

PIC Steering Board to Discuss OHR's Mission Implementation Plan Today

The High Representative is in Brussels today for the meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council on 29-30 January 2003.

The authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be represented at the meeting by the Secretary General of the Standing Committee on Military Matters, Stepjan Pocrnja, and the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, Mirsad Kebo.

The Steering Board will discuss the following five issues:

- A presentation of BiH's defence targets by the Secretary General of the SCMM, including BiH's plans for establishing effective civilian control of the armed forces at the State level;
- The deteriorating economic situation in BiH, and progress so far on the customs and tax reforms that are an essential part of the solution;
- The OHR's Mission Implementation Plan (MIP), including the six core tasks that the OHR has identified as essential;
- A presentation by the Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of the Annex VII Implementation Strategy, and the process of building domestic capacity to promote the process of sustainable refugee return;
- The preliminary conclusions of the meeting of ICTY and OHR experts on 13 - 15 January on building domestic capacity in BiH to try war crimes.

The OHR's Mission Implementation Plan will be discussed at a preliminary meeting of the Steering Board this evening. The High Representative will say: "the MIP focuses on the essential, rather than the desirable. Our job is to deliver real benefits for the citizens of BiH against a background of declining international resources; to put BiH irreversibly on the road to becoming a peaceful, viable state on course for European integration. The MIP is part of a wider transition strategy to a more European, less interventionist, presence more suitable for a country wishing to join the EU. This is not an exit strategy for the International Community; it is an entry strategy for BiH into Europe".