

# **Statement by Ambassador Michael Steiner on Integration of Ilidza into Sarajevo**

Today we witness an important step toward the future of Sarajevo as an integrated city that can serve as the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By integrating Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs in its Interim Council, Ilidza has made a strong move to counter the forces of division in Bosnia.

We are now a step closer to realising the goal of the Rome Statement that "Sarajevo will be a united city" where "there will be equal treatment for Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, and Others." By taking this course, Ilidza can make itself a positive example for the future of a country in which all too many of the examples have been negative.

The authorities of Ilidza have made progress in integrating the Opcina, and my office and other international agencies will be fully supporting these efforts. Communities which show such serious progress toward building a democratic, multi-ethnic future will be our first priority for reconstruction assistance.

While much remains to be done in Ilidza, we have seen that the local leadership takes a serious approach to resolving problems and should be considered in the forefront of Bosnian communities in building a peaceful future.