State Court Shows No-one Is Above The Law

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today congratulated the BiH Prosecutor's Office on bringing to a successful conclusion the Milakovic-Sherwood human-trafficking case.

"The BiH authorities, together with the international community, have spent a lot of time building the institutions of the Rule of Law. This conviction shows that that work is beginning to bear fruit" the High Representative said today. "The BiH Prosecutor's Office has proved today that crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not pay – that those who break the law will be brought to book. I'm sure that every honest citizen in BiH will cheer the fact that powerful criminals are beginning to end up behind bars."

In his statement, the High Representative welcomed the fact that the newly established State-level judicial institutions are showing their judicial muscle. "We are witnessing the start of a new judicial era, in which no one can flaunt the law and expect to get away with it because of their connections or influence," the High Representative said. "The fact that individuals with connections at the highest level of BiH government, are now in custody awaiting trial proves this. The Office of the BiH Prosecutor has shown that the Court of BiH and the BiH Criminal Code are robust enough to tackle the most powerful of criminals." The High Representative added that "this is a positive signal of BiH's progress towards Europe," and that it is "a signal which should send a shiver down the spine of every criminal who wants to use BiH to his own advantage."

The High Representative noted that the focus of activity must now be on establishing a modern European BiH intelligence

service and providing the Security and Information Protection Agency (SIPA) with effective police powers. “These institutions can then be used effectively by the BiH Prosecutor’s Office in tackling the most serious organised and financial crimes and countering in an effective way the threat of international terror,” the High Representative said.