

High Representative meets United World Colleges delegation, addresses condition of education in BiH

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, met today with a delegation from United World Colleges (UWC), the UK-based organization that runs schools throughout the world. UWC is proposing to open an international and residential college in Sarajevo. The school will be a fully accredited member of the UWC movement.

The present UWC schedule envisages the school opening in September 2003. The High Representative expressed his hope that donors will come forward and support this concrete and worthwhile project.

On the occasion of his meeting with the UWC delegation, the High Representative addressed the current situation of the BiH education system and its restructuring. He noted that while there has been substantial progress in many different areas in BiH in recent years, progress in the field of education has been insufficient, despite the fact that this is crucial for the sustainable future of the country. "I am therefore deeply frustrated, which explains why I decided to support the excellent initiative of the United World Colleges which is being presented today," he said.

Lack of decisive progress in the field of education as a result of overpoliticisation and the absence of vision, have been the main obstacles to providing the young people of BiH with the kind of education they are entitled to expect, the High Representative said. The adoption of a joint core curriculum that respects the rights and needs of all students

must be made a national priority.

The High Representative has appealed to Ministers, Rectors, Professors, students and parents to work together to remove all political, legal, and administrative obstacles to the development of an efficient, sustainable and modern education sector in BiH. "I have repeated many times these past years that sustainable economic development can only be based on an adequately trained and educated workforce," the High Representative said.