

High Representative concerned with Presidency statement linking the nomination of the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers to the formation of the BiH House of Peoples

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is concerned by an official statement made yesterday by the BiH Presidency, which puts off naming the Chairman of the Council of Ministers until the BiH House of Peoples is formed.

The BiH Presidency spokesman stated that the High Representative supported this position. This is at best a misinterpretation. The High Representative wants to see the BiH Presidency members repay the trust placed in them by the electorate. The Presidency members must ensure that the institutions that will bring the important legislative changes that are before Bosnia and Herzegovina are functioning as soon as possible.

However, prior to nominating a Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Presidency should enter into consultations with the relevant parties in the BiH House of Representatives. It is the Presidency's constitutional obligation to nominate a chairman that the House is likely to approve, in accordance with regular parliamentary procedure. According to the constitution, the House of Peoples does not play a role in this process, hence there is no need for the Presidency to wait for the final formation of both houses of the BiH Parliament before nominating the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The High Representative wishes to remind all three members of the Presidency that Bosnia and Herzegovina has to meet the many urgent requirements placed upon it by the Peace Implementation Council Brussels Declaration of May 2000, the EU Road map, the Zagreb summit and the Council of Europe Benchmarks. There is an urgent need for reform, expectations are high, and artificially created delays are not acceptable.