

High Representative Calls for Commission to Chart Way Forward for Mostar

Visiting Mostar on Friday, the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown supported a plan to set up a Commission that will produce a comprehensive proposal for the political and administrative future of the city.

“It is clear that the people and authorities in Mostar have recognized the need for reform. The consensus has been reached that the time has come for the City of Mostar to take a decisive step forward,” the High Representative said during a meeting with Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Mostar Hamdija Jahic and Ljubo Beslic and members of the Mostar City Council.

The High Representative also suggested that the Commission be multi-ethnic and cross-party and that it include representatives from all levels of government that may be called on to make legislative or constitutional change.

The OHR proposes that the Commission should be formed on the following basis:

- Representation in accordance with the last census
- Representation of all parties represented in the Mostar City Council
- Representation of all levels of government (City/Canton/Federation) that may be required to amend their legislation/constitutions
- Appropriate representation of both experts and politicians
- A maximum of 12 members.

The High Representative suggested that the Commission be

nominated by the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor and appointed by the City Council, in consultation with the Canton PM and the Federation PM. This was accepted by all those who attended meetings with the High Representative in Mostar on Friday. It was also proposed that the sessions of the Commission be co-chaired by four Commission members, each coming from a different constituent people and the group of Others.

The High Representative, while meeting the City officials and councillors, said that, if needed, international experts could assist the Commission but that they should not be members – the Commission, he said, should be made up of individuals who have a long-term stake in the future of Mostar. In principle, primary responsibility lies with the people of Mostar and their representatives.

Ideally, the High Representative said, the Commission should begin work in April and produce a comprehensive proposal by the end of July this year. “This is a chance for Mostarians to decide for themselves about the future of their City and OHR is willing to help and assist in this important process,” the High Representative said.