

New Process on Naming Public Facilities

As indicated at the occasion on annulling a renaming of Sarajevo International Airport The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today issued a Decision laying out the formal legal process that must be followed in the case of renaming public facilities in BiH that have an international or inter-Entity character.

The Decision requires that where a new name is proposed for facilities of public interest, the proposal must be submitted to the BiH Council of Ministers for approval. Facilities covered by this Decision are international airports, rivers that follow the state border or are used for international and/or inter-Entity transportation, naval ports which are used for international and/or inter-Entity transportation, buildings where BiH institutions are located, state border crossings, bridges connecting BiH with other countries or connecting the two Entities, roads linked to international and inter-Entity road traffic and bridges and tunnels related to such roads, and railways stations which are located on the inter-Entity boundary line or are used for inter-Entity or international transportation

In a letter to Prime Minister Adnan Terzic, the High Representative stressed that the naming of public facilities must be viewed in the context of reconciliation, something which in BiH today remains fragile.

"If Bosnia and Herzegovina's international character is to be beyond dispute and its inter-Entity relations are to remain harmonious, then its international and inter-Entity public facilities must be named in a manner that ensures they do not cause contention at home or an erosion of the country's reputation abroad," the High representative wrote. "They should also be named in such a manner as to have the broad support of the constituent peoples so as to reflect the basic consensus on which BiH, uniquely, is founded. Moving from divisive relationships based on mistrust and defensiveness to relationships rooted in mutual recognition and trust is the essence of reconciliation and of the maintenance of BiH's international reputation as a stable multi-ethnic state. I am sure you will recognise that the intention of this Decision is to improve the internal harmony and good external reputation to which I know you are committed."