

Joint Statement on Freedom of Return and Resettlement in BiH

The Parties have agreed to procedures for return of refugees and displaced persons into and through the Zone of Separation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. These movements should be conducted in a safe, orderly manner, in accordance with Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

The UNHCR is responsible for return and resettlement programs. The International Community has strongly encouraged the Parties to ensure they coordinate their return and resettlement efforts with UNHCR, and meet all Dayton requirements and conditions established for return and resettlement.

The International Community is working together to provide a safe, secure environment which will allow freedom of movement and freedom to resettle to take place. The Parties are responsible, under the Dayton Peace Agreement, for ensuring free and safe movement of all civilians, including refugees and displaced persons, throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Parties must do more to ensure compliance with the Peace Agreement requirements to maintain freedom of movement and freedom to resettle, and to promote a sense of security throughout the country. Government leaders must take responsibility for the actions of their government institutions, police authorities and citizens.

The International Community has notified the Parties that the presence of armed civilians or military forces in the Zone of Separation is a violation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The International Community will strictly enforce the provisions of the peace agreement, and will act swiftly and decisively against any violations.

**OHR Press Release
Sarajevo, 24 September 1996**