

## **High Representative Regrets Parliament's Failure to Pass Election Law**

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, regrets the failure of members of the House of Representatives to pass the draft Election Law. This failure threatens to jeopardize hitherto successful efforts to consolidate the democratic process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and give its citizens the effective political representation to which they are entitled. It also places in question Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards further integration in European structures.

The High Representative notes that it may yet be possible to secure the necessary parliamentary support for the draft Election Law. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs legislation which enshrines democratic principles in the country's governance. The Election Law is not a luxury but a citizens' entitlement. It is a lynchpin of the country's efforts to move into the European mainstream and the most important single item among the Council of Europe accession criteria, as well as on the EU Road map.

Yesterday's vote is a setback on the road to democratic prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative is, however, disappointed that procedural disputes have been allowed to damage the interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens. He calls on responsible politicians to take ownership of the Election law and apply the focus that is needed to steer this indispensable legislation through parliament.