

High Representative Urges Qualified Candidates to Apply for Top Civil Service Jobs

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Friday urged qualified candidates to put their names forward for senior positions that must now be filled in the BiH civil service. The High Representative endorsed remarks made earlier in the day by the Director of the BiH Civil Service Agency (BiH CSA), Jakob Finci. Mr Finci said that the process of filling nine top civil service positions in the BiH Council of Ministers “represents a unique opportunity” because it will demonstrate that the BiH civil service “is open to all qualified candidates through a merit-based and transparent system, without reference to politics.”

The High Representative expressed concern that although the nine vacancies – for Ministry Secretaries in the Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & Economic Relations, Security, Civil Affairs, Communications & Transport, Finance and Justice, and the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers and the Director of the Directorate for European Integration – have been open for two weeks, there have been only 15 applications so far.

“It is not clear if potential candidates are not applying because of a lack of information, or because there is a belief that these appointments will be made on party lines anyway,” the High Representative said. He emphasised that that “the BiH Civil Service will not be a playground for patronage,” and he noted that the guarantee of this is the demonstrable “integrity, professionalism and efficiency” of the BiH CSA, which is free of party political influence.

“Patronage and politics have always been close in this

country,” the High Representative said. “But now there is a real opportunity for qualified, non-political professionals to make a major difference in peoples lives, to show that public service is about personal integrity, and about individuals putting the people’s interest before their own.”