

Fourth Donors' Pledging Conference for Bosnia and Herzegovina

The High Representative wishes to express the satisfaction at the outcome of this important Conference on International Donations to Bosnia and Herzegovina for the coming year. The total pledges exceeding the expected amount of USD 1.1 billion will enable significant progress in the areas of economic reform towards a sustainable economy and refugee return, the key themes of these two days.

The continued generosity of donors allows the High Representative to pursue his priorities and to build on the significant progress made last year. These positive results of the last year include the new currency and a legal framework for customs, privatization, foreign investment and budgets is in place. This will be built on significantly in the coming year as will the infrastructural development already underway for post and telecommunications and the railways.

The High Representative notes with thanks the support expressed by all donors for his policies, and their endorsement of his recent binding decisions.

The High Representative's goal for this Conference has been to stress a move towards the creation of a unified and modern economic space, which will open the door to private and foreign investment. The move to this phase is essential if the 1.7 million refugees and displaced persons, still living away from their pre-war homes, can return with confidence to a country where jobs are being created and private enterprise will recover. The conference has underlined the importance of moving to this phase.

Finally, this Donors' Conference has emphasized the commitment of donors to reward positive political development in the Republika Srpska by important but still conditional injections of economic and reconstruction aid to this Entity. The High Representative applauds donors for their willingness to redress the imbalance of aid, with a fair share-out for both Entities. He calls on the authorities in both Entities to demonstrate the deservedness of these new financial commitments.