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BiH Currency

The new currency of Bosnia-Herzegovina was launched on 19 June; by 22 June the network of bank distributive branches throughout the country was complete, and the Convertible Mark was appearing on the streets.

The Governor of the BiH Central Bank, Peter Nicholls, speaking at the launch, explained that the Convertible Mark, (Konvertibilna Marka, or KM) was legal tender, and as of 22 June would be fully operational.

20 million banknotes, valued at 25 million KM had arrived in BiH by 19 June, in units of 10, 5, 1 and 0.5 KM. Units of 20, 50 and 100 are arriving this month, and the Central Bank has announced that coins will probably be in circulation by September this year.

There are two designs per denomination, and therefore 14 different bank notes. Differences between designs consist of the portraits and order of alphabets (Both Latin and Cyrillic) used on each note. (On the 5 KM notes both designs will have the same portrait). The banknotes do not bear any national symbols.

The two sets of designs will have the same legal value in both Entities of BiH, and can only be exchanged for fully convertible currencies.

The KM is now the legal tender currency of BiH and people will be obliged to accept it as a form of payment. All local public authorities will have to use the KM. (However, for private persons, other currencies are not illegal, and can continue to be used as a payment medium.)

The KM will be fully backed by reserves of convertible currencies, primarily Deutschemarks, that are held at the Central Bank of BiH (CBBH). Since the CBBH is not allowed to create KM without an equivalent reserve of DM, there is no risk of any depreciation of the KM. The exchange rate will be fixed and stable at 1:1 DM.

Also speaking at the currency launch, High Representative Westendorp commented:

'BiH is now the only country in the region to have a stable, internationally convertible, currency…The currency will give BiH economic credibility on the international stage.'

He added: The KM is, for the whole country, an important symbol of statehood…It will facilitate trade and the capital

flow between BiH's two Entities, and, we hope, will bring the people closer together.'

Ministerial Meeting

The Ministers of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board met in Luxembourg for talks on 9 June. Subsequently they issued a Declaration, in which the following statements were included:

- The Steering Board welcomed the progress that has been made over the last six months. They noted, however, that this was largely due to international intervention and therefore, the slow pace of implementation by the authorities in BiH specifically, continues to be a matter of concern to the Board.
- BiH political leaders elected in 1996 have largely failed to serve the interests of the people, for example by speedy implementation of the Peace Agreement. Many of the current leaders continue to use the politics of ethnic separatism to advance their own positions, at the expense of the BiH people. Thereby they condemn the country to stagnation and isolation from the European family of nations.
- In the context of the September elections the Declaration challenges candidates contesting the elections to address publicly the following four issues:
    1. Returns of refugees and Displaced Persons
    2. Rights of ethnic minorities
    3. Economic reform and reconstruction
    4. The provision of social services and pluralist education.
- The Declaration requires that the local authorities themselves start to take more responsibility for managing the government of their country.
  The following were focused on as key issues for immediate progress:

- Orderly and self-sustaining returns
- A self-sustaining ceasefire with transparent mechanisms for military to military cooperation
- A core of basic legislation establishing the rule of law, and an independent judiciary
- Consolidation of free market reforms; transparent privatisation, free movement of goods, services and capital
- Restructure, retraining, reintegration and equipment of Entity police forces
- Dissolution of illegal pre-Dayton institutions
- Regulation of media in accordance with democratic standards
- Conduct and implementation of elections by the same standards
- Cooperation with the International Tribunal over the arrest of war criminals
- Consolidation of multi-ethnic institutions and a secure return environment in Brcko
- Full cooperation in peace implementation by the neighbouring countries.

HR's Message to the Steering Board: Speaking to the Steering Board members in Luxembourg, the HR laid stress on the fact that the people of Bosnia Herzegovina and their leaders must build political institutions which are durable and establish a free market economy, using the aid and the assistance now available.

Concerning the performance of their leaders, all citizens of Bosnia Herzegovina must use the opportunity of the elections in September to take the future of the country into their own hands.

