

# **OHR announces planned opening of schools in Zvornik return areas by the 1st October 2001**

We are happy to inform you of the results of yesterday's meeting of the Zvornik authorities, the board of the primary school and representatives from the office of the High representative and the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on the opening of the schools in four returnee communities in Zvornik.

The agreement will enable hundreds of children to attend school in their own home village instead of having to walk for kilometers or go by bus to a school in the Federation. It is a significant step, and it will normalize living conditions in the returnee communities.

The agreement reached is that all involved are committed to have the school opened by the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. The Zvornik municipality has already sent its teams to the field to do the final technical inspection of the school buildings. The primary school will send its representatives to the schools involved to enroll the pupils next week. After this the hiring of the teaching staff will start.

The agreement shows the willingness of the local authorities in Zvornik to tackle one of the most important issues in the return areas, education, and to facilitate the integration process in the municipality.