

# OHR welcomes signing of CIPS contract

The Office of the High Representative welcomes yesterday evening's signing of a contract by the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications and Siemens, on the implementation of the Citizens' Identity Protection System. The CIPS project represents a major breakthrough in administering residency registration and personal-identity documents in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project will also provide the BiH authorities with important tools in the fight against international terrorism, organized crime, and illegal migration – each of which threatens BiH's place in a secure and modern Europe. The OHR would like to commend the leadership and teamwork shown by the Council of Ministers' CIPS Project Team in bringing this project to the implementation stage.

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, has called for the speedy and effective implementation of the project, which is likely to encourage foreign governments to ease visa requirements for BiH citizens. "CIPS will introduce secure EU and international-standard documentation and establish important human-rights safeguards for the protection of personal data. These are crucial elements in the Europeanization process which is the key to BiH's future economic prosperity," the High Representative stated.

The High Representative calls on the authorities to make the necessary preparations for implementing the project, which represents a comprehensive reform of the administration of personal-identity documents in this country.