Round Table Discussion on the Sarajevo Declaration

Today, the Principal Deputy High Representative, Ralph Johnson, and the Deputy High Representative for Return and Reconstruction, Andy Bearpark, hosted a round table discussion on the Sarajevo Declaration. The participants included 29 representatives of civic society, various political parties and Cantonal authorities.

The OHR convened this round table to take stock of what has been achieved, and to find ways to overcome obstacles in the implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration. Although there has been progress this year, much more could have been achieved.

As Sarajevo is the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina and has a distinct multi-ethnic tradition, it is responsible for setting an example. It must take the lead in allowing all its former citizens to return, and in establishing the Rule of Law, which in this context means adherence to the property laws and a complete commitment to individuals' rights.

The OHR is encouraged that all participants pledged their full support for the implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration. A variety of views were expressed. All agreed that it was high time that Sarajevo began to take its responsibility as a capital city more seriously. Sarajevo can indeed become a model of multi-ethnicity and a bedrock for the Rule of Law, but only if all its residents – including those in power, and those who represent various social groups – genuinely wish to make this possibility a reality.