

OHR Statement On Implementation Of The Sarajevo Declaration

The High Representative wishes to point out that there is no discrepancy between the statement by his office of 8 September on implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration and the discussion on this issue by the Steering Board of the same day.

Indeed, the statement of 8 September was based on the evaluation of progress of the Sarajevo Declaration, prepared for the Steering Board discussions.

The full transcript of the OHR statement delivered at the joint agency press conference, which is available to anyone wishing to comment on this issue, is very clear. It states that there have been returns to some 120 apartments (not "individuals"), from the priority case list of more than 300 cases that are mentioned in the Sarajevo Declaration.

It also states-based on figures collected by the Cantonal authorities-that 1049 families, which amounts to 1752 individuals, had returned to Sarajevo by the end August. These figures have been supplied by the authorities and verified by the UNHCR. If there are different methods or standards for calculating returns, these should be presented in a scientific manner based on reliable data. Whatever the desirable average of number of persons per apartment, the facts are unchanged: a total of 1752 individuals have returned.

Both the Statement of 8 September and the remarks by the High Representative to the Steering Board acknowledged progress, but concluded that more needed to be done. Similarly, both the Statement and the Steering Board discussion held out the possibility of reviewing the freezing of funds to Sarajevo to

reward progress.

Finally, the High Representative wishes to underline that the content of all statements issued by his press and public affairs department is supplied by the experts and reflects the priorities of the High Representative himself.