

High Representative Further Strengthens The Court of BiH

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, this week appointed Myron Greenberg, a judge of the State of Minnesota in the United States, and Bernard Pierre, a judge from Bordeaux, France, as international judges on the Special Panel for Organised Crime and the Special Panel for Economic Crime and Corruption, within the Criminal Division of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Law on the Court of BiH specifies that there will be six international judges in the Special Panel for an interim period while the Court is in its start-up phase. With the two appointments made earlier this week, five international judges have now been appointed. The High Representative expects that the remaining international appointment will be made by early October of this year.

“Financial crime, corruption and organised crime continue to pose a real threat to the economic and social position of all BiH Citizens, and are a real deterrent to developing domestic and international investment in BiH. The Court of BiH is at the centre of the strategy to fight this kind of crime in BiH and has already begun to put major criminals behind bars. Over the past 18 months, BiH has been putting in place the tools to fight organised crime and corruption. We are now using them. A fearless and independent judiciary is a crucial weapon in the fight against crime. That is what we are building in BiH, through the reforms to the structure of the judiciary, and with the assistance of international judges” the High Representative said when appointing Judges Greenberg and Pierre

The Court of BiH, whose Criminal Division only became operational in January, has so far ruled in cases of forgery, smuggling and drug trafficking, sentencing 12 defendants to a total of more than 22 years imprisonment. A further 20 indictments have been brought before the court by the Office of the BiH Prosecutor and another 68 cases involving over 200 defendants are being processed.

The Court of BiH has three judicial divisions: Criminal Law, Administrative Law and Appeals. The Special Panels focus on dealing with organised crime, economic crimes and corruption.