OHR Condemns Attacks on TV Crews in Banja Luka

The OHR deplores and condemns the attacks on two TV crews in Banja Luka yesterday.

The two TV crews of a RS TV station were filming yesterday's violent demonstrations and protests in front of the offices of the U.S. and the British Embassy in Banja Luka. Both crews were assaulted by an angry mob with knives and other objects. One cameraman was severely injured and hospitalized, while other crew members received slight injuries that fortunately did not require medical treatment. In addition, one camera was destroyed.

The OHR does not deny to anyone the right to demonstrate and express his opinion, but this should be done in a peaceful and democratic manner. It is particularly important that journalists are able to conduct their work.

A free media is the forth pillar of every democracy. Only objective information allows citizens to form their own opinions, and journalists must be allowed to work freely and securely and have unhindered access to all events of public interest.

The OHR calls on the local police to investigate the case and take the appropriate steps against the perpetrators.