Introduction

The Reconstruction and Return Task Force (RRTF) provides policy and resource allocation guidance, and recommends actions in support of sustainable returns. The reports here show the development of the RRTF itself and of international community policy in support of the return of refugees and displaced persons in BiH.

The current priorities of the RRTF are as follows:

- **Implementation of Property Legislation**: Legislative amendments imposed by the High Representative in October 1999 put in place a uniform legal structure across both entities with regard to the repossession of property and the Property Legislation Implementation Plan (PLIP)remains a key instrument for achieving progress in minority return.
- **Spontaneous Returns**: The momentum of spontaneous returns witnessed in 1999 and 2000 is continuing in 2001. Among other support mechanisms, flexible funding, so that assistance is timely and adequate, continues to be important to create an environment for spontaneous returns. RRTF works with donors to target funding towards return movements. But return movements also require security, and in addition to the stabilising presence of SFOR in BiH, effective and impartial local policing is required in return areas. RRTF supports the targeted recruitment and training of minority ethnicity police officers that is being undertaken by UNMIBH with the RS and FBiH Interior Ministries, by working with donors to prioritise reconstruction for returning police officers and through nationwide recruitment campaigns.
- **Sustainability**: Sustaining return is about creating the right social conditions for returnees. These conditions include access to employment, health, education and basic utilities and services. The particular focus of the RRTF is on creating economic opportunities for returnees e.g. SME (Small and Medium Enterprise) credits.
- **Regional Returns**: Since more than half the current number of refugees from BiH are presently residing in Croatia and FRY and, in turn, a substantial number of refugees from Croatia and FRY are still living in BiH any progress requires two-way solutions. RRTF continues to work with regional governments and the Stability Pact to eliminate any obstructions to cross border return within the region.

Overarching these priorities is the concept of transfer of “ownership” to the authorities of BiH and the need for greater engagement of local players in return planning and implementation. RRTF is working increasingly closely with the state and entity bodies responsible for facilitating return to ensure sustainable solutions are created.