

## **OHR(S) Condemns Vandalism of Property**

As it is known, on a number of occasions OHR pointed out to its outrage by reports of looting of apartments and houses, especially those which are vacated by previous temporary occupants in order to be returned to its rightful owners. OHR strongly condemns such primitive and illegal acts; however, there is a continuation of such a behavior, sometimes even by elected officials. Of particular concern is the report that on the 13th June 2000 Mr. Mario Mikulic, Councilor of Municipality Mostar West, vacated an apartment which he illegally occupied in Municipality Mostar South West. On the same day the original Occupancy Right Holder accompanied by the responsible Municipal Officials repossessed her home and discovered that it had been left in appalling condition looted and clearly deliberately vandalized.

Damage, destruction and theft of Property are Criminal Acts and all cases of this nature must be immediately investigated and prosecuted. OHR will not tolerate theft of property or vandalism of peoples' homes, especially in this time that returns, repossessions and winds of normalization are taking place. For us, the establishment of Rule of Law is a priority. OHR will use all its powers to ensure that Municipal Housing Offices, Prosecutors, Courts and Local Police fulfill their responsibilities to guarantee that those who are criminally liable face prosecution and are held responsible for their crimes.

It is clear the provisions of the Law stipulate that Mr. Mikulic and people who are conducting similar acts are to be prosecuted and will have to answer for their impermissible behavior. OHR (S) finds that this is definitely not the kind of moral and political leadership by an elected official that citizens want to have as an example.