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PRESS RELEASE

Coalition "Pod lupom" organised a press conference today at the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina and presented a report on the work of the Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG) to change Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The report says that IWG members held 14 out of planned 15 meetings. The work-start day has been delayed for five months after which the group accelerated its work in order to compensate wasted time. However, this work did not produce expected results so majority of 32 proposed amendments to change Election Law of BiH are pertaining to technical rather than crucial improvements in the electoral process.

"Proposed changes to the Election Law of BiH are pertaining to technical improvements and improvements relating to penal provisions for political entities while there is lack of fundamental set of solutions," said Dalida Demirovic, coordinator of the Coalition.

The Coalition "Pod lupom" do not support IWG's proposals as follows: to abolish the order of under-represented gender (women mostly) on the candidate lists and to increase the threshold for candidates to be „moved up“ on intra-party lists, which is for local elections three times higher than before (from 5% to 15%), and for general elections is six times higher than before (from 5% to 30%).

"This solution implies introduction of closed and blocked lists through „small doors“. If, for example, out of 20 candidates on the list of the top thirteen must be only one woman, which is currently proposed, and if „skipping“ candidates within the list is not allowed, then unfortunately this is the only conclusion that can be formed", said Dario Jovanovic, Project Director.

Through parliamentary procedure and in cooperation with the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Coalition "Pod lupom" will continue to advocate following key recommendations to change Election Law of BiH: election of the President of the Election Committee should be on a non-partisan basis; names of all members of all Election Committees should be publicly disclosed to prevent trading places in Election Committees; voting boxes for each level of government being elected should be separated and transparent; and the height of voting booth should be decreased in order to prevent irregularities and electoral fraud.

"Election Committees are partisan, members are not well- educated and positions in Election Committees are easily traded which represent a serious violation of the law. That is why we consider that specific solutions pertaining to Election Committees are of crucial importance", said Vehid Sehic, President of the Strategic Committee of the Coalition.

At the end of the conference, Coalition „Pod lupom“ simulated voting procedure using separate and transparent voting boxes and voting booth decreased in its height. Also, the Coalition announced that it will continue to further improve Election process through implementation a three-year project funded by the European Union as well as to recruit 3000 observers to monitor 2016 Local Elections.

For further information please feel free to contact the coordinator of the Public Relations, Jovana Kljajic, via e-mail pr@podlupom.org or phone 033 268 160 and 065 252 016.

** The contents of this press release are the sole responsibility of the Coalition „Pod lupom“ and in no way reflect the views of the European Union.*