

OHR Praises Prosecutors' Actions in Customs Fraud Cases

On Wednesday, November 4, Senior Deputy High Representative Hanns Schumacher and officials from the E.C.-funded Customs and Fiscal Assistance Office (CAFAO) met with Federation Prosecutor Suljo Babic and Republika Srpska Prosecutor Vojislav Dimitrijevic to discuss the recently-discovered customs fraud cases.

Last month, the Customs Administrations and police of the Federation and the Republika Srpska moved jointly against organized smuggling and customs fraud. Some 900 shipments in the past few months had entered Bosnia and Herzegovina illegally, without the payment of customs duties. The joint operation has prevented annual losses to the Entities of more than 40 million KM in customs revenues.

Ambassador Schumacher expressed his support and appreciation for the active and outstanding involvement of the two Prosecutors in the matter, and welcomed the determination of officials in both Entities to properly investigate and try the cases. In particular, he lauded the decision of the two Prosecutors to work together in the prosecution and promised full support and assistance by the International Community.

The International Community will continue to monitor the cases closely as they proceed to trial. Ambassador Schumacher said that if they are not followed up properly, this could have negative effects on further international reconstruction aid.