

Senior Deputy High Representative presents Education for Peace Program

The Senior Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Dr. Matei Hoffmann, today presented a new Education for Peace (EFP) project. Present were the Federation Education Minister, Mr Fahrudin Rizvanbegovic, the Federation's Deputy Education Minister, Mr Ivo Miro Jovic, Ambassador Ronald Mayer representing the Foreign Ministry of Luxemburg, as well as Ambassador Wilhelm Schmid, Switzerland's envoy to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Prof. Danesh, Rector of the Landegg Academy, Switzerland, Cantonal Ministers of Education Safet Halilovic and Fahrudin Karakas.

The project, run by the Landegg Academy, Switzerland, is funded by the Luxemburg government which has provided nearly 2 million DM. It aims to help teach Bosnia's younger generation, the country's future leaders, how to create an environment free of violence, cope with post-war trauma and develop inter-ethnic understanding. The pilot project will involve six schools – a primary and secondary school belonging to each of the three main ethnic groups – and will reach about 6,000 pupils, 12,000 parents and 400 teachers and school staff.

"This is a unique project," Ambassador Hoffmann told journalists and officials. "It will teach how to create a violence-free environment, in homes and schools and in the country as a whole." Ambassador Hoffmann also condemned the recent bomb attack against the RS Minister of Education, Mr Nenad Suzic, who was unable to attend today's launch, as well as other recent acts of violence which were perpetrated, especially against returnees and religious sites.

Ambassador Mayer said Luxemburg had decided to back the

project within the framework of the Stability Pact. "For tomorrow's generation of leaders, this is a very important project," Ambassador Mayer said.

Minister Rizvanbegovic welcomed the project, saying: "I believe this education project will help us to turn away from the prejudices of the past."

Ambassador Hoffman is grateful to the Luxemburg government for backing this project and to the Landegg Academy for its effort in setting up the program. This is an important step towards desegregating the education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing a new generation with the high standards of education so vital to the country's future.