

In Focus



EU Integration: Well-Being for BiH

On January 1, Czech Republic started its first turn at the rotating presidency of the European Union, only the second formerly communist country to take helm of the bloc. The coming six months will be a trying time for Prague, as they deal with growing economic and energy crises, as well as the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

However, the country which joined the European Union only four years ago has been preparing diligently for its six months of rule, determined to steer the EU through turbulent waters, which is reflected in Czech Presidency's focus: energy, economy and external relations. They strongly believe that, in dealing with challenges, the precondition for success is flexibility, and ability to react quickly and rationally.

With this approach, between the work on the stabilisation of financial markets and analysing energy infrastructure, Czech

Presidency will also focus on Western Balkans, upholding the promises of Thessaloniki and preparing to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in implementing the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA).

"During Czech Presidency, we are ready and willing to support all steps towards the integration of the Bosnia and Herzegovina," says Jiří Kuděla, Ambassador of the Czech Republic and holder of the EU Presidency in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "We will mostly focus on visa liberalisation policies and candidate status, which of course requires a lot of effort by the BiH institutions. As for the implementation, we are ready to help and assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in executing all reforms that are required for improvement on the road towards the European Union. We hope to make a difference in the fields mentioned above, but the main precondition for anything to hap-

Continued on page 2 >>

Editorial

By Nikola Spiric,
Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH

As the Czech Republic took over the rotating EU Presidency, this marked another development phase for the European Union, but also a new step on BiH's road towards the EU integration.

While, for BiH, 2008 was primarily the year associated with the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU, 2009 will definitely be a challenging year for our country's road to Europe.

The SAA signing did close one chapter in the integration process, but it immediately opened a series of objectives that we need to fulfil if we want to continue advancing towards the final goal - our full membership in the European Union. Being fully aware of all commitments and challenges ahead of us, we must try to utilise the priorities of each EU Member State which presides over the EU, that currently being the Czech Republic.

We will use the Czech EU Presidency, under the slogan EUROPE WITHOUT BARRIERS, to intensify activities related to liberalisation of the visa regime for our citizens, and bring them closer to the EU in the best way possible by enabling them to travel freely throughout Europe without the laborious task of obtaining a visa. I believe we are very close to fulfilling our obligations from the Roadmap on visa-free regime, and that we will get a positive report from the European Commission and thus be added to the 'Schengen white list'. In that regard, I have to stress that a significant progress in that direction is possible during the Czech Presidency.

Along with fulfilling these obligations, we remain committed to accomplishing those from the European Partnership as an integral part of the Thessaloniki Agenda, as well as to the further implementation of duties set by the SAA.

The term of the Czech Presidency will also be used to fulfil conditions and prepare a high-quality application for acquiring EU candidate status. Conditions permitting, the possibility of submitting the application during this term is not excluded. It is necessary to say unambiguously that the preparations for the green light from the European Commission need to be done in parallel with the

Continued on page 3 >>



More on page 8 >>

pen is a continuous and sincere effort from BiH authorities."

What could BiH, as a state, and its people do to assist in achieving the goals Czech Presidency has set?

Kuděla: Our goal is the general improvement in the whole Western Balkans, and also assuring the clear EU perspective for the region. BiH and its people should work on all the conditions they have committed to fulfil. For politicians, that would be more than just declarative support to the EU integration. BiH citizens and institutions should work in the field of EU integrations regardless of the Czech Presidency goals and wishes, but for their own well-being.

Since energy is one of the foci of the Czech Presidency, and with the current energy crisis, is there a plan to address this issue for the Balkans, offer long-term solutions? If yes, how?

Kuděla: Energy is one of the priorities of the Czech Presidency, but it is orientated inwards, as an internal EU matter. We are planning to open a discussion in this field, towards overcoming the current energy issues by promoting diversificati-

on, clean energies, self sufficient EU, open and competitive energy market with clear rules, etc.

What are your expectations in regards to results realised both in the European Union and in BiH by the end of the six-month period?

Kuděla: We hope for the BiH to progress in the association and stabilisation process as planned and we are ready to assist in this field. Also, we would like to see Road Map conditions being fulfilled towards full visa liberalisation. Fulfilling of the conditions for the OHR closure is also our priority. As for the EU, we hope to raise many discussions and offer reforms in the fields of economy and energy as written in the "Work Programme of the Czech Presidency 2009". We are also very dedicated in taking all possible steps towards solving the current financial crisis.

