

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

Ruling Coalition Parties and the CoM Must Show Greater Reform Focus

Yesterday the High Representative underlined what is becoming ever more evident; the BiH authorities are missing many of their self imposed deadlines for the start of a Stabilisation and Association agreement, and many of the real deadlines which would make BiH a serious candidate for PfP membership at NATO's summit in Istanbul this summer.

In certain areas the CoM has been making progress; OHR welcomes the fact that at their session today, the CoM will discuss the proposed Law on Prevention of Money Laundering: OHR looks forward to this law being passed into Parliamentary procedure today.

On the other hand, it is with concern that OHR notes that the draft Public Broadcasting System law and the draft BiH RTV law have not been placed on today's CoM agenda.

This is indeed worrying, as the CoM will now reduce its chance to implement these laws according to their own, self-imposed deadlines. It will also significantly reduce the chance of the respective Entity governments preparing and adopting harmonised public broadcasting legislation by the deadlines that again they themselves have set.

As you know a properly funded, independent and modernised BiH wide broadcaster is one of the sixteen requirements for the start of Stabilisation and Association negotiations – BiH needs to accelerate the pace of this reform.

The facts are clear – continue as up to now and the momentum gained last year will be lost. The question that has to be answered is what will the institutions: the Council of Ministers and the Parliaments, but perhaps more crucially, the parties that were elected on a European reform

platform, do now?

Donald Hays attends conference for children with a hearing impairment

For those of you who may be interested, Donald Hays will be taking part in a press conference at the Hotel Bosna at 2.30 this afternoon. The press conference is being organised by a group of doctors working with children who are hearing impaired. Ambassador Hays is working with these doctors in a voluntary capacity.