

OHR's Statement at the International Agency's Joint Press Conference in Mostar

Political Directors meeting

The Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council will meet at the OHR in Sarajevo tomorrow afternoon and on Friday. They will review the progress that has been made in BiH's reform programme since the last PIC Political Directors' meeting in September. On Friday morning Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic and other ministers will take part in the discussions. ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla del Ponte will also brief the political directors on Friday morning. There will be a photo opportunity on Friday morning.

High Representative and ICTY Chief Prosecutor Visit State Court

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, will tomorrow meet with the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte. Tomorrow afternoon they will visit the Court of BiH, where reconstruction work on the physical infrastructure needed to start war crimes trials in the Court's Special War Crimes Chamber is ongoing. The High Representative and the ICTY's Chief Prosecutor will meet with the BiH Court's President, Medzida Kreho and the BiH Chief Prosecutor, Marinko Jurcevic.

The BiH Court is a key element of the reform of the Rule of Law in BiH. The Court has a mandate to deal with War Crimes and the most serious organized crimes case. Completing the establishment of the Court of BiH is one of the key focus areas that the High Representative announced in his first speech to Parliament in May 2002. The BiH War Crimes Chamber

plays a major role in the ICTY's mandate completion plan and is due to take on cases from the ICTY early next year.

The War Crimes Chamber Project has been developed in co-ordination with the BiH authorities, the ICTY and the OHR. A sum of 16.1 million Euros was pledged by donors in the Hague in October 2003 for physical reconstruction, start-up costs and running costs for the first two years of the Chamber's existence. Substantial additional funds will be required to continue the Chamber into the future and international donors have pledged to revisit this requirement once the Chamber had been set up. To make sure that this Chamber gains the benefit of years of international war crimes tribunal experience the project foresees a strong international presence during the first two years that will gradually decline during years three to five and thereafter this specialised Chamber and the corresponding department in the BiH Prosecutors Office will be fully BiH staffed institutions.

A media advisory with details of the media opportunities during this visit will be issued later in the day.