EU Police Mission and the Czech Presidency for BiH share a number of goals for 2009. In which areas do you see EUPM and the Czech Presidency making a joint effort?

Kuděla: I would like to stress that we, as the Czech Republic, have cooperated with EU Police Mission for years and we have a



number of officers in the mission at this time. The main field would, of course, be the fulfilment of the security conditions in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to advance towards EU. We must use all our capacities to assist BiH in doing as much as possible, given the full dedication of local authorities. Other burning issue would, of course, be redefining the role of the EU and its agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have been introduced to the plans of the EU Police Mission in the next six months and I think we also have a lot of field work we should co-operate in.

It seems like it's going to be a busy year in Bosnia and Herzegovina, both for the Czech Presidency and EUPM, both aiming to reach the common goal - helping the country's progress along the road to the European Union. ■

EU Affairs

Key to European Union Lies in 2009



■ Czech Ambassador Jiří Kuděla and EUPM Commissioner Stefan Feller discussed the plans the coming year

Jiří Kuděla, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic and holder of the EU Presidency in Bosnia and Herzegovina, paid a visit to the European Union Police Mission on January 20 to mark the beginning of the Czech EU Presidency.

Ambassador Kuděla and EUPM Commissioner Stefan Feller talked about common strategies for the coming six-month period. Amongst the main issues discussed were the fight against organised crime, the implementation of the two police reform laws, the visa liberalisation, and the general

security situation in the country, where Commissioner Feller and his staff briefed Ambassador Kuděla on EUPM's efforts and activities.

"Year 2009 will be a decisive time for Bosnia and Herzegovina," said Feller. "The European Union is preparing for its reinforced engagement to bring the country irrevocably on the path of European integration, and the Police Mission remains a key instrument for the European Union in making this happen."

In the address to the media, Ambassador Kuděla said that the Czech Presidency fully supports the goals of the EU Police Mission.

"This is a decisive year for BiH in our eyes as well," he said. "Act now' is the message for BiH politicians. Delays are depriving us of arguments which we use to defend the right of BiH citizens' path towards the EU. Work needs to be done. We want to help BiH within our Presidency to make 2009 a turning point in the visa liberalisation regime domain and other issues."

During the visit, Ambassador Kuděla also met with the members of the Czech contingent deployed to the EU Police Mission. ■

BiH Police Unions Take a Collective Step Forward

Since 2004, EU Police Mission has aided local counterparts in the creation of "The Joint Basis for Creating a Framework Model for the Collective Contracts of Police Unions in BiH", a document which represents a major achievement in enhancing the coordination among BiH police trade unions and standardizing the procedure of negotiating and the content of collective agreements for all police forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Designed to serve as the basis for further negotiations between individual unions and their respective governments, the *Joint Basis* regulates labour relations and rights of police officials, civil servants and employees employed in the police forces. It also regulates issues such as employment rights, probationary work, working hours, leaves, protection at work, salaries and remunerations, reconciliation of disputes, strike, procedures and criteria in case of redundancy of personnel.

On January 27, the representatives of police unions in BiH signed the *"Agreement on Implementing the Commitments of Police Unions during the Process of Drafting, Negotiating and Signing Collective Agree-*

ments". With this *Agreement*, the representatives of the unions commit themselves to undertake all necessary activities for the implementation of the annexed *Joint Basis*. Moreover, the *Agreement* notes that they expect from all employers and governments in BiH to incorporate the provisions of the *Joint Basis* to maximum extent into the specific collective contracts for the police agencies.

Negotiation benefits

"It is promising that police trade unions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are working together with the aim to enhance the status, rights and obligations of all employees of police bodies across the whole country," says Commissioner Stefan Feller, Head of the EU Police Mission. *"Trade Unions working together is the best way improve police officers' work conditions. In this respect, we also encourage the police trade unions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue integration into European Trade Union associations, such as European Council of Police Trade Union (CESP), which already helped to reach today's agreement."*

Simonetta Silvestri, Chief of EUPM's Police Reform Department which has been facilitating the work of police unions in drafting the *Joint Basis* and the *Agreement*, says this is the first time a core document which determines main desired principles of collective contracts has been signed.



