

## **The Agreement on the Recovery and Identification of Mortal Remains in the Brcko District Signed Today**

The Operational Agreement on the Recovery and Identification of Mortal Remains in the Brcko District was signed today by International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP), Office of High Representative (OHR), the representatives of the Brcko District Government and the Brcko Prosecutor's Office, the Commission for Tracing Detained and Missing Persons of the Republika Srpska, the Federation Commission on Missing Persons.

The Agreement provides the procedures of conduct of the joint exhumations process on the territory of the Brcko District.

"A joint process of recovery and identification between the Commission for Tracing Detained and Missing Persons of Republika Srpska and the Federation Commission on Missing Persons is ongoing on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We want to implement the successful features of this model in the Brcko District. I hope this process will help to solve many of the uncertainties surrounding the fate of the missing persons and will bring closure to many of the families who are looking for their missing loved ones." - said the Brcko Supervisor Ambassador Henry L. Clarke.

"With this Agreement we take concrete measures to alleviate the suffering of families with missing loved ones. We are sure that continued cooperation on the part of signatories is vital to helping the families of the missing and that the most dignified and expeditious process of recovery and identification of mortal remains will faithfully be carried out." - said Gordon Bacon, Chief of Staff of ICMP.

This Operational Agreement for the Brcko District incorporates the commitments undertaken by the entity-level commissions on missing persons as part of the Sarajevo and Banja Luka Agreements, which established the precedents for the Inter-Entity Joint Exhumation Process. On January 1, 2001 the Joint Exhumation Process was transferred from the Office of the High Representative (OHR) to the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP).

Last year, a total of 2,600 cases of mortal remains, were recovered. This is the highest number of recovered cases since the Joint Exhumations Process started in 1997.

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