

Opening Remarks by Supervisor of Brcko, Ambassador Henry L. Clarke at Press Conference

I must again extend my deepest condolences, this time to the family and friends of Emir Suvalic, who was killed by a mine near Gornje Dubravice on Monday. The Brcko District has more mines than almost any other place in Bosnia and Herzegovina – probably over half a million. It is one of the greatest dangers left to us by the recent war. I want to emphasize, in response to this tragic accident, the responsibility of all adults and children in the District to be aware that these mines still represent a threat to the lives and safety of our people and that proper precautions must be taken.

Last week there were very important meetings of the Primary Education Quality Board, and of the Education Collegium for secondary schools. You already have, I believe, the texts of my remarks to these bodies. Representatives of the Ministry of Education of the Federation, and the Minister of Education of the Republika Srpska, attended these meetings and made very favorable comments on the work of harmonizing the curricula of Brcko schools, which is largely completed. Based on their comments, I feel sure that we will have no problems with the recognitions with the recognition of Brcko District diplomas next year. We will continue to inform both entities about all of our work to restructure education and they are invited to participate as much as they wish.

The work of the two coordinating bodies continues, and even today they are working on the plans for enrollment of pupils in the primary and secondary schools for next year. When the planning is completed, I am sure they will share the results promptly with the parents and the general public. I want to

emphasize that the process of preparing the harmonized curriculum has not been a theoretical exercise: Brcko classroom teachers have been closely involved in the process throughout. And I want to thank them, especially, for their outstanding work.

It is my pleasure to announce that Mr. Esad Atic has been appointed Head of the Department of Education in the government of Brcko. There were many well qualified candidates for this job. The interviewing panel chose Mr. Atic as the best overall candidate for the very broad responsibilities of this position.