The HR also stressed a series of positive economic developments which have taken place in BiH, notably the fact that the GDP of Bosnia was up by one third in '97 and by 50% in '98. Unemployment is falling both in the Federation and, in

recent months, in the Republika Srpska, while wages are rising in both Entities.

EU Declaration

At the Luxembourg meeting of the Steering Board, mention was also made by the HR of the declaration issued by the European Union on 8 June. The declaration laid down the basis for the establishment of special relations between the EU and BiH.

HR Westendorp emphasised that the leaders of BiH must use this support fully, with the goal of reaching the day when BiH will become a fully-fledged member of the European Union.

‘Decision on Reconciliation’

On 3 July the High Representative issued a reminder to the authorities of BiH and the Entities. This emphasised that the implementation of the Peace Agreement needs to be accelerated, in order to create necessary conditions for peaceful and orderly return, and to guarantee respect for the basic constitutional principles of reconciliation and multi-ethnicity.

The reminder outlined these principles, with a strong message to the authorities to take the necessary measures without delay and ensure they are respected by all within their jurisdiction.

The reminder also contained a reiteration of the HR’s powers, emphasised in the conclusions of the Bonn PIC, and in the Luxembourg Declaration. The reminder stressed that any failure by any authority to respect the principles of reconciliation and multi-ethnicity laid down by the Peace Agreement is a violation of the Agreement and an obstruction of the Peace Process. The HR is ready to use his authority to take whatever measures and decisions he deems fit, including the removal from office of elected and appointed officials, to establish

the necessary conditions for a democratic society.

State Anthem

The Bonn Peace Implementation Council invited the High Representative “to establish a process leading to a decision on a new flag and symbols if the parties cannot agree on their own by 31 December 1997”. With the expiration of this deadline, the High Representative announced his intention to establish an independent commission to propose alternatives for the flag of BiH, as outlined in his statement of 31 December 1997.

The High Representative stated on 12 June that the independent commission established on 12 January 1998 to propose alternatives for the flag of BiH and the Coat of Arms had been requested to continue its work and select alternatives for the National Anthem of BiH.

The commission unanimously agreed to continue its work, and to submit three proposals for a National Anthem for Bosnia and Herzegovina to the High Representative by 15 October 1998.

The commission is organising a public competition for the National Anthem of BH. The High Representative encourages musicians & composers from BiH and beyond, to participate in the public competition and submit proposals for a National Anthem.

The High Representative, following appropriate consultations, will then give consideration to the question of which procedure would best ensure that the decision on the adoption of a National Anthem is reached in a fair and democratic manner by 15 November 1998 at the latest.

With the selection of proposals for the National Anthem, the commission will have successfully completed its work of drafting and selecting proposals for the state symbols of BiH.

Presidency

The 36th Session of the BiH Presidency took place on 2 July. It achieved several international relations decisions, including the following:

- Acceptance of the resignation of the BH Ambassadors to Buenos Aires and to Tunis;
- Ratification of the Agreement on International Road Traffic between BH and the Kingdom of Sweden;
- Ratification of the Agreement on International Road Traffic between BH and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In addition, the Presidency asked the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare the BiH draft position for the forthcoming meeting of non – aligned Countries.

A working group has been composed to advance as soon as possible a viable proposal for the establishment of a common Secretariat and Protocol Office of the BiH Presidency.

Council of Ministers

At the CoM session of 12 June, it was decided that Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Mirsad Kurtovic and Minister of Civic Affairs and Communications Spasoje Albijanic should meet with Central Bank Governor Peter Nicholl and the Entity finance ministers at the Office of the High Representative to discuss issues surrounding the BiH budget.

The CoM also considered the request on customs and tax benefits between “Volkswagen” and “Unis-TAS Commerce” companies which anticipates assembling of motor vehicles in Vogosca, Sarajevo.