■ Border Police Union President Ahmet Turcinovic signs the Agreement



■ Republika Srpska Police Union President Dusko Jandric signs the Agreement

Agreement Signatories

- Nedo Djurdjic, President of the Representative Union of Institutions of BiH
- Halid Ganija, President of the Association of Independent Unions of Police of BiH Federation
- Dusko Jandric, President of the Union of Employees of Internal Affairs of Republika Srpska
- Slobodan Markovic, President of the Brcko District Police Union
- Mesud Ormanovic, president of SIPA Union
- Ahmet Turcinovic, President of the Border Police Union
- Stipe Rozic, President of the Union of Employees of Federation Ministry of Interior
- Amir Dedovic, President of the Bosna-Podrinje Canton Police Union
- Faris Mahalbasic, President of the Srednja Bosna Canton Police Union
- Jusuf Tufekcic, President of the Cantonal Board of Police Union of Tuzla Canton Mol

Continued from page 1 >>

necessary transformation of the OHR into the EUSR. I do not consider the final solving of the state property and Brcko District issues only as necessary actions on BiH's road to EU, but also as further and necessary development of the entire system in BiH. I also believe that constant postponement of the OHR-EUSR transition would undermine international institutions' credibility in BiH and disrupt trust in the reforms implemented.

Of course, we remain committed to fulfilling conditions for full NATO membership. In this process, we hope to gain full support from the Czech Republic. Another important priority is the preparation process for WTO membership, as part of the overall process.

We also expect full Czech support in accessing the EU funds, especially those for education, promotion of European values, civil society development, and overall establishment of European standards in BiH.

Being fully aware of all obligations ahead of us, we wish to benefit from Czech Presidency in the best way possible, by strengthening the partnership with this EU country and making a significant step forward - first towards the candidate status, then towards full membership.

Readers will agree with me that BiH geographically and culturally belongs to Europe. If we wish to formally become a part of that Europe, we need to double our efforts in fulfilling the conditions for full EU membership.

These efforts can be doubled only if we choose a path of dialogue and compromise, if we learn to listen and accept each other, like EU member states do. Patience, trust building, and equality of all citizens are crucial factors in achieving sustainable solutions in BiH. We will work hard on these factors. ■

"Of course, this does not mean that all working conditions and salaries of police in BiH will be harmonised, because harmonisation is also related to the budget allocated to each police agency by their entities and cantons," says Silvestri. *"But it shows the determination of all police unions to work together and to have a harmonised stance on what are some of the biggest issues for them today."*

Standing together

Representatives agreed that January 27 was an important day for all police unions as it represents a concrete step towards European standards that will provide equal grounds for dialogue with all levels of government in BiH.

"Provisions of this Agreement should be used in maximum extent as a basis for creation of our own collective agreements with respective governments," says Ahmet Turcinovic, President of the Border Police Union.

"We want to send a message to our employers that we are harmonising the standards for all employees of police agencies in BiH," adds Dusko Jandric, President of the Republika Srpska Police Trade Union. *"I think this Agreement will settle all dilemmas that objectively existed in the union-employer relations." ■*

Police Accountability, a Never-Ending

“Work on issues pertaining to police accountability should be perceived as a never-ending process. Building a strong partnership between the police and the citizens is a two-way route that requires a constant proactive approach in explaining our efforts to the citizens and in return engaging them in resolving security matters,” says Nebojsa Maric, senior police officer of Sarajevo Canton police.

Maric is also a member of the Coordination Group, tasked with the implementation of the upcoming Police Accountability Campaign that EUPM will be implementing in cooperation with BiH police agencies. His selection was not a coincidence. Being actively involved in the community policing sector for eleven years, Maric’s contribution to the plan of activities was valuable.

“Our expectations from this campaign are high,” says Maric. “This is the first time that this issue has been approached in a coordinated manner across the country, and as such it should be perceived as the first step in a long-term process. Perception of the police cannot be changed over night, and we know that reaching the campaign’s objectives will require a lot of work and effort. Sarajevo Canton police, thus, has a very ambitious plan. We intend to simultaneously

work on two fronts - education of citizens and police officers. Ultimately, we need to educate citizens that their feedback on our work is crucial. Only then will the police be able to improve the performance and respond effectively to the citizens’ needs. On the other hand, we also need to ensure that police officers uphold the highest professional standards when interacting with citizens on any issue.”

Like citizens, like police

How do you intend to achieve that?

