# OHR 3rd Federation Meeting on the Central Bosnia Canton, 14 Oct. 1997

## Third Federation Meeting on the Central Bosnia Canton

## Chairman's Conclusions

On 14 October 1997, Federation President Soljic, Vice-President Ganic, Federation Prime Minister Bicakcic and his Deputy Bilandzija, Deputy Minister for Refugees Ljubic and Assistant Minister Garib, Minister of Interior Zilic and his Deputy Leutar, Governor Saric of the Central Bosnia Canton and his Deputy Terzic and other Canton officials met to discuss the situation in the Canton. The meeting was chaired by Principal Deputy High Representative Ambassador Klein. UNHCR Chief of Mission Pirlot, SRSG Ambassador Eide, UN IPTF Commissioner Seitner, COSSFOR General Widder and OSCE Deputy Head of Mission Jenness also attended.

Recalling the conclusions of the Second Federation Meeting on Central Bosnia on 27 August, the participants reviewed progress in the area of returns and in the establishment of the Joint Cantonal Police. They particularly remembered late Ambassador Wagner's efforts to facilitate return in the Central Bosnia Canton.

The Canton Minister for Social Welfare, Displaced Persons and Refugees introduced the Central Bosnia Return Programme which has been approved by the Canton Government and submitted to the Canton Assembly. The participants welcomed the programme and an operational plan for the first phase of returns drafted by the co-ordinating body consisting of the competent Canton Ministries. The participants particularly welcomed the Minister's statement that villages where immediate return could take place had been identified, and called on the police to take necessary measures to provide a secure environment for returnees and on donors for reconstruction support.

The only municipality that had not submitted a jointly agreed plan for returns in the first phase was Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje. The participants opposed any linkages between the implementation of Annex 7 of the Peace Agreement and unresolved political questions and called on Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje authorities, particularly the Bosniak side, to submit a plan within three days. The Federation President and Vice President as well as the Federation Prime Minister stated they would personally ensure that this municipality would comply with the three day time span.

The Federation Prime Minister announced a further allocation of 500.000 DEM from the Federation budget to support returns in the Canton. The participants were informed about a meeting of donors that had been convened by UNHCR, OHR and the Federation Presidency in Sarajevo on 5 September to provide information about return planning in Central Bosnia. In order to update donors about developments, the participants agreed that the finalised return programme will be submitted to donors by the Cantonal Ministry for Refugees. The Canton co-ordinating body will call a meeting in Travnik of the international actors in the Canton within the next week with the support of UNHCR. A further meeting of major donors will be called by the Office of the High Representative within a week from this at which priorities for reconstruction will be presented.

The participants further agreed on the following: Municipalities, in co-ordination with Cantonal authorities, will maximally support immediate returns to empty houses under the first part of the first phase of the Return Programme, and make operational plans for further phases of the programme. To this end, municipalities will complete surveys of all types of housing, including houses inhabited by displaced persons and socially owned apartments, by 14 November. All municipalities are to establish returnee information centres, as regulated by Federation legislation and as defined in the Return Programme.

Regarding the safety of returnees, the participants deplored further mine incidents in the Jajce area, one of which resulted in a fatality, as well as murders in the Travnik area. They supported measures taken by the government with regard to police authorities.

They reiterated their commitment to establish a fully operational Joint Cantonal Police in all municipalities of the Canton without any further delay, and expressed their concern that in some municipalities the slow introduction of the Canton Police endangers progress achieved in the field of the Cantonal Return Programme for refugees and displaced persons.

On outstanding police issues, the OHR and the UN IPTF Commissioner will, by 18 October, submit solutions to the participants which will contain binding provisions for the full introduction of the restructured Cantonal police, to be implemented by 25 October.

The participants finally welcomed the official opening of the Federation Ombudsmen’s office in Travnik on 9 October.

The participants decided to meet again on 18 November to review progress.