

HR Highlights ICTY, SAA in First Official Visit to Belgrade

In his first official visit to Belgrade, the High Representative today met separately with Serbian President Boris Tadic, Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, and Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic.

During his meetings he highlighted the need for continued cooperation with the ICTY, improving trade and economic links between the two countries and improving regional cooperation through strong support for the Stability Pact.

"Tomorrow I am participating in a meeting of the Stability Pact and will advocate improving regional cooperation through a dynamic Stability Pact," said the High Representative. "I hope that the region will start moving faster and take bigger steps to its final destination of Euroatlantic integration."

On ICTY cooperation, the High Representative highlighted the responsibility of the RS, but stressed that there is no linkage between Serbia's failure to cooperate fully with The Hague and BiH's progress in SAA negotiations. The progress of the two countries towards the EU will be assessed on the basis of each country's individual merit, he said.

The High Representative said that the overriding focus of the next 100 days should be to push forward the legislative package that is necessary for BiH to make progress in SAA negotiations.

The High Representative also repeated earlier statements saying that there is no linkage between the referendum in Montenegro, discussions over the status of Kosovo and BiH.

“For me, those are completely separate events. The RS is bound by the Dayton Peace Agreement, an internationally binding treaty which recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign independent state”, he said.

Separately, the High Representative met also Patriarch Pavle, the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, with whom he discussed the role of religious leaders and religious communities in the process of reconciliation and in promoting better understanding among citizens and communities in the region.