Maric: Effective and helpful police can only be built through joint effort of police and citizens. The bottom line is that there must be a strong partnership between us. Citizens should understand we are here for their benefit, and trust us more. And we need to deserve that trust. We want to educate citizens to start using 122 as a confidential phone number; we need them to know that Public Complaint Bureaus receive not only complaints, but suggestions for the improvement of police work.

Police, on the other hand, need to provide feedback to a citizen’s enquiry or suggestion, and to demonstrate that we are working and that we care. Our work should be shaped as an outcome of citi-



zens’ needs. We are here to serve and protect citizens.

Police for the people is what you are saying, then?

Maric: We are the police mainly consisting of individuals from that same community of people; we are not from another planet. Like citizens, like police. Constant education is needed for both and it has to be carried out simultaneously.

Effective and helpful police can only be built through joint efforts of the police and citizens

Community policing

Where is the fascination with community policing coming from?

Maric: Community policing sparked my interest twelve years ago when serving in Srpsko Gorazde. I was the first police officer from that region who went through the IPTF-organised course. Applying the knowledge, I launched an “Open Door Day” project, the first of its kind.

When I was redeployed to Sarajevo police, I realised that I want to work with children. Why? In my opinion, it is the most important segment of my work. When you provide a child with a proper and timely education, you can rest assured that he/she will become an adult with the right perception about police, free of prejudice. By educating children, we are also influencing their parents as adults with already pre-formulated opinion. *The Kids Fest* can serve as the best example of this strategy. In 2003, when the project was launched, I personally travelled to 56 cities across BiH to present it to my colleagues in police and PTAs to ensure their participation. There was a certain degree of scepticism from both police and parents. The parents we-



■ Nebojsa Maric socialises with children during the Anti-Drugs Campaign event

ing Process

re afraid of letting their children go to something they referred to as a “police gathering”. This was simply something they have never done before. However, last three years, there were more applicants than we could have welcomed in Sarajevo.

I have another project aimed at children in mind to implement in scope of the campaign, “*To movies with the police*”, for children from Sarajevo Canton. We already implemented something similar in 2007, and I am sure this one will turn out to be equally successful.

Plans for the future

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Maric: I intend to stay in the community policing sector for the remainder of my career. I will continue giving my maximum to modernise this sector, pass knowledge to my junior colleagues and come up with new projects. There is no end to this process.

What is your message to citizens of BiH?

Maric: Help us help you. A partnership that police is determined to build with you must be based on mutual confidence. ■

HR Lajcak Leaves

On January 23, High Representative and EU Special Representative to BiH Miroslav Lajcak announced that Prime Minister Robert Fico offered him the post of the minister of foreign affairs of Slovakia, which he accepted. Lajcak reiterated his dedication to OHR/EUSR and BiH, committing to remain available and engaged in finding a transition formula which will help avoid any political and legal vacuum.

As the debate on his successor begins, we would like to congratulate Mr. Lajcak on his new position and wish him all the best in his future endeavors. ■



Campaigns

Sve primjedbe na rad policije mozete dostaviti u najblizi javni zalbeni biro.

VAŠA SIGURNOST
NAŠA OBAVEZA

VAŠA POLICIJA

EUPM to Launch Police Accountability Campaign

On February 12, the European Union Police Mission in cooperation with BiH law enforcement agencies will launch the Police Accountability Campaign, aimed at educating and raising awareness about the accountability of the local police in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby improving their image. The EUPM and the local police want people to take simple steps - such as meeting their community police officers or commissioners - to create a closer bond with their local law enforcement.

ety, there is no room for barriers between the two - only a strong link and a strong partnership."

The campaign is based on the premise that a better relationship between the police and citizens will lead to higher awareness of the areas that need improvement and of the steps to be taken in order to respond better to the needs of public. Various issues will be covered through extensive media exposure, round tables, popular television programs, as well as the work of the police within the community.

"We have been preparing for this campaign for the past two years," says Srečko Bosnjak, Spokesperson of the Hercegovina-Neretva Canton MoI. "The results of the police in BiH have increased significantly and we want to relay that to the public. Citizens need to know they can rely on us. Together with our colleagues from other BiH police agencies, we intend to address the issues of security and safety, trust and transparency, internal and external corruption. We want the citizens to understand that our highest aspiration is the ever-growing cooperation with them."

