

OHR's Statement at the International Agency's Joint Press Conference

Political Directors of PIC StB

The Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board meeting will conclude today. As usual we will be issuing a Communiqué on behalf of the PIC later this afternoon.

Given the importance of the PIC at this stage of the reform process, the High representative, Paddy Ashdown, will also hold a press conference at 15:00 today at the OHR.

This morning the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, BiH Foreign Minister Malden Ivanic, BiH Minister of Defence Nikola Radovanovic and Entity Prime Ministers Dragan Mikerevic and Ahmet Hadzipasic briefed the Steering Board Political Directors on the status of BiH's reform programme, reporting among other things, on efforts to prepare BiH for membership in Partnership for Peace and for negotiations with the EU on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

PDHR in Tokyo

This week BiH received its first ever credit rating from Moody's Investor Service, which assigned a positive outlook to BiH's economy, noting that the current B3 rating could be upgraded within six to 18 months.

This and other progress achieved by Bosnia and Herzegovina will be a core of the speech that the Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays will deliver in Tokyo on Monday April 5 at a Ministerial Conference on Peace Consolidation & Economic Development in West Balkans. The conference is co-chaired by Government of Japan and Ireland, which holds the Presidency of the EU.

"For nearly a decade we have been building the foundations of post-war

recovery” Ambassador Hays will say in Tokyo, underlining that “now the citizens of BiH are about to reap the benefits.”

Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic and Foreign Trade Minister Dragan Doko will join Ambassador Hays in Tokyo where issues such as how BiH intends to build on the foundation of Economic recovery and plans for developing BIH’s future prosperity will be presented.

The PDHR’s aim at the conference is to highlight the opportunities that may arise for BiH trade and business with partners from around the world.