

OHR welcomes RS willingness to work with the State Court and the international community in the fight against crime

The OHR welcomes the RS Ministry of Interior close cooperation with the international community and the BiH State Court in recent days in the fight against crime. The Ministry of Interior has played a particularly constructive role in bringing the Milakovic case to court.

Action by the RS Ministry of Interior's in recent days has led directly to the release of six Eastern European women held, it is alleged, against their will in a Prijedor nightclub by its owner Milorad Milakovic. This case is an example of effective cooperation between the law enforcement agencies, the international community and the courts. The initial information was passed from SFOR to the RS Police who then acted vigorously and promptly. Importantly the RS Ministry of Interior, recognising that human trafficking is an international crime, transferred the case together with the individuals detained, to the BH Prosecutors Office. This case will now be processed before the Court of BiH.

The Court of BiH was set up with the strong backing of the High Representative to deal with exactly these kinds of cases. Human trafficking is an international crime and the Court of BiH and the BiH Prosecutors Office have the mandate to handle these kinds of crimes.

The role of the International Community has been to encourage greater co-ordination and co-operation between crime fighting

organisations across all levels in BiH and within the region. The scale of organised crime in the Balkans does represent a crisis damaging to the stability of all the states in the region the states. This crisis must be tackled head on, which is why all with a mandate to fight organised crime must work together.

The High Representative said: "Organised crime affects every citizen of BiH, irrespective of ethnic identity or where they happen to live. We therefore welcome the newfound willingness of the RS Ministry of Interior to work with the international community and the relevant institutions, including the Court of BiH, to tackle this scourge"