

Statement by Brcko Supervisor Roderick Moore at a Press Conference in Brcko

Brcko Supervisor Roderick Moore's press statement on corruption at joint press conference with Brcko District Mayor, Prosecutor, Deputy Speaker and Deputy Chief of Police in Brcko on 23 November 2011

Over two years ago, the international community concluded that the institutions of District are functioning effectively and apparently permanently.

This conclusion marked an important milestone in the evolution of Brcko District, the culmination of many years of successful reforms. This conclusion was also important as a step toward the eventual end of the special international role in Brcko.

This conclusion has been tested heavily over the last several months, which saw perhaps the worst political crisis in the District since its establishment.

And it will face perhaps its most rigorous test in the coming months.

In question is whether or not the law enforcement and judicial institutions of the District are willing and capable of aggressively fighting corruption and of punishing those who violate the public trust and steal from the public coffers.

I have been struck by the deep skepticism felt by many people in Brcko – people from all strata of society – who doubt that their institutions are up to the job. I have been struck by the prevailing conviction that powerful people in the District are above the law.

Operation Bingo offers an opportunity for the institutions to demonstrate to the citizens that they are indeed up to the job, that they are above politics, and that they truly deserve the confidence that has been placed in them.

I do not know, of course, whether or not those individuals that are being investigated are guilty, nor is it my role to assess their guilt or innocence.

I do know, however, that the law enforcement and judicial institutions here are under the microscope – how they handle this case will deeply affect the views of the citizens and of the international community as to how effective those institutions truly are.

The standard is not a high one. All that is expected is that the prosecutors and courts will deliver justice fairly and treat the suspects in this case they would any other citizen of this District – and regardless of their name, ethnicity, party affiliation, or position in the political life of this community.

If the judicial organs of the District fail the test before them, it will be a major setback for democratic development in Brcko. It would send a signal to the international community that the judicial organs are not truly independent and free of inappropriate influence. More importantly, it would confirm to the citizens of this District that justice is administered selectively and unfairly.

I am happy that Brcko District Mayor Miroslav Gavric, Prosecutor Zekerija Mujkanovic, Deputy Chief of Police Fahrudin Selimovic and Deputy Speaker Ivan Krndelj have joined me here today. Their presence today signals to me – and I hope, to the citizens of the District – the support of the District's leadership for the fight against corruption and ensuring that the rule of law is honored to the highest degree.

I am glad to hear from them about the concrete steps they will undertake in fighting corruption in the forthcoming period – the Mayor have been talking about action plan for fighting corruption and the Deputy Speaker about the Assembly's initiative for fighting corruption. I am grateful for their efforts and courage they have shown.

Thank you.