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### **Press Release for Immediate Release**

#### Operation Commander Farewell Parade

On the 18 February 2014, at EUFOR Camp Butmir, Sarajevo, a Farewell Parade was held for the '4 star' EUFOR Althea Operation Commander, General Sir Richard Shirreff. Attendees included the incoming Operation Commander, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw and the Commander of EUFOR, Major General Dieter Heidecker.

#### Major General Heidecker thanked General Shirreff

General Shirreff has held the role of NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe since March 2011 and is therefore the EUFOR Althea Operation Commander and has regularly visited BiH to meet politicians from all sides in the country.

Major General Heidecker said thankfully:

"During his time as Operation Commander, General Shirreff has pushed forward with the project to dispose of surplus arms, weapons and explosives, but his main effort was in the development of capacity building and training for the Armed Forces of BiH.

#### Progress is needed

On BiH, General Shirreff said:

"I remain deeply disappointed that we are not seeing political progress in BiH – Croatia is a full EU member and, despite their differences, even Serbia and Kosovo are determined to join the EU. In many ways, BiH is going backwards as the recent demonstrations have shown. These riots should be a 'wake-up call' for BiH politicians and Foreign missions in BiH will only end when a political solution is reached which is acceptable to all parties and does not threaten the stability of the country and the region. EUFOR, the EUSR, NATO and others in the International Community will continue to assist towards Euro-Atlantic integration."

#### Some Positives

General Shirreff said:

"We are however beginning to see some progress with the disposal of surplus ammunition, weapons and explosives under the energetic leadership of Defence Minister Osmic and Major General Jelic and it has been positive to see Bosnian 'Brothers in Arms', putting aside their ethnic differences and operating in that most difficult and dangerous of theatres, Afghanistan.

On EUFOR and Major General Heidecker, General Shirreff said:

“Major General Heidecker is a soldiers’ soldier and under his leadership, EUFOR has consistently demonstrated professional excellence, such as with the LOT Houses, which recently provided much needed situational awareness, and with the Capacity Building and Training for the Armed Forces of BiH.”

New Operation Commander

General Sir Adrian Bradshaw, who has previously served in BiH, will take over from General Sir Richard Shirreff as the NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe in March 2014 and will therefore be the new EUFOR Althea Operation Commander.

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