

High Representative Issues Decisions on Special Auditor for the Federation and RS

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today issued two Decisions establishing the office of Special Auditor in the Republika Srpska and extending the mandate of the Special Auditor in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The mandate of the current Federation Special Auditor, Dale Ellen Ralph, has been extended, and Ms Ralph has been appointed to serve concurrently as RS Special Auditor. The duration of her appointment will be determined by the High Representative.

The Special Auditor will be responsible for examining the accounts of Entity and municipality institutions and public companies. This will build on the previous audits carried out by the OSCE Special Auditor in partnership with the Entities, and thereby further strengthen the local authorities so they become effective watchdogs over the public accounts.

The function of Special Audits is to ensure that all reasonable precautions have been taken to safeguard the collection and custody of revenues, that disbursement of revenues has taken place under the proper authority and for the proper purposes, and that all reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure the proper use of public funds.

The Special Auditor may enter premises of institutions being audited and is entitled to full and free access to relevant information.

The Supreme Audit Institution of the BiH Federation and the Supreme Audit Office of the Republika Srpska shall provide the Special Auditor with any assistance that she requests in order

to perform her duties.

The Special Auditor will not publish information obtained in the course of her work, but will produce an audit report for the institutions being audited and the OHR, as well as the RS Government, RSNA, and RS Supreme Audit Office, in the case of RS audits, and the Federation Government and Federation Parliament (or the Cantonal Government and the Cantonal Assembly where the Audit took place) and the Supreme Audit Institution of the BiH Federation, in the case of Federation audits.

The High Representative's Decisions are designed to protect the public funds, so that citizens' tax revenue is spent on schools, hospitals, roads and other legitimate items, and does not disappear into the pockets of dishonest bureaucrats, politicians or businesspeople.