

High Representative Removes RS Education Minister Milovan Pecelj

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today issued a Decision removing RS Education and Culture Minister Milovan Pecelj from his post. The Minister has been removed because for a whole year he has failed to discharge his ministerial responsibility to implement the High Representative's Decision of 30 June 2004 removing Radomir Lukic from his post as Dean of the Law Faculty of the University of Eastern Sarajevo.

The High Representative's Decision removes Mr Pecelj from his ministerial post and bars him from holding any official, elective or appointive office and from running in elections unless or until such time as the High Representative may expressly authorize him to do so.

Specifically, Mr Pecelj failed to fulfill his legal duties with respect to Mr. Lukic's continued illegal employment by the Faculty of Law of the University of Eastern Sarajevo. This was a matter that came under his direct ministerial supervision.

Mr Pecelj failed to make a clear public statement in order to inform the students that Mr. Lukic is barred by law from holding his current posts and that, in consequence, any accreditation of students emanating from him is null and void.

The autonomous status of universities in BiH does not mean that their staff can violate the law.

"Only by abiding by the Law, and acting in the interests of all citizens and institutions will the future of this country be secured," the High Representative noted today. "I cannot accept willful, repeated and longstanding obstruction of that

process by a person holding ministerial office.”