

OHR's Statement at the International Agency's Joint Press Conference in Mostar

Tomorrow's Debate Crucial For BiH War Crimes Prosecutions

The BiH House of Peoples will tomorrow discuss the set of legislative amendments which will enable the processing of war crimes cases before the Court of BiH. This package of laws was adopted by the House of Representatives last week. These laws are essential for the establishment of BiH's War Crimes Chamber.

The OHR urges BiH's Parliamentarians to ensure that they meet the end of September deadline for the passage of this legislation which will enable the BIH Court 's War Crimes Chamber to be established operational in January 2005. It would be intolerable if the future of this country and its citizens were jeopardised by politicians putting short term electoral gain ahead of reforms that will have a long term benefit.

The War Crimes Chamber Project was launched in early 2003 and 16.1 million Euros has been pledged by international donors for this endeavor. There will be special chambers in the Court of BiH and a Special Department in the Office of the Prosecutor of BiH which will be responsible for prosecuting and trying these cases. International judges and prosecutors will work with BiH judges and prosecutors in the existing BiH institutions. This is not going to be an international tribunal. These funds were pledged by international donors to help BiH institutions build their capacity to deal with War Crimes cases. Funds will be used for capital expenditures e.g the building of secure courtrooms in the Court of BiH and support to the Court and Prosecutors Office of BiH and

establishment of the Registry which will be responsible for administration of the project. The Registry system, which is used world-wide to ensure trials are fair, would, during the transitional period, report to the BiH Ministry of Justice. In this way the financial support of 39 mill Euros would be secured.

Economic Seminar in Trebinje

OHR has funded the organization of the Single Economic Space in BiH Phase two Seminar in Trebinje. Single Economic Space Project is to give assistance to the State of BiH in the consolidation of a Single Economic Space within its territory, thereby facilitating the prospects of BiH to become a Member of the EU.

The goal of Trebinje Seminar was to start the introduction of the Laws, regulations, institutions and technical infrastructure, which are regulating the safety of the product for the view of human and animal health protection, environment protection and interest of the consumers by the EU model. The Seminar was organized for businessmen and local authorities from the Herzegovina region.