Under the slogan “*Your Police*”, the campaign will further open up the police towards the public and present their role as a servant to the citizen, as effective policing can be achieved only by building stronger relations with the public. To this end, the campaign elements will touch upon issues such as transparency, corruption, cooperation between the citizens and the police, and community policing, as well as promote the police emergency number 122, reiterating the message that the police are always there in time of need.

"The campaign is designed to overcome the 'invisible barriers' that exist between police and citizens in BiH," says Monja Koluder, EUPM Spokesperson. "In any developed democratic soci-

To demonstrate just this kind of cooperation, BiH police and political officials, citizens and media will join EUPM at the launch of the “*Your Police*” campaign in Sarajevo on February 12. ■

Newcomers

The Mission wishes a warm welcome to the following colleagues who have recently arrived from Slovenia and Germany.



SLOVENIA



Alojz MULEC, 38, joined EUPM as an **Adviser in Field Office Livno**. He came from Slovenia where he finished the Secondary school for police officers in Ljubljana. Before joining the police, he had been working as a toolmaker. With 18 years in the force, Mulec has a broad police experience, having worked as a patrol leader, shift leader, crime investigator, patrolling, controlling traffic safety, controlling public order, as well as being involved in community policing. His previous international police mission experience includes participation in UNMIK peace keeping mission in Kosovo in 2006 - 2007. When asked what motivated him to join the EUPM, Mulec said "As I mentioned, I've already been in peace keeping mission once. Facing or trying to solve all predictable and unpredictable problems which can occur during our work is always a big challenge for all. But if we know how to share information, listen and motivate all involved, then we are on good way to manage it. Sharing the knowledge which is present in this international environment is the benefit for all counterparts. And therefore, a chance to participate in EUPM is a big honour and pleasure". He has been married for seven years and has two children, Uros (5) and Grega (9). His favourite free time activities are climbing and running.



Darko LESJAK, 46, joined EUPM as **Team Leader in Field Office Brcko**. He is from Slovenia and his education background includes a degree in Law and baccalaureate in Police and Security Studies. He has joined the national police when he was 19 years old. He holds the rank of Chief Police Inspector and before being deployed to EUPM, he was working in various positions in the Slovenian police, including those of the deputy police station commander and the police station commander. In 1999, he joined the Security and Protection Bureau and took the position of the Head of the Department for Protection of V.I.P Premises. From 2004, he was the senior police inspector in the Department for Security Planning and International Police Missions, responsible for EU police missions. His previous international police mission experience includes work as Senior Police Advisor in OSCE FYRoM 2001 - 2003, Chief Co-locator in PROXIMA FYRoM 2006, and Police Adviser in EUPAT FYRoM 2007. When asked what motivated him to join

EUPM, Lesjak said: "With my knowledge of BiH background and experiences from a similar mission in FYRoM, I can help the EUPM mission to reach the goals. I want to share my experiences with others and also to get new experiences from internationals and nationals which I can use back home. To be a part of the mission is a big challenge for me". He is married, with four children: a 24-year-old son and three daughters aged 21, five and one-and-a-half. His favourite free time activities are playing football, skiing and swimming.



GERMANY



Michael Kresse, 40, joined EUPM as an **Adviser in Field Office Mostar**. In his native Germany, he joined the police after obtaining a university degree in 1994, and has been working for the State Criminal Office Brandenburg since 1997. Throughout his career, he worked as a leader of different investigation groups dealing with cases of Islamic terrorism and terrorist associations, and was responsible as a project manager for the implementation of undercover investigations for the special branch. Furthermore, he is in charge of elaborating of strategic analysis regarding Islamic terrorism for the Ministry of Interior Brandenburg. Kresse's previous international mission experience includes working for EUPM in 2006/2007, as the Crime Advisor in the Federal Ministry of Interior in Sarajevo, in charge of monitoring counterterrorism and war crime cases. He is married as of recently, but already father of two little daughters. As for the favourite pastime, before he became a father, he used to travel around the world, but now he spends time with his family.