The CoM also accepted the transformation of the State Directorate for Goods Reserves (DDRR) into the Federation Directorate for Goods Reserves and accepted the agreement with Swiss government on programs of urgent reconstruction of the

BiH telecommunication system.

Customs Policy Law

A statement by the European Union announced that the working group established by the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations to draft the permanent BiH customs policy law concluded its work on June 17. The draft law was subsequently submitted to the CoM.
All members of the working group, comprising of state and entity level representatives, signed the draft, based on the European Union's Customs Code, and agreed to its submission.

"This is a great achievement and it will introduce customs procedures to Bosnia consistent with European Union standards. It brings Bosnia one step closer to Europe and is consistent with the recently adopted European Union Declaration on Bosnia, which affirmed that Bosnia belongs to Europe," the new head of the European Commission Representation Office to BiH, Ambassador Hans Jorg Kretschmer, said.

The CoM now has one month in which to consider the working group's draft. According to the Luxembourg conclusions, the law must be applied throughout BiH by January 1 1999. The interim period between July 15 1998 and January 1 1999 will allow for the drafting of supporting sub-legal regulations, changes to customs procedures and the training of customs officers and forwarding agents.

The European Commission Customs and Fiscal Assistance Office (CAFAO) will assist State and Entity level authorities to prepare themselves for the application of the law in 1999.

Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM)

On 2 July, the Federal Ministry of Defence (MoD) made two important statements concerning the establishment of a combat training centre at Livno/Glamoc. A press conference was held

to provide an outline of the measures taken to ensure that those affected by the construction of the range would be treated fairly. The OHR, in its position as chair of the commission set up to ensure the establishment of the centre is consistent with the civilian aspects of the Dayton accords, welcomed this move by the Federation MoD to bring the issue into the public domain.

Subsequently the Assistant Minister of Defence briefed the Standing Committee On Military Matters (SCMM), including representatives of the RS MoD and the RS Army, on the establishment of the range. During this presentation he proposed the exchange of liaison officers between the Entity armed forces on the Livno/Glamoc and Manjaca facilities. The OHR welcomed this example of the SCMM fulfilling its function in encouraging transparency between the Entities.

The latest session of the SCMM, in addition to receiving the reports of the Federation and RS Ministries of Defence also agreed on a schedule of work for the next six months.

Police Restructuring

Inauguration of the Federation Ministry of the Interior The official inauguration of this ministry, which took place on 1 June, enables the Ministry to begin essential restructuring tasks. In particular the staff of the Ministry and the Police should now be restructured to represent each of the ethnic communities in the Federation.

This is particularly crucial in the current post-war BiH social situation: organized crime and trafficking of narcotics have increased during the last 6 months. Additionally, the full institution of a mixed police force is crucial to speed up provision of a secure environment for the return of refugees and displaced persons

HR Westendorp urged the assembled ministers to show full

cooperation in making this Ministry function in accordance with International standards. He also urged the Federation Government to give its full support to these efforts.

RS National Assembly

The RS National Assembly, during its mid-June sitting, replaced its speaker, Serb Democratic Party (SDS) member Dragan Kalinic, and his deputy, Serb Radical Party (SRS) member Nikola Poplasen. They were accused of obstructing the work of the assembly, by the RS parties which proposed their removal. Voted into their places were Petar Djokic of the RS Socialist Party (SPRS), as speaker, with Safet Bico, head of the Federation-based Coalition for a United and Democratic BiH (KCDBiH) taking the place of deputy speaker. Jovan Mitrovic of the Serb National Alliance remained in place as the other deputy speaker of the Assembly.

Kalinic and Poplasen had opposed amending the RS constitution to introduce a third deputy chairman position which could be occupied by a member of the KCDBH. This alliance has 16 deputies in the 84-seat parliament, and the OSCE and OHR both warned that the International Community would not acknowledge the legitimacy of the parliament unless a speaker position was given to a member of this alliance.

The OHR welcomed the appointment of Petar Djokