

## **Supervisor welcomes Brčko authorities' continued prioritization of stopping COVID-19**

Principal Deputy High Representative and Brčko District Supervisor Michael Scanlan welcomes the adoption of the 2020 Brčko District budget in advance of the expiration of temporary financing and in line with the Law on Budget adopted last December.

"Ensuring the uninterrupted financing and unimpeded functioning of the District institutions is a vital contribution to the District's and overall BiH's efforts to confront the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, in adopting the budget and the law on its execution, the groundwork has been laid for generating close to BAM 40 million to be used for preventive purposes but also for mitigating medical as well as economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. It is also notable that – at the proposal of the District Government – the District Assembly discussed today measures to support the economy in these extraordinary circumstances, thus being the first legislator in BiH to take up this issue."

"I commend the District authorities for their demonstrated leadership, responsibility and commitment to good governance and the well-being of the citizens. They have set a positive example for other levels of government, including their counterparts at the State level who need to follow suit and promptly adopt the 2020 budget of the BiH institutions and international obligations of BiH," added the Supervisor.

In addition to dedicating necessary resources and taking targeted measures, Supervisor Scanlan underscores the importance of close cooperation and coordination of all levels of government in these challenging times. Regrettably, Brčko has seen its first confirmed cases of COVID-19 this week. The Supervisor urges all institutions and citizens to strictly follow the instructions by relevant authorities and medical experts. An informed and responsible approach is of the essence, and the Supervisor reiterates that he, the High Representative and the entire OHR staff are following experts' guidelines as BiH is still weeks away from knowing how broadly COVID-19 has spread.

Scanlan invites citizens and officials alike to keep their spirits up and work together in these challenging times. In this respect, he welcomes yesterday's announcement in Brčko by Ilija Studen, President of the "STUDEN & CO Holding" Board, that the "Bimal" agro-industrial complex has the necessary resources for the uninterrupted supply of cooking oil and sugar for the entire country for at least six months

The Supervisor also urges those institutions and officials who are not directly involved in combating the coronavirus to continue working in their respective fields, to the extent possible and while observing instructions for restricted exposure, on good governance, infrastructure development and private-sector reforms which will be the basis for a quick recovery of the Brčko economy after the COVID-19 crisis.