

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

"GIVE PARLIAMENT A CHANCE"

- The OHR only has one thing for you today. And that is an appeal from the High Representative to those raising concerns about the proposals of the Defence Reform Commission: "Give Parliament a chance"
- The reforms that are being drawn up by the Commission should rightly be debated in parliament, through the democratic process of this country
- But these reforms will never enter parliament, will never be scrutinized by the democratic process, unless the Defence Reform Commission can complete its work and present its proposals to government and parliament
- The OHR believes that the best way to address the concerns that have been raised is through parliament and the democratic process. The High Representative is confident that if we all now take a deep breath, we can find the strength, confidence and statesmanship to compromise
- These proposals are not take-it-or-leave-it. The objective all along has been that these proposals should be discussed in government and ultimately adopted by parliament. If BiH wants to join PfP, it cannot do so on the basis of reforms imposed by the international community
- Let me reiterate what these reforms do for BiH. They take the existing armed forces of BiH, put them under state control and in the same uniform, and march them towards NATO. Miss this opportunity, and you set back BiH's integration into NATO by a very long time

- These reforms are vital for the future of this country, and its future stability. They are a huge opportunity. They should rightly be discussed in the democratic institutions of this country
- Let me end by repeating the HR's message to those preventing the Commission completing its work: "Give Parliament a chance"