

Political Leaders Commit to Creating Environment for Jobs

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, Federation Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic, RS Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic and Brcko Mayor Branko Damjanac met in Jajce today to discuss the current status of the Bulldozer Process. In addition to the 50 reforms enacted under Phase I, 50 new reforms have now been formulated under Phase II and are in various stages of government and parliamentary procedure. These reforms are expected to be enacted during the summer. Bulldozer Phase III will be launched later this month.

At the end of Phase I, the State, Entity and Brcko governments agreed to establish Emergency reform Units, made up of young, highly-motivated civil servants, who would have direct access to the heads of government and who would be tasked with steering Bulldozer reforms through the relevant ministries and government departments. In Jajce today representatives of the ERUs briefed the political leaders and an audience of more than 50 businesspeople and representatives of BiH and IC organisations on the progress that has been made in taking Phase II reforms forward to enactment. The Chairs of the five regional Bulldozer Committees and the BiH-wide Agricultural Bulldozer Committee briefed the meeting on the collection of reforms, the nature of reforms and the obstacles and advances experienced by the committees in the course of Phase II.

In addition, a 60-page brochure monitoring the implementation of the 50 Phase I reforms was presented. Next week, this brochure will be distributed with newspapers throughout BiH.

Today's meeting was held on the factory floor of Alloy Wheels Company, which was chosen as the venue because it is a successful example of a BiH company that has combined substantial investment with a talented workforce and

established itself as a competitive exporter to Europe and further afield. Alloy Wheels employs 126 people. The Bulldozer Reforms are primarily targeted at improving the BiH business environment so that more and more companies like this can be launched, thus creating more jobs.

Ambassador Hays said that Bulldozer had created a mechanism through which BiH entrepreneurs and politicians must come up with "*your solutions for your problems*".

Prime Minister Hadzipasic pointed to the considerable overlap which exists between the Bulldozer Initiative and the emerging Economic Regions. He attributed this to the fact that both the Bulldozer and the Regions are genuinely business-based, and they both aim to improve the business environment so as to attract investment and create jobs.

Prime Minister Mikerevic highlighted the cooperative partnership that has been established among the RS, State, Federation and Brcko ERUs.

Brcko District Mayor Damjanac noted that the District Assembly has adopted all the changes suggested by the Bulldozer Commission, a voting record which he said was consistent with the District's broad efforts to create a positive business environment.