



Partnership between public, private and civil sectors essential to ensuring a bright future for Brčko District

Principal Deputy High Representative and Brčko Supervisor Michael Scanlan met on Sunday with representatives of the Brčko-based NGO network “Promote Positive” to discuss how the civil sector can contribute to reversing the negative trends, including corruption, that have dominated life in Brčko the past years.

The Supervisor underscored that positive changes for the entire community can only be achieved through partnership between the public, private and civil sectors, with the private sector being the driving force of the economy with well-paying jobs and new investment initiatives.

The good news is that positive steps have been made. The adoption of a new Law on Budget in December last year and the adoption of a new law on foundations and associations this spring will contribute to fiscal discipline and make sure that grants go to associations whose engagement clearly benefits the community. The Supervisor welcomed the public commitment by representatives of the District executive and legislative authorities as well as all political parties to work towards this objective and fully adhere to the principles of transparency, responsibility and public interest already in the 2020 budget adoption process.

Proper targeting is also an essential component of the budget process. Considering that Brčko District has already completed energy audits for 187 public buildings, there are no obstacles to include immediately those essential to all District citizens – such as the Brčko Hospital – into the UNDP energy efficiency projects and through retrofitting help improve the quality of conditions for Hospital patients and staff.

Good governance, however, is not only about having good laws and public interest-guided budget allocations. All segments of society need to get involved. Citizens have a vital role in reporting corruption. Journalists need to be able to work independently and without pressure. NGOs should help make elections matter by engaging as observers on Election Day. And stakeholders must be involved when drafting new legislation.

On this note, the Supervisor informed his interlocutors in Brčko this weekend that a new meeting between the Brčko Chief Prosecutor, the Chief of Brčko Police, Representative of the FBI/U.S. Embassy's Office of the Legal Attaché and the U.S. Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor for the U.S. Embassy will take place in Brčko at the end of this month, as part of ongoing efforts to help the District strengthen the rule of law and ensure accountability of public institutions.