

Economic Reforms in Next Six Months Can Help Bring Real Benefits to Citizens

As economic reforms begin to deliver results, Bosnia and Herzegovina's main economic indices are at last moving in the right direction. Inflation is negligible, exports are rising faster than imports, investment is up, industrial production is up; GDP growth this year is projected to be the fastest in Southeast Europe. But the BiH business environment could be more attractive, exports could be stronger; industrial production could be higher, and job creation could be greater if politicians implement additional necessary reforms in the next six months, PDHR Larry Butler told a business audience in Sarajevo today.

Ambassador Butler listed four priority steps:

- BiH must pass a Law on Obligations by the middle of 2006;
- The Entity Banking Agencies must be incorporated in the Central Bank by the middle of 2006;
- The RS Government must provide funds for foreign currency account verification and it must agree to the issuance of state bonds to settle frozen foreign currency debts so that the Law on Frozen Foreign Currency Savings can be enacted by 20 November;
- The BiH Statistics Office must be in a position to provide investors with essential data – with full cooperation from its Entity partners – without further needless delay.

“None of these tasks is particularly arduous; each will directly and substantially benefit citizens,” Ambassador Butler said. “BiH is getting better – but it must get better

faster. The people of this country have had to suffer hardship for long enough. Much has been done to create the infrastructure necessary to attract investment and create jobs. We are on the right path – but we must move along that path more quickly.”

The full text of Ambassador Butler’s speech, to the Regional Economic Forum, can be found on the OHR website.