

OHR and ICTY Experts Begin Talks on Scope of BiH War Crimes Prosecutions

Senior Deputy High Representative and Head of the Rule of Law Pillar, Bernard Fassier and President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Judge Claude Jorda, today opened a technical conference at the level of senior experts. The conference will look at the issues that need to be addressed to allow the effective prosecution in BiH of those war crimes cases that will not be tried in the ICTY.

The conference will afford the international community the opportunity to understand better the technical requirements of such a process, including the number of cases that will have to be considered, the number of courts that may have to be involved and the financial burden of developing such a capacity.

Both the ICTY and the OHR are committed to assessing jointly the parameters and scope of this issue, the cases to be considered, the costs, the level of international involvement and adaptation of BiH's legal framework

This three-day working meeting is the most recent in a series of meetings held on this issue between the OHR and the ICTY. The High Representative met in Sarajevo in November 2002 with the Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, and in the Hague in December 2002 with the ICTY President, Judge Claude Jorda.

The preliminary conclusions of this working group will be forwarded to the Steeringboard of the Peace Implementation Council, which is due to meet at the level of Political Directors on 30 January.

On the first day participants will consider the number and

nature of cases that may have to be dealt with in BiH and recent developments in Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure Law in BiH.