

International Community to clean up trade at the Arizona Market, Brcko

The International Community views with serious concern the many criminal problems and safety issues associated with the so-called "Arizona Market", located in Brcko District. Criminal activities there have grown steadily, including: prostitution; trafficking in women; abetting and exploiting the flow of illegal immigrants; trafficking in drugs; trafficking in stolen and illegal goods.

The authorities in both Entities and the Brcko District, including their respective police forces, support strong and sustained action to clean up the Arizona Market.

Gary Matthews, the Deputy High Representative and the Supervisor of Brcko, recently participated in a meeting with the following heads of international agencies: Wolfgang Petritsch, the High Representative; LTG Michael Dodson, COMSFOR; Jacques Paul Klein, the United Nations' Special Representative to BiH; and Robert Barry, head of the OSCE mission to BiH. They agreed to take the following action:

- A wide-ranging clamp down on all criminal activities connected with the Arizona Market. The relevant laws of the Entities and of the Brcko District will be applied, together with such Supervisory Orders as Ambassador Matthews may deem fit to issue.
- The Brcko District will develop and put in place a regime of regulation, licensing, fees and taxation which will apply to all enterprises located in the Arizona Market, just as this regime applies to enterprises located elsewhere in the Brcko District. The Supervisor of Brcko will ensure that this regime is effectively enforced and is specifically authorized to declare null and void any land use allocations which interfere with the regime.
- The more than 2,000 stalls at the present Arizona Market are located in an area which lacks necessary facilities such as water, sewage, garbage removal, electricity, communications, public health and fire safety regulations. Accordingly, the Brcko District and the Supervisor of Brcko will initiate and carry out a plan for the phased relocation of the main market area to an alternative site which will be prepared with the necessary facilities and safety features by June 2001.
- Until this area is ready for use, all existing operating licenses for stalls and other market activities in the Arizona Market will be subject to revalidation and reissuance by the Brcko District government in connection with phased relocations to the alternative site. All of this will occur in a transparent and objective manner in order that all concerned will benefit equally and fairly.

The present Arizona Market represents significant commercial activity in the northeastern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Legitimate business owners can only benefit from rule of law and a proper health and safety regime.

All the above elements are effective from today's date.