Statement: High Representative will speak to BiH House of Representatives on July 19

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown will address the BiH House of Representatives at it's session on July 19 when the House will consider the position of the BIH institutions towards the High Representatives mandate.

The High Representative has welcomed and encouraged this debate as a part of the process of moving BiH to full statehood. Ten years have passed since the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed. The High Representative on his arrival said that he would measure the success of his mandate by how close BiH is to the point at which a High Representative is no longer necessary.

In his speech to the House of Representatives the High Representative will welcome the conclusions of the Venice Commission in its review of progress in BiH of March 11 2005. The High Representative will inform the delegates of the House of his objectives during the last months of his mandate, those elements of the High Representatives powers that he forsees could be transferred to the BiH authorities first, and how BiH's rapprochement with the EU could continue.

The High Representative will underline that the true measure of BiH's readiness for this change will be the ability to bring key reforms to completion, including police and defence reforms which are key prerequirements for the start of Stabilization and Association negotiations and for PfP membership respectively.

The High Representative will remind delegates that the SAA offers BiH the opportunity to shift the agenda from one dominated by the past, to an agenda dominated by the future, in which the BiH authorities take full responsibility for BiH's future.

Following the speech, the High Representative will answer questions from the delegates to the House of Representatives.