Oliver Erdmann, 43, joined EUPM as a **SIPA Adviser in Sarajevo**. Back in Germany, he is a Detective Chief Inspector in Hamburg police, currently managing a team in the Human Trafficking Section within the Organised Crime Office of the State Crime Police. In his 25 years as a police officer, Erdmann also worked in the Narcotics Division and the Special Operations Unit. As for international experience, he worked with EUPM in 2004/ 2005 as a Programme Manager CID in Federal Ministry of Interior in Sarajevo. Erdmann is single with a 17-year-old daughter. His favourite free time activities are scuba diving, photography, working out and travelling. ■

Zoom: EUPM Border Police Department

Example of

They say that the greatest compliment you can get is the trust of your peers, and if that is true, EU Police Mission's Border Police Department received accolades. BiH Border Police regards their EUPM colleagues a team with the highest level of professionalism.

"Our counterparts from BiH recently revealed that they consider us as some kind of 'best of' team," says Chief Adviser to Border Police, Karl-Heinz Schenk. "We can be proud that we have not only been accepted, but that we are also considered professionals, which makes it easier to advise our counterparts. They follow our proposals and listen to our recommendations since we are seen as their partners."

"But still," he adds, "for me, the biggest advantage while performing my duties is that I have the possibility to work with this team."

Different nations, various people, one team

As it is common within EUPM, Border Police team also consists of people from many different countries, different nationalities.

"We see ourselves as the best European practice," says Schenk proudly. "It is the combination of everything - people from Bosnia, from the European Union and the contributing states - what makes it so exciting to work here."

This department is also proud of their professionalism, especially considering the fact that many of their team members were not dealing with border police issues before they joined the mission.

"We resolve our issues in an open discussion and work together like one big family," stresses Border Police Deputy Chief Adviser, Romana Fabbro, who joined the team recently, after serving in missions in Kosovo, Russia and Romania.

"Our way of working improves our professionalism and even reflects on our personal lives," she adds.

Klaus Groebel, Border Police Adviser responsible for issues regarding human resources and trainings, says that his personal every-day challenge is to coordinate not only the work of 20 people within the department, but also their counterparts.

Best European Practices



■ EUPM Border Police Department (left to right): Marcel Cervinka, Thomas Van Brakel, Romana Fabbro, Karl-Heinz Schenk, Mirela Sakovic, Sanja Lepic, Aleksandra Jovanovic, Samir Hadzimosic, Martin Caballo Gago, Klaus Groebel, Sinan Tuncel.

"There are a lot of things going on 'behind the curtain' that we are aware of, which take a lot of time and effort," stresses Groebel.

But everything is easier when you are surrounded by people you can count on.

"On a more personal note, I must underline my satisfaction of being a part of such team", says Groebel, while his colleague, Marcel Cervinka, who works as the Border Police Adviser, nods in agreement, saying that "this department is one of the best that I have ever worked with."

Aiding hands

This is the fourth mission for Cervinka, but he still considers the work in an international environment a great professional opportunity, where one can always learn something new.

"To be honest, we have never had any interpersonal problems, misunderstandings or cases when the colleagues are simply not on the same track. And I am very amazed that this is the case since this is not my first mission and I was always facing those issues before," he points out. "We are being strongly supported by our Chief Advisor and other managerial staff

members regardless of the problems we are facing. It makes our work so much easier since we know that there is always somebody who is keeping our back."

The international staff members in this department see their national colleagues as the "backbone of the department", which provides their unit stability and continuity since they work for EUPM much longer than their international fellows.

"We surely face a lot of challenges, first of all since the deadlines are often very tight, but I find it actually interesting to work under pressure, especially because of the team," adds Assistant to Chief Advisor Mirela Sakovic, reiterating the pleasure of working in such a healthy atmosphere and inspiring environment.

"Our Chief is always allowing us to make decisions and giving us a chance to organise ourselves better, and this is what helps us 'grow' in a professional and personal way," she explains. "But what we appreciate the most is the possibility to give our contribution to the work of the

Mission that is here to help our country. It is a benefit for all of us to work for an organisation such as EUPM."

"It is a privilege to work with so many different international colleagues and exchange our experiences," notes her colleague Sanja Lepic.

Matter of staffing

The only thing which represents a small obstacle for the work of EUPM Border Police Department is that the Call for Contribution was not very satisfactory.

"One international position in each of our five Regional Field Offices is still vacant and we have no expectations that we will be receiving any new colleagues in the future. One of our national staff members has also been re-deployed to another department which additionally increased the workload in our department," explains Schenk.

"If we want to achieve the goals, we have to face that the workload for all of us will be even higher this year," he adds,

reminding that it should not be a problem since every member of

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his team feels highly responsible for the work from their areas of expertise.

"They receive guidelines, but manage to work completely independently."

Currently, EUPM Border Police Department is assessing and analysing the present situation in order to

create their operational goals for the forthcoming months. Their biggest challenge this year would be to move forward with their counterparts from BiH Border Police by following their objectives.

"We will also accompany them while evaluating those goals," concludes Schenk.

The international staff members at EUPM Border Police Department appreciate the possibility of spending a year abroad, but they all agree that the saddest thing will be that they will not be able to see the final results of their work since EUPM is closing its doors in December 2009.

"But still, this is once in a lifetime experience." ■

Sarajevo Winter Festival Celebrates Life

Many who have seen it will agree that there are very few things in this world as beautiful as a night in Sarajevo covered in first snow. There is just something about how the city quiets down, about the inner happiness one feels while watching the snowflakes twirl in the city lights, hears the ecstatic laughter of children sledging down a steep street, shaking powdery snow off of the laden birch branches as they dash by. On the night of the first snow, Sarajevo is a place of wide grins, rosy cheeks, loud laughter, hot chocolate, romance, poets and peace.

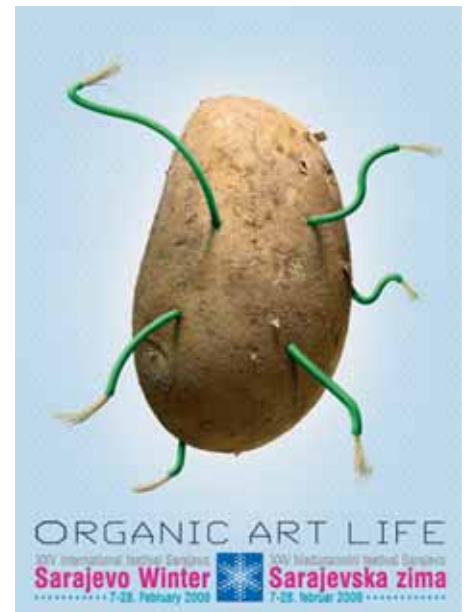
Only after you have seen the city in this sparkly form, you can understand why Sarajevo has for 24 years now been a setting of the International Winter Festival. This city is a perfect background for the festival, which introduces a multitude of exceptional presentations of artists' work and achievements, giving them an opportunity to promote urban culture, whilst preserving tradition.

This February will see the opening of

the XXV Sarajevo Winter Festival, named *Organic Art Life*. The theme will encircle several jubilees, marking the year of Haydn, the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, as well as 25th anniversary of the 14th Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo. The festival will also be dedicated to the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

The *Organic Art Life* theme is illustrated by posters depicting a potato with sprouts, once part of the local folklore as a medicine for headaches and fevers. The history of the symbiotic relationship between the human being and the nature will be practically demonstrated through a variety of exhibitions, performances and concerts. Special treat will be a market on the Sarajevo National Theatre square, where visitors will be able to buy both vegetables and books. All proceeds from the market go to the children of Gaza.

In tribute of their EU Presidency, Czech Republic is the honorary guest of the Sarajevo Winter, and a part of the Festival's program will be dedicated to former



Czech president, Václav Havel.

The Sarajevo Winter Festival will run from February 7-28. We will bring you the must-sees in the next issues, but you can always find additional information about the events and venues on the SWF's official website: www.sarajevskazima.ba (English version available). ■

Happy Birthday!

Our Commissioner
Stefan Feller

celebrated his first step
into the fifth decade on
Wednesday, January 28!

Through this, we would
like to wish him a belated,
but still very happy birthday
from the entire mission.

Dear Commissioner,
we hope you enjoyed the day,
and hope you will enjoy the
year ahead with us even more!

Night for Hope

On February 13, in Dom Armije, Project MUCHH - Music and Color for Hope and Healing - is organizing the *Night of Wine and Music*, aimed at raising funds for the new Pediatric Cancer Ward opening in Jezero at the end of the month. The event will offer both local and international wines and cuisine, as well as a parade of children in the BiH national costumes.

The tickets for the *Night of Wine and Music* are 50KM, and all the proceeds will go towards refurbishing the Pediatric Cancer Ward, creating a warm and friendly environment that can help reduce anxiety and promote healing in sick children.

For ticket inquiries, email:
ProjectMUCHH@gmail.com



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