

Statement: HR welcomed the assessment of BiH's progress towards PfP

The High Representative welcomed the assessment of Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards PfP, given by NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Vilnius yesterday, as a very significant and encouraging response. He said that the assessment keeps the door open for achieving an outcome that all of the citizens of BiH want.

"This is a recognition that the climate of obstruction on ICTY is slowly being overcome, and there is a new mood of constructive engagement," said the High Representative today.

"NATO has repeated its positive stance towards BiH participation in PfP, a first step on the road to full NATO membership, but this will only be transformed into a green light when the process of improving ICTY cooperation is completed," he added.

At a press conference yesterday, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer noted BiH's accelerated cooperation with the ICTY, but also said the major hurdle of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic remains.

"NATO recognizes that BiH is now moving in the right direction; it is imperative that we now go the final mile. We are within sight of the goal, and the people of BiH want to reach that goal. It is up to their leaders to make sure that they are not disappointed," said the High Representative.