

High Representative visits Washington and London

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Friday travelled to New York and will today continue on to Washington on the first leg of a ten-day international tour. From the USA the High Representative will travel via London to the EU summit in Thessaloniki. The tour will end with a meeting with the Pope during the Pope's visit to Banja Luka on Sunday 22 June.

The goal of this visit is five-folded. During his stay in New York the High Representative will present the first America-Bosnia Cultural Foundation Peace Award to Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke for his outstanding achievements in bringing peace to the people of BiH.

The High Representative's next stop on his American-European tour is Washington DC, where he will join BiH Prime Minister, Adnan Terzic, BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic, the Governor of the Central Bank of BiH, Peter Nicholl, and other BiH and international officials for meetings with the World Bank. Whilst in Washington the High Representative will meet representatives of the US Administration including the US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, briefing them on his upcoming policy priorities for the autumn. Similarly, in the UK, the High Representative will meet the UK's Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw. During these meetings, the High Representative "will update them on Customs and tax reform, defence reform and intelligence reform, and on the progress made in putting in place the institutional structures to fight crime" said Julian Braithwaite, the OHR Director of Communications. "The High Representative will say that a lot has been done to build the institutions which will ensure the Rule of Law in BiH; the State Court, and the new Criminal Intelligence Unit, have improved co-ordination between different international and domestic agencies – now we need to

use them” added Braithwaite.

With regard to fight against organised crime, terrorism and corruption Braithwaite said that the High Representative will also brief on “the significant progress that has been made on putting in place systems to attack the networks that support war criminals, terrorism and organised crime, and the High Representative will thank the US Administration for their decisive action in this regard.”

The High Representative will also set out for them the unacceptable cost of government in BiH, he will say that “there is little money for the most vulnerable in society, or for essential public servants like teachers and doctors.” “The High Representative will not be presenting solutions at this stage – any change to the constitution or Dayton will be for the people of BiH, not for the international community, to decide on” said Braithwaite.

During the final legs of his ten-day tour the High Representative will attend the EU summit in Thessaloniki where he will lobby for BiH. The end of his tour is planned for June 22, when he will meet the Pope in Banja Luka.