

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 26 November 2013 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Pursuant to Security Council resolutions [1575 \(2004\)](#), [1639 \(2005\)](#), [1722 \(2006\)](#), [1785 \(2007\)](#), [1845 \(2008\)](#), [1895 \(2009\)](#), [1948 \(2010\)](#), [2019 \(2011\)](#) and [2074 \(2012\)](#), I have the honour to convey the attached letter dated 12 November 2013, which I received from Ms. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, transmitting the thirty-fifth report on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see annex). The report covers the period from 1 June to 31 August 2013.

I should be grateful if you would bring the report to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) **BAN** Ki-moon



Annex

Letter dated 12 November 2013 from the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolutions [1575 \(2004\)](#), [1639 \(2005\)](#), [1722 \(2006\)](#), [1785 \(2007\)](#), [1845 \(2008\)](#), [1895 \(2009\)](#), [1948 \(2010\)](#), [2019 \(2011\)](#) and [2074 \(2012\)](#), please find enclosed the thirty-fifth three-monthly report on Operation Althea to the Security Council.

(Signed) Catherine **Ashton**

Enclosure

Report of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

I. Introduction

1. This report covers the period from 1 June to 31 August 2013.
2. In its resolutions [1575 \(2004\)](#), [1639 \(2005\)](#), [1722 \(2006\)](#), [1785 \(2007\)](#), [1845 \(2008\)](#), [1895 \(2009\)](#), [1948 \(2010\)](#), [2019 \(2011\)](#) and [2074 \(2012\)](#) the Security Council requested that Member States, acting through or in cooperation with the European Union, report to the Council on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) at least at three-monthly intervals. This is the thirty-fifth such report.

II. Political background

3. Within the reporting period, the lack of a common vision among political parties and the persistent trend to politicize and “ethnicize” even matters of a technical nature continued to affect the functionality of the political and administrative structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and hampered progress on European integration and other reforms. The political crisis in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained unresolved and put strains on the work of the entity Government and the Parliamentary Assembly.
4. At the beginning of June, in mass protests in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, the public called on political leaders to take measures ensuring good governance and improving social justice. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina took a temporary decision to satisfy the key demands, but a permanent solution needs to be put in place by the end of the year. Otherwise, the protestors warned of resuming their action. Following those events, the work of the State-level institutions was disrupted, including the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which suspended work for a period of one month.
5. The initiative of an expert group to reform the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has received much deserved public attention, with subsequent discussion in the Parliament and a decision of the Government to follow up on the initiative. However, the main political parties remain divided on the way forward.
6. Just before the accession of Croatia to the European Union on 1 July 2013, the agreements on border crossing points, local border traffic and transit to and from Ploče port and through the Neum corridor were signed and entered into force and facilitated the transit of goods and persons between the two countries. However, trade between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia in a range of agricultural and food products was negatively affected by the inability of Bosnia and Herzegovina institutions to meet the European Union requirements for food safety in time. The European Union continues to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina towards implementation of the necessary measures. Until then, the loss of export revenues may affect farmers and food-processing companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

7. Bosnia and Herzegovina failed to achieve any tangible progress on its Euro-Atlantic integration path and on structural reforms. However, the renewed commitment to the European perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which the European Union member States expressed in the conclusions adopted in July by the Council of the European Union, Croatia's accession to the European Union on 1 July, and the European Union's decision to open accession negotiations with Serbia could highlight to the political leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina the urgency of addressing the remaining obstacles to allow the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina to enter into force.

8. In its July conclusions, the Council of the European Union urged Bosnia and Herzegovina to bring its Constitution into compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights by implementing the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the *Sejdić and Finci* case. Political parties of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the European Union facilitators, are looking for a political agreement on the necessary constitutional changes ahead of the general elections to be held in October 2014.

9. No tangible progress was registered on fulfilling the outstanding condition for the activation of the NATO Membership Action Plan. The issue of registration of immovable defence property as State property was introduced in a parliamentary process in the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 6 June. Major disagreements between the Bosniak and Serb parties have not allowed for more progress.

10. The implementation of the stand-by arrangement of the International Monetary Fund and the positive decision on the disbursement of the second tranche of European Union macrofinancial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina remained critical for the sustainability of the economic and social situation in the country.

11. The comprehensive approach, promoted by the reinforced European Union presence on the ground and the continued close cooperation between the European Union Special Representative and Operation Althea consolidated and strengthened the European Union's engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The European Union and European Union-related issues dominated the political and public agenda.

III. Security situation and EUFOR activities

12. The overall security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained calm and stable throughout the reporting period. Inflammatory nationalistic rhetoric continued, but the safe and secure environment was maintained. The number of inter-ethnic incidents remained a concern. The number of incidents is at the same level as those of the same period of 2012.

13. On 5 June 2013, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament adopted a temporary law on a single reference number for children born in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which triggered public protests in Sarajevo. The activity of the Parliament was blocked for more than a month. Law enforcement agencies proved capable of maintaining control and restored order.

14. Operation Althea continued its main effort in capacity-building and training while retaining the means to contribute to the deterrence capacity of the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities.

15. The shared European Union/NATO over-the-horizon reserve force capability was limited to one battalion. The Italian operational reserve force battalion has been available to EUROR with a modified readiness posture from 1 July 2013 for the following six months. The intermediate reserve was fully resourced.

16. In support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), EUFOR continued to monitor and advise the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina within activities related to ammunition and weapons storage sites, the civilian and military movement of weapons and military equipment, the disposal of surplus weapons and ammunition and defence industry factories. EUFOR also worked with international partners to try to increase the disposal rate of surplus ammunition.

17. The progress of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in taking control and managing the ammunition, weapons and explosives surplus was encouraging. The Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina made that issue a priority. A Strategic Board under his leadership and a Coordination Body led by the Armed Forces Deputy Chief of Joint Staff have been created to proceed with this process. The Strategic Board brings together the principals of international organizations and bilateral embassies that provide assistance to this issue. The United Nations Development Programme, in partnership with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, started the implementation of a project to dispose of the surplus ammunition, weapons and explosives, to further build the capacity of the defence apparatus and to increase the safety and security of storage sites. This project is funded by the European Union with €3.8 million.

IV. Outlook

18. The security situation is expected to remain calm and stable. The elections in 2014 as well as the further handling of the result of the census deserve careful attention, against the backdrop of a fragile socioeconomic situation.
