

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

Need to fulfill international obligations

OHR would just like to respond to recent comments in the media that cooperation with ICTY will be empty talk until SFOR establishes joint operations with BiH authorities.

In the OHR's view, this sounds like just another excuse for not doing anything.

BiH is under an international obligation to arrest PIFWCS, and the RS in particular is failing to uphold that obligation.

Based on the Hague indictments, SFOR have arrested nearly 30 PIFWCS from the RS. The fact remains that the RS authorities have not arrested a single one. It is not acceptable that the serious efforts to uphold international law and arrest leading indicted war criminals have been carried out by the international community, and that the citizens of BiH should continue to pay the price for the irresponsibility of their politicians. The RS authorities will need to demonstrate that they are serious about carrying out operations to detain PIFWCS before the Istanbul summit at the end of June if BiH is to have any chance of changing the perception that BiH is not serious about upholding its international obligations.

The OHR expects the RS Minister of Police Zoran Djeric, and the RS Director of Police, to continue to authorise and undertake operations against PIFWCS as a matter of urgency. Unless the RS shows a dramatic change in their attitude and delivers results instead of excuses, they are putting this country's future in Europe at risk.

Cantons have no excuse

The FBiH Constitutional Court has now rejected the VNI objections by the HDZ in Canton 6 to harmonising the primary and secondary education law of the Canton with that of the state of BiH.

Canton 6 therefore now has no excuse for not bringing their legislation governing primary and secondary schools into line with the state law. If they do not do this, they are bringing themselves into direct conflict with the State of BiH and its international obligations, as are the other cantons that have not yet harmonised their legislation.

This is about the Rule of Law and the international obligations of this country. It is worth noting that the State level framework Law was unanimously adopted by all political parties in parliament last June.

The laws of BiH, and the constitution of BiH, must be upheld by the cantons. Otherwise, the OHR will be forced to hold to account those in Cantons 2, 6, 7, 8 and 10 should they continue to undermine the constitutional order of BiH.