

OHR's Statement at the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference in Banja Luka

BiH must win loyalty of its citizens

As you know, the HR will deliver a speech on Friday morning at a Conference entitled ten years of Dayton and Beyond in Geneva, the first conference organized to mark the 10th anniversary of Dayton.

The HR will speak about the achievements of BiH in the last decade and what needs to be done in future: BiH is about to enter negotiations on SAA and is deepen its relations with NATO thus moving into a new era, marking a decisive shift away from the post-war Dayton reality.

The HR will emphasize that there is still a long way to go, but the worst is behind BiH. He will say that the basic institutions necessary for the smooth functioning of the state have been established – now they have to be made properly functional. This means reducing the cost of government, optimizing expenditure by eliminating the duplication of services across different tiers of the sprawling administrative system, and bringing civil service salaries into line with the country's capacity to pay.

He will say that once the SAA process is secured, the need for constitutional change will become more apparent. He will say that Bosnia and Herzegovina has perhaps come as far as it can under its present constitutional apparatus; and it now must make changes that will allow it to continue on the path towards full sovereignty and stability, and above all which

will channel funds away from government and directly to citizens. He will say that no state can win the loyalty of its citizens when it spends 70 percent of their taxes on government and only 30 percent on services to the people themselves.

HR will emphasize that where necessary, through dialogue and consensus, constitutional changes need to be made.

But the High Representative will repeat that change can only come through consensus among the peoples. It cannot be imposed and done by outsiders. The object of of the current phase that will see BiH transitioning towards the EU must be to create a state that puts its citizens first, not its politicians, he will say.