High Representative’s mandate extended for another year

At its session in Stockholm today, the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council confirmed the extension of the mandate of the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, for another year. The Steering Board expressed its continued full support for the High Representative and his past and future untiring efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the session of the PIC Steering Board, the High Representative’s proposals on the streamlining of current international civilian implementation structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina were heard. It was agreed that the current capacities, strengths, weaknesses and other factors relevant to the streamlining process need to be reviewed. The OHR will now engage in detailed consultations with other agencies on the ground.

The High Representative reaffirmed his commitment to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and fighting extremist nationalist forces. Together with the international organisations operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina the High Representative will continue to move ahead and ensure that living standards for the country’s citizens improve. Economic reform, refugee return and property law implemeturn and property law implementation, the building of a functioning State, fighting corruption and securing the rule of law constitute the way forward for Bosnia and Herzegovina, if the country is to participate in the European integration process and if it is to begin competing with neighbouring states for foreign investment.

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s accession to the Council of Europe remains of great importance for the citizen’s of Bosnia and

Herzegovina. So does fulfillment of the requirements set out in the “EU Road Map” of March 2000, which would make the country eligible for close and beneficial relations with the EU and, eventually, allow it to conclude a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU.

The High Representative reiterated his determination to use his powers to initiate the necessary change and trigger additional positive reforms. However, it is of the utmost importance that officials and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina assume ownership of their country and take the initiative in creating a modern, democratic state under the rule of law.