

# HR Welcomes SDHR Peter Bas-Backer

The High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, has welcomed Ambassador Peter Bas-Backer, who today took up his post as Senior Deputy High Representative.

The High Representative also took this opportunity to thank former SDHR Ambassador Martin Ney for the energy and dedication he has shown during his nine months in BiH, particularly in the fields of defence reform and public broadcasting reform and also strengthening political dialogue and civil society, including efforts to make young voters more engaged, fostering a constructive sense of BiH identity among citizens, and harnessing the collective energy and enterprise of NGOs and forward-looking government officials.

Ambassador Bas-Backer's portfolio will include Defence and Intelligence reform, the strengthening of BiH institutions and reform of the public administration, public broadcasting reform and the establishment of a modern European Public Broadcasting System, the development of civil society, and issues related to young people.

Before taking up his appointment as Senior Deputy High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina he was head of the Dutch Liaison Office in Pristina/Kosovo. The office was responsible, in addition to regular diplomatic operations, for representing the EU Presidency in Kosovo, from January 2003 until the middle of 2005.

Ambassador Bas-Backer has extensive experience of Southeast Europe as a whole and Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. From 2001 to 2003 he served as Deputy High Representative for BiH and headed the International Community's Reconstruction and Return Task Force, responsible for implementation of Annex

Seven of the Dayton Agreement. He has also been responsible, as a Political Counselor, for issues related to the development of the European Defence and Security Policy and its impact on the Western Balkans. From 1996 to 1997 Ambassador Bas-Backer was Deputy Head of the European Community Monitoring Mission in Former Yugoslavia, and before that he was head of the Eastern Europe Section in the Directorate for European Responsibilities at the Dutch Foreign Ministry, where he acted as deputy coordinator for policies concerning former Yugoslavia.

Ambassador Bas-Backer has a Dutch Public Law degree from the University of Leyden and completed postgraduate studies in Economics, History, Law and Sociology at the Institute European des Hautes Etudes International at Nice, France . He is married with two children. His hobbies include drawing, painting and collage.

Ambassador Peter Bas-Backer joined the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1975.