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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Pod Lupom Coalition: Necessary to urgently form Interdepartmental Task Force for Amending Election Law of**

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Coalition for Free and Fair Elections “Pod lupom” as the civil society coalition that primarily monitors elections, protects the electoral process, and provides recommendations for improvements in the Election Law of BiH, has sent an appeal to both Houses of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH and to the Council of Ministers of BiH to urgently form and initiate the work of the Interdepartmental Task Force for amending the Election Law of BiH.

As the time ahead is relatively short to allow for all the necessary changes in the Election Law and having in mind that elections will take place in 2022, it is necessary to prepare all the changes to the Election Law to allow for more transparent and fairer 2022 General elections. It is necessary by the end of this calendar year to start the parliamentary procedure for the legislative changes that should be harmonized in the Interdepartmental Task Force, hence starting the process of fulfilling one of the 14 priorities imposed on BIH authorities by the European Union.

In addition to the changes concerning implementation of the verdicts and rulings of the international and local courts regarding the established discrimination i.e. ensuring equal passive suffrage for all BiH citizens, the key changes must also address improvements of certain technical solutions for the conduct of elections. Firstly, we believe that the changes to the Election Law should envision different method for the appointment of polling station committees and prohibit by law trade of seats on the polling station committees; it is necessary to introduce new technologies in the electoral process (electronic identification of voters, determining of results) and to prevent abuse of voting abroad< moreover to allow everyone to file a complaint at any stage of the electoral process and to simplify the accreditation procedure for election observers, etc.

*We expect that decision-makers will demonstrate a high level of responsibility for the necessary changes to the Election Law of BiH, while we expect of political subjects and civil society organizations to submit their proposals to the Interdepartmental Task Force to be able to reach high quality solutions – it said in the Coalition's statement.*