Brcko Supervisor Farrand Departs BiH

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is grateful to the Brcko Supervisor and Deputy High Representative, Bill Farrand, for his tireless efforts to create lasting peace and a spirit of tolerance in Brcko.

Ambassador Farrand has informed the High Representative that he would like to leave his posting at the end of May after having been separated from his family for more than three years.

When Ambassador Farrand was appointed the Brcko Supervisor in March 1997, Brcko was a divided and war-shattered area whose destiny was unknown. Ambassador Farrand contributed to the implementation of two Interim Arbitral Awards issued by the Brcko Arbitration Tribunal. Following the third and Final Award, Ambassador Farrand succeeded in establishing the Brcko District of BiH, pronounced the Statute and put in place the basic interim institutions of the District. This is the beginning of a new phase in democratic, multi-ethnic government in BiH.

Even prior to the creation of the District, Brcko broke new ground. In early 1998, the former RS municipality of Brcko was the first municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina to establish a multi-ethnic police, administration and judiciary comprising representatives from all three constituent peoples of BiH. It was the first municipality to which refugees and displaced persons started returning in significant numbers. Today, over 2,200 families have returned to their homes, and an average of three homes are vacated every day in Brcko town in order to allow the pre-war residents to return. The Brcko area of supervision was also the first municipality in BiH in which returnee children received special school education taking

their cultural and ethnic heritage into account.

As a multi-ethnic District whose territory belongs to both the Federation and the Republika Srpska and therefore to all the people of BiH, Brcko now has the chance to become a model for the whole country.

Ambassador Farrand’s successor will be announced shortly.