

Electricity Connection For All



James Lynch, the UNHCR's Representative in BiH, and Peter Bas Backer, the OHR's Senior Deputy High Representative (SDHR), visited villages in the Zvornik and Sapna Municipalities today to meet returnees who, since returning to their homes, have been without electricity. Return to these areas began in 2000.

The UNHCR Representative and the SDHR today met with returnees, representatives of the local authorities and the management of the electricity distribution companies to find a solution for those who have been living without electricity for six years now.

"The return process is no longer a question of good will shown by donors but a social issue that the BiH authorities are obliged to resolve," said the SDHR today. "The BiH authorities must mobilize their own funds to rebuild the infrastructure needed for normal life, and to assist those people who have had the courage to return in very difficult circumstances."

The villages of Gornja Kamenica, Djulici, Radava and Rastonica visited today by the UNHCR Representative and the SDHR are but a few of the many return sites in the country where the sustainability of the return is being challenged by the lack of electricity infrastructure.

"It is unacceptable that eleven years after the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, with the country on the threshold of

contractual relations with the European Union, these people still do not have access to basic services", said UNHCR Representative James Lynch. "I hope that officials in this area have recognised their responsibility in this matter".

Peter Bas Backer and James Lynch expressed their hope that the electricity supply to these areas will be connected soon. "We have seen positive results in Strgacina in a very similar situation" said the UNHCR Representative.