

Bosnia-EU association agreement initialed

by UPI

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina -- The European Union and the Bosnian government have initialed an association agreement, seen as a step toward EU membership. The stabilization and association agreement was initialed by EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn and Bosnia-Herzegovina Prime Minister Nikola Spiric in Sarajevo Tuesday, the Serbian news agency Beta reported Wednesday. Rehn told reporters all 27 EU member countries had expressed their consent with the motion, which he described as a move toward membership candidate status. The initialing of the EU association accord followed months of tense negotiations among Bosnia-Herzegovina's Muslim, Serbs and Croats that ended in agreement on federal police reforms and on amended rules that should make decision-making in central bodies more efficient. The U.S.-brokered Dayton peace accords ended the 1992-95 ethnic wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which created a single state made up of two entities, the Serb-run Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croatian federation. The two entities have their own governments and a central Bosnian government with a rotating presidency.

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