

# High Representative visited Tuzla

Today, the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch visited Tuzla to meet with Cantonal authorities, the SDP leadership, and view the Podrinje Identification Project. The High Representative said he was pleased to learn about the positive developments in the Canton to make government more accountable and transparent. The High Representative stressed the need to undertake such reforms to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina fully into Europe. Tuzla Cantonal Prime Minister Jasarevic agreed, saying that speeding up the privatization process was extremely crucial.

The High Representative also discussed the upcoming Peace Implementation Council (PIC) to be held in Brussels on May 23-24. At the PIC meeting, Ambassador Petritsch said that he will send a strong message to Europe that Bosnia was, is, and will be a part of Europe. For Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a part of Europe, however, the High Representative said that he needed the commitment of authorities throughout the country to accelerate the return process, strengthen common institutions, and speed up economic reform.

The High Representative also said he was pleased that Tuzla Canton continued to be in the forefront in the fight against fraud and corruption. Unless corruption is checked, he said, a country's economy will stagnate and not develop.

Ambassador Petritsch said he welcomed Cantonal officials' commitment to the development of a professional, independent judiciary and he urged that further steps be taken to implement the Rule of Law. Finally, the High Representative encouraged all citizens of Tuzla Canton to hold public officials accountable for their decisions and take an interest in all levels of their government.