

# High Representative calls to fight corruption in BiH

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, after conferring with his Special Auditor for the Federation, has today called upon all authorities in BiH to increase their commitment to the fight against corruption.

The High Representative is concerned that Bosnia and Herzegovina's public finance system continues to suffer from systemic corruption despite the fact that local authorities have made a commitment to combat this. Progress, especially in supporting critical institution building, specifically the Supreme Audit Institutions, appears to be lagging. However, these institutions are critical in establishing a public finance system which has the confidence of the BiH public and which meets international standards. Only then can corruption be curbed and assurances made to citizens that public revenues are being properly spent. The High Representative calls on all public authorities to ensure the political independence of these institutions and provide appropriate financing for them. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs a corruption-free system to attract the much needed foreign investment.

The High Representative would like to point out that independent oversight is one of the cornerstones of secure public finances. BiH in the past year has made some progress in establishing the Supreme Audit Institutions at both the State and Entity levels. However, these institutions must be supported by the BiH administrations. An effective system of independent public auditing is a critical component of good democratic governance.