

Incidents in Derventa on 23 April 1998

The High Representative and the International Community in general deplores the incidents in Derventa yesterday.

These disrupted the mass there for Croat refugees and other Catholics from Bosnia Herzegovina, and placed Cardinal Puljic and his followers under a serious security threat.

The church ceremony in Derventa was held to mark the anniversary of St. George, Patron Saint of the Derventa Church. Contrary to some of the comments in the media, the event was planned and organised in conjunction with the RS authorities, in particular the Derventa municipality authorities and Chief of Police. A prior guarantee of security had been given by the local community.

Further response to this incident is being addressed with the RS Ministry of Interior so that an exact account of events can be established. We consider this incident, as with all others that affect the confidence of people to return or freedom of movement in general, with the utmost seriousness.