

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

Banja Luka press conference

12 August 2004

OHR welcomes BHTV1 channel

Tomorrow will see the launch of the BHTV1 channel – a welcome and important step forward for public broadcasting in BiH.

This channel will serve all citizens of BiH. It will provide programming that covers the entire spectrum of domestic and international culture and entertainment, in the languages of the peoples of BiH. The fact that it will launch its programming with state-of-the-art broadcasting of the Olympic Games gives a flavour of the kind of service BHTV1 will be able to offer the citizens of this country.

This is the first time since the war that citizens have been able to watch this programming across the whole territory of BiH. This is the culmination of years of hard work and the OHR extends its congratulations to all those involved. While initially the channel will have a limited programme schedule it will develop with time.

This is also an important requirement of the EC's Feasibility Study, which calls for a single unified public broadcasting system that is self-sustainable, viable and state-wide and precludes divisions.

It is now essential that the BiH Parliament adopts the PBS

legislation in a format that will meet the Feasibility Study requirements. These new laws improve existing legislation in the areas of the system's financing, management and use of joint infrastructure so ensuring that the PBS will continue to develop