

## **High Representative calls on Ministers to Protect the Reputation of the Government and the-Country**

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Friday commented on a statement made earlier in the day by Prime Minister Alija Behmen, requesting public officials who come under investigation for serious impropriety to step down from their positions.

"I welcome Prime Minister Behmen's very important announcement today," the High Representative said. He said the prime minister had "established the principle that Ministers and officials must take responsibility for protecting the reputation of their offices and the integrity of the government," and he added that "this principle must now be acted upon."

The High Representative noted that, "if the reputation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the world is to be protected, and the principles of accountability, transparency and probity are to be upheld, Prime Minister Behmen's call must be heeded." The High Representative concluded his comments by saying that he, and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "will be watching developments closely over the coming days."