

Looting remains a serious problem

Looting of apartments and houses remains a serious problem throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The PLIP agencies (OHR, UNHCR, OSCE and CRPC) in cooperation with ministries of interior are launching a public-information campaign aimed at curbing this problem. Because of looting, many returnees have had to pay for additional repairs or wait for extra practical assistance in order to make their houses habitable again.

The goal of the public-information campaign is to highlight the legal sanctions faced by those who wrongfully remove personal property or fixtures from apartments or houses, or who damage property when they vacate it.

Looting is a criminal act, subject to criminal law. The housing authorities under the property laws have a standing obligation to report cases of looting of apartments or houses to the judicial authorities. Failure to do this, or failure by the judicial authorities to take appropriate measures against such criminal acts, is tantamount to condoning looting.

The campaign will also highlight steps which members of the public can take in order to prevent looting and the actions that members of the public can take if they know that a property is being looted.