Experts' seminar examines introduction of VAT in BiH

The Office of the High Representative, in conjunction with Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), on Friday convened the first of a series of seminars for senior officials on the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

The seminar was chaired by the Principal Deputy High Representative, Don Hays. Participants included BiH Treasury Minister Ante Domazet, Federation Deputy Minister of Finance Sefika Hafizovic, and other officials of the Federation, the RS, and Brcko District.

The seminars are part of a process of information gathering ahead of the possible introduction of VAT in BiH. Friday's seminar focused on the experience of other transition economies which have introduced VAT, and concluded with an agreement to form a working group which would allow the International Community to make expertise on VAT available to the domestic authorities.

"How and when the domestic authorities want to introduce VAT into their tax structure is up to them," Ambassador Hays noted. "It is their decision, and these seminars are designed to help them make an informed decision."

Representatives of several international organisations also participated, including the Delegation of the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund.

Presentations were made by GTZ VAT expert Eckart Brandt-Pollman, Renzo Daviddi, Economic Advisor to the Delegation of the European Commission, Emil Sunley of the IMF and Mechtild Lauth of the OHR legal department.