

# **The Role of Peace Implementation Council Steering Board Ambassadors in BiH**

The Office of the High Representative wishes to clarify the respective roles of the Diplomatic Corps, on the one hand, and the International Community – including Ambassadors of PIC Steering Board Member Countries – on the other hand.

The Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations was created almost exactly 40 years ago to regulate ordinary bilateral diplomatic relations between states. Ambassadors and their staff, who conduct bilateral business under these rules, form what is known as the Diplomatic Corps. This is the case in Sarajevo as it is elsewhere.

In Sarajevo, besides the Diplomatic Corps, there is another body generally referred to, for ease of reference, as the International Community (IC). The IC, comprised of the High Representative as the final authority in civilian implementation, SFOR, Principals of other international organisations, as well as ambassadors of the Steering Board member states, are present here in Sarajevo not only on behalf of their respective governments, but mainly on behalf of the Peace Implementation Council. The International Community's presence here is due to the fact that a horrific fratricidal war was ravaging this country only a few years ago, one which could not have been ended without the International Community's intervention. Even today peace implementation could not go forward without the International Community presence.

All this is not to say that the activities of IC members

individually, or of the IC as a whole, are beyond criticism. It is simply beside the point to apply the traditional concept of non-interference in internal affairs to the present situation in BiH.

The citizens and the peoples of Bosnia & Herzegovina may rest assured that the International Community shall continue to exercise its role as required by the Peace Implementation Council until the political leadership of BIH is going to take over in a suitably constructive fashion.