

Political and Security Committee visit to BiH: 18 - 20 September

The Political and Security Committee of the European Union will be visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina on 18-20 September. This visit is part of the EU's preparations for the European Union Police Mission which is taking over from the IPTF on 1 January 2003.

The PSC is based in Brussels and represents all the 15 Member States of the EU on common foreign and security policy issues, including the EUPM. During their visit, the PSC will call on the BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Zlatko Lagumdzija, High Representative and EU Special Representative Paddy Ashdown, and the leaders of the leading international organisations in BiH including UN SRSG Jacques Klein.

The President of the PSC, Ambassador Marie-Louise Overvad said: "The decision to take on the Police Mission as of next year is a sign of the EU's long-term commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The EU is determined to ensure a smooth transition from the IPTF to the EUPM and build on what has been achieved. The EUPM's role will be to complete the process of developing impartial and effective police forces capable of providing security to all the citizens of BiH."

Commenting on the forthcoming elections, Ambassador Overvad said: "These elections will determine whether BiH undertakes the reforms necessary to move closer to Europe, or stagnates and falls further behind its neighbors. It is up to the citizens of BiH to choose their leaders. The EU asks only two things of them: that they use their vote; and that they vote for the reforms that will deliver a better future for BiH as part of Europe".