

Public Corporation for Road Infrastructure Established

The OHR warmly welcomes the establishment of a joint Bosnia and Herzegovina Road Infrastructure Public Corporation (BRIC) under Annex 9.

The Road Infrastructure Public Corporation will institutionalize co-operation between the two Entities in developing a quality road network across Bosnia and Herzegovina. This includes development planning, the implementation of improvement projects, maintenance of the road system, and its connection to the European network.

The formal signing of the BRIC agreement was completed last week when Principal Deputy High Representative Ralph Johnson, the new chairman of the Commission on Public Corporation, signed the agreement as a witness. Entity Prime Ministers Edhem Bicakcic and Milorad Dodik as well as Federation Deputy Prime Minister Dragan Covic had agreed on the final text at the February 14 meeting of the Commission on Public Corporations.

BRIC is, after the Railway Public Corporation founded in July 1998, the second Public Corporation established under Annex 9 of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

BRIC will take a lead role in expediting the implementation of priority road improvement projects – for example to remove major traffic bottlenecks and safety hazards -, and the introduction of rigorous road maintenance programs. The Corporation's immediate priority will be the major European road corridors traversing BiH.

Other activities of the new organisation will include the harmonisation of technical standards and road management procedures between the Entities, the co-ordination of road development planning, the identification and evaluation of priority projects and the co-ordination of public tenders. BRIC will work closely with the existing Entity Directorates of Roads.

The Corporation will have a management structure similar to the one of the Railway Public Corporation. It will have a tri-partite Management Board and a 12-member Board of Directors for corporate control and strategic direction. Six of the Directors will represent road user groups. The seat of BRIC will be Banja Luka. The agreement also envisages the formation of specific regional Consultative Committees for major road infrastructure initiatives to ensure input from affected municipalities, Cantons and the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications.

Ambassador Ralph Johnson said: "With the establishment of the Road Infrastructure Public Corporation, BiH has made a significant step towards the development of a high quality and economically sustainable highway network in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A good road system is a precondition for economic development as it facilitates international and domestic trade. The Corporation will also help consolidate BiH's single economic space and improve BiH's connection to the rest of Europe and the world's economy."