

Elections in Croatia

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, congratulates the new political leadership of the Republic of Croatia on their notable success at the polls. The people of Croatia have clearly expressed their will, through the democratic process, to make a significant change.

The High Representative now hopes that the new leadership of Croatia, a signatory of the Dayton Peace Agreement, will assume their responsibilities as guarantors of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and he looks forward to close cooperation in the future implementation of the GFAP.

The High Representative notes that the out of country voting which took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina on January 2nd and 3rd 2000 was without significant incident, although certain irregularities were noted by international observers.

Areas of concern to the High Representative still remain. Many refugees have been unable to assert their Citizenship of Croatia and have therefore been unable to vote, inaccuracies in the voter registers have been observed, the media coverage prior to the election has been seen to favor the incumbents and the sheer volume of voters in certain polling stations means that errors could easily occur. These issues should be addressed by the competent authorities as soon as possible.

The participation of a constituent people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the election of another country without an agreement between the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina is an anomaly that concerns the High Representative.

The Office of the High Representative will be cooperating closely with the OSCE mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the impending elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina this year. The High Representative requires the competent authorities to

ensure that similar irregularities do not occur.