Gregorian to Visit Srebrenica Tomorrow

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Raffi Gregorian, will travel to Srebrenica tomorrow to meet with representatives of returnee associations and the town's municipal authorities. His visit will be an opportunity to discuss a series of measures that will help create a sustainable return process and better living conditions in the area.

"The OHR welcomes the increased assistance to Srebrenica pledged by entity and cantonal governments as well as the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina . However, it is important that this assistance is spent in a focused and transparent manner and takes due account of the wishes of the local population in the area," the Principal Deputy High Representative said.

"Improvements in the life of returnees do not depend on greater funding alone, but also on increased cooperation between different levels of authority in ensuring better social, pension and heath care services to returnees," he added. "Best results can only be achieved for both citizens and the families of victims when existing regulations are better implemented and their harmonization encouraged by the highest levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina

"The authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina , particularly in Republika Srpska, need to focus additional attention to create a secure environment in Srebrenica and investigate the possible implication in war crimes of police officers and other public officials. In addition, the search for missing persons and the identification process needs to be stepped

up," Dr Gregorian said.

On 23 March, the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board Ambassadors requested the OHR to set up an Assessment Group on Srebrenica comprising all relevant international actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Group, which is chaired by Senior Deputy High Representative Peter Bas-Backer, is tasked with reviewing international assistance to the Srebrenica area and following actions taken by domestic authorities to improve living conditions in and around Srebrenica. To date, it has met twice, including yesterday.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling will meet in the coming days with four Srebrenica and Podrinje Women Associations to discuss the promised additional assistance and its focus.