

High Representative Acts to Avoid Vacuum in Intelligence Sector

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, issued a Decision today deferring the establishment of the Intelligence and Security Agency until 1 June 2004. The High Representative acted in response to a request by Ambassador Kalman Kocsis, Chairman of the Expert Commission, which drafted the Intelligence and Security Agency, in order to avoid any vacuum in the maintenance of proper control over the intelligence-security sector.

In a letter to Prime Minister Terzic, Parliamentary Assembly Security-Intelligence Commission Chairman Tomislav Limov, and the High Representative, Ambassador Kocsis notes that "The appointment of the Director-General, Deputy Director-General and Inspector-General is a prerequisite for the integration of FOSS and OBS into OSA. Much rests on their shoulders. Unfortunately, despite everyone's best efforts, the appointment of individuals to these positions appears to be slightly delayed. This creates a problem. Without the new management in place, there will be a vacuum where no one will be in charge of the intelligence-security sector."

Without this technical adjustment, no one in the Council of Ministers would be operationally responsible for the actions of the intelligence-security sector. "Such a vacuum would have undermined the work undertaken to date by the BiH authorities in moving the intelligence reform along its difficult path," said the High Representative.

The High Representative also paid tribute to the Parliamentary Assembly for quickly forming a Security-Intelligence Commission and appointing its chairman. He also welcomed the

Council of Ministers' adoption of the Intelligence-Security Advisory Service so that, when the Intelligence and Security Agency is established on 1 June 2004, executive control of the intelligence sector can be maintained. "They have shown that they understand the need to act quickly," he said.