

## **Opening Of The School In Prekaja**

OHR welcomes today's opening of the Prekaja elementary school as a branch of "Dr. Ivan Mertz" school located in Drvar. After a period of negotiations between Drvar Municipal authorities, Cantonal authorities and the IC an agreement which made this event possible was reached. Reconstruction of the school was funded by the European Union with the Humanitarian Organization CESVI as implementing partner. The opening of the school was attended by both OHR and European Commission representatives who acknowledge this as a concrete action which will benefit all pupils in the area.

In particular, a precedent is set for the Federation of B&H. Prekaja is the first branch school in which the Serb students will follow a national curriculum for a national group of subjects incorporated into a mainly Croat curriculum.

OHR hereby would like to express its satisfaction with the work of the local and cantonal authorities who should be commended for setting this example for other areas of B&H. This school offers the opportunity for all students, including children of the Serb returnees, to learn and socialize under one roof. While encouraging refugees and DPs to return, this agreement and the opening of the school will significantly facilitate acceleration of the reconciliation process in Drvar.

This positive development, however, stresses once again that only a joint core curriculum which makes ample room for the expression of the distinct linguistic, literary, cultural and religious identities of the constituent peoples of B&H, and minorities present in this country, is the correct answer to facilitate returns throughout B&H.