As a member of the Global Coalition to Counter Terrorism, Bosnia and Herzegovina will, in accordance with its capabilities, work and participate in the fight against all observable forms of terrorism. The representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to actively participate in the working meetings within the three working groups, including:  the Working Group on Countering the Financing of Terrorism, the Working group on Countering Violent Extremism, and the Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters.

* ***Regional cooperation***

Furthermore, given a number of years of political, economic and cultural ties with the neighbouring countries, intensifying relations with them, as well as both bilateral and multilateral regional cooperation in general, stand as important aspects of enhancement of stability and security. Frequent exchange of bilateral visits, and bilateral governmental sessions with the Western Balkans countries, as well as an active participation in the regional initiatives, will contribute to an increased trust and understanding in the region, which is a precondition for all other aspects of cooperation. As far as the countries in the process of stabilization and association are concerned, the regional cooperation is one of the key conditions for their integration into the European Union. Their regional cooperation is also an objective in its own right. In this sense, it is necessary to work, through all available mechanisms, on a closer exchange of experience and knowledge, as well as on developing joint projects.

The path towards enhancement of Bosnia and Herzegovina's bilateral relations with other countries, particularly the neighbouring ones, certainly leads through resolving of the open issues in the mutual relations. In order to achieve progress in this sense, the first step should be the analysis of the progress achieved so far, and defining of a clear and coherent position of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the open issues and directions of how to bring about final resolutions to such issues.

Moreover, the advancement of relations in the region is necessary due to an increasing need for as strong as possible regional and European cooperation on security issues, including a joint action in the realms of migration flows, countering terrorism and violent extremism, countering organized crime and illegal arms trade, countering cyber threats, and development of shared regional policies on energy and transport.

Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to cooperate with the Western Balkans countries within the so-called Berlin Process, whose form and content represent a complementary long-term aspect of both Bosnia and Herzegovina's and the Western Balkans' integration into the European Union.

An active participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the regional initiatives is of particular importance for improvement and permanent stabilization of relations in the region, as well as for positioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a proactive and constructive partner. On its European integration path, Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to provide concrete support to the regional cooperation through participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's representatives in the work of initiatives such as the Brdo-Brijuni Process, the South-East Europe Cooperation Process/Regional Cooperation Council, the Central European Initiative, the Mediterranean-Ionian Initiative, the European Union's Strategy on the Danube Region, the Regional Strategy on Migration, Asylum and Return of Refugees, the Regional Western Balkans' Youth Cooperation Office, the Western Balkans Fund, etc.

* ***Bilateral and multilateral cooperation***

Enhancement of bilateral cooperation with the strategic partners represents an unavoidable part of reaching stability and security of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an active international actor. It also implies invested efforts in further enhancement of cooperation with the countries with which Bosnia and Herzegovina already has a high level of mutual cooperation, as well as with the countries for which there are preconditions met for reaching a strategic cooperation. Bosnia and Herzegovina will, through an intense political dialogue, seek to develop such cooperation further in all relevant fields, including economics, security, culture, education, information, science and research, technological and development-focused work, sports, and other fields of cooperation.

At the multilateral level, Bosnia and Herzegovina will intensify further its participation and cooperation with the most important international organizations, including those from the United Nations (UN) system, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and other international organizations. While doing this, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be led by the generally accepted principles and values on which the said international organizations are based.

It is necessary to monitor development of the relations and activities of interest to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the international arena. This will be done by using the available analytical capacities and by an enhancement of such capacities alike

**b) Economic prosperity**

The economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as an open economy in the close vicinity of the European Union's shared market, is largely determined by the country's ability to increase its net exports through increased competitiveness. Such increased net exports will be achieved consequently, inter alia, by means of attracting high quality foreign direct investments.

The efficiency of economic diplomacy is conditioned by the internal reform processes. However, the foreign policy aspect is of an equal importance. Namely, the foreign policy aspect implies promoting the progress achieved by means of public diplomacy, finding adequate markets for exports from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and attracting high quality foreign investors. Membership and active participation in multilateral organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) is one of the key objectives o Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy in the forthcoming period.

In the context of economic prosperity, the European Union has an important role for Bosnia and Herzegovina for at least two reasons: the European Union is an engine of internal economic and social reforms which converge towards the European standards, and it is one of the key trade and investment partners of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The activities of the economic diplomacy of Bosnia and Herzegovina include a synchronised coordination of, on one hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutions whose competencies include drafting of documents on exports promotion, attracting foreign investments, development potential of the current economic and industry sectors, and, on the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the diplomatic and consular network of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The focus of economic diplomacy will also be on the organization of concrete events enabling meetings between entrepreneurs and other important actors from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries through economic forums, business/investment conferences, presentations for investors, which will encourage direct cooperation and finding solutions to remove obstacles standing in the path of cooperation.

The diplomatic and consular representative missions of Bosnia and Herzegovina should have a specific role in this process. Timely, useful and accurate information must be available to these missions, which should use them for promotion through various communication channels, written materials, social networks, and constantly updated web pages.

With the aim of further economic development, and with a particular focus on generating new jobs and economic accession to the European Union, Bosnia and Herzegovina will support innovation, new technologies, as well as invest in small and medium enterprises. In the context of regional connectivity (primarily within the context of the Berlin process), Bosnia and Herzegovina will advocate for initiatives on a more free flow of goods, services and capital, a more free flow of qualified labour force, a joint digital approach, and an establishment of a dynamic investment-friendly environment.

* ***Contributing to SDGs 2020-2030***

Intensify activities focused on Bosnia and Herzegovina's contribution to the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2020-2030. Through supporting the adoption of the Global Sustainable Development Programme until 2030 at the UN Summit in 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina made a commitment to initiate a process of systemic monitoring and analysis of the implementation of this global action plan, which encompasses social, economic and ecological development-focused dimensions. For a full achievement of this objective, it is of utmost importance to reach an agreement on predictable, coherent and sufficient financing of the sustainable development goals. Pursuant to the decisions made by both the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina will adopt its own action plan and roadmap on achieving the sustainable development goals.

* ***Intensifying cooperation with the diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina***

In order to intensify the cooperation with the diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina, aimed at their contribution to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina in various fields, it is necessary to systemically enhance cooperation and capacities of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is necessary to open a space for both prompt and efficient information sharing on the diaspora potentials, as well as on the mutual benefit and possibilities of cooperation in various fields of development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this sense, the diplomatic and consular missions of Bosnia and Herzegovina will maintain intense communication and meetings with the expats' associations, aimed at learning on the Bosnia and Herzegovina diaspora's potentials, with a focus on skilled and highly educated cadre, and with the purpose of creating business partnerships. Moreover, it is of great importance to connect entrepreneurs from diaspora with the economic subjects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is aimed at promoting mutual potentials, including, in particular, the investment opportunities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this sense, the foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina will focus on attracting as many highly educated and economically active persons originating from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The economic diplomacy will, inter alia, in coordination with the competent institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, have a task of presenting to the diaspora the systemic models of investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Through various activities, within the cooperation with the diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its associations, a continued support is important to promoting the relevance of the official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to preserving the identity and cultural heritage.

According to the Policy on Cooperation with the Diaspora, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina will, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, maintain registers on diaspora (mapping of diaspora) in the countries hosting high numbers of expats from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**c) Protecting the interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina's nationals abroad, and international legal cooperation**

It is one of the main functions of diplomatic and consular network of any country to protect interests of its nationals abroad. Protecting the interests of and providing assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina's nationals residing abroad in accessing their rights, as well as providing assistance to the economic subjects which operate at other countries' markets represent the basis of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy consular aspect.

In today's interconnected world, when people travel more than ever, the consular protection is necessary everywhere. Any future reorganization of the global diplomatic and consular network should take into account creating such conditions which will continue to enhance the said interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The network of honorary consular missions, usage of modern IT solutions in combination with the diaspora, and application of best practice from other countries will be taken into consideration within the efforts invested in order to ensure improved communication, aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina's nationals in the world.

In the countries in which there is no diplomatic or consular mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, pursuant to the international law and, first of all, in cooperation with the countries from the South Eastern Europe region, work will be done aimed at creating conditions for provision of consular protection to the Bosnia and Herzegovina's nationals through the third countries' diplomatic and consular missions. A shared usage of DCMs will be applied where it is realistic, financially feasible and professionally efficient, and with such countries with which Bosnia and Herzegovina concluded the bilateral agreements which provide adequate regulatory frameworks on the issues concerned.

The international legal aspect of the Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy will also be focused on signing the agreements on visa-free regime for Bosnia and Herzegovina's passport holders with as many countries as possible, primarily with those for which it is estimated that there is a significant economic, diplomatic, cultural, tourism-focused, or some other interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Reciprocity, security and economic interests will be the key determining factors of the visa policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the context of enhancement of bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation, an important role is allocated to regulating relations with other countries and international organizations. In this sense, it is of decisive importance to analyse the needs for signing of agreements in various fields, and conclude, as well as efficiently implement the international agreements concerned.

In addition to their main – consular function, the consular representative missions of Bosnia and Herzegovina also have homework to enhance economic relations, promote the cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and advance cooperation with the diaspora, as well as diaspora associations and clubs.

**d) Promoting Bosnia and Herzegovina in the world**

The implementation of objectives set out in the said foreign policy pillars affects, in one of its parts, the strengthening of the fourth pillar, which is the improvement of reputation of Bosnia and Herzegovina worldwide. The said pillars are interdependent, so that an improved image of Bosnia and Herzegovina contributes to its economic development, attracting investment and reducing brain drain from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The improvement of Bosnia and Herzegovina's image through a wide spectre of activities of Bosnia and Herzegovina's diplomacy is established by an internal consensus on shared values and comparative advantages of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a significant space for activities of the diplomatic and consular network aimed at channelling the strategic pillars mentioned towards creating a new narrative on Bosnia and Herzegovina and its nationals. This implies, inter alia, an active promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's culture, of its constitutive peoples and all others who live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as of the achievements in the fields of science, sports, and innovation.

The foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, primarily through its diplomatic and consular network, as well as through other implementing parties in the foreign policy activities, should work more intensely to achieve the following:

* More comprehensive and efficient participation in important international events;
* Promotion of tourism and business trips to Bosnia and Herzegovina;
* Promotion and capacity building of the “country of origin“ concept aimed at exporters of goods and services;
* Better and more comprehensive presentation in the international media:
* Usage of contemporary communication technologies for promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's values;
* Further enhancement of cultural relations with other countries and regions.

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Sarajevo, 13 March 2018

**CHAIRMAN**

**Dragan Čović, Academician**