

High Representative imposes Official Publication of Telecommunications Sector Policy

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, today imposed a Decision to ensure the publication without delay of the Telecommunications Sector Policy – as adopted by the Council of Ministers in November 2000 – in the Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Official Gazettes of the Federation and Republika Srpska.

This important piece of legislation lays out how the telecoms sector will be liberalised and privatised, including areas such as GSM voice telephony and new technologies. It also clarifies the competencies of the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (TRA), empowering it, to ensure a fair and transparent privatisation process.

A much needed shake-up of the telecoms sector is vital to economic reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reform is also a requirement of the Peace Implementation Council's (PIC) Brussel's Declaration, made in May 2000, which called on all BiH authorities to increase efficiency and economies of scale by using a country-wide approach in a number of areas, including telecoms.

A reformed telecoms system will mean lower prices and better services for all citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who now have to pay some of the highest telecommunications charges in Europe.

The High Representative imposed the Decision based on the powers entrusted in him under Annex 10, Article V of the Dayton peace agreement and the PIC's Bonn Declaration of 1997.