

# **High Representative Issues Decision Giving Communications Regulatory Agency Access to Operating Funds**

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Wednesday issued a Decision amending the Structure of CRA Expenditures for 2002 in order to allow the CRA to continue functioning. This Decision gives legal force to a majority decision already taken by the BiH Council of Ministers to ensure adequate funding for the CRA until its next annual budget is approved.

The CRA is fully self-financing and generates its funds from the licence fee that all telecom and broadcasting operators pay, but its access to these funds is restricted to the budget lines laid down by the BiH Parliament. Its budget was originally decreased by 25 percent in 2002 compared to 2001 without a corresponding alteration to its budget lines. The High Representative issued today's Decision in order to rationalise the budget lines while keeping the CRA's overall budget within the limits adopted by Parliament. This was necessary in order to ensure that the CRA continues to operate, efficiently and independently, thus maintaining a European standard broadcasting and communications environment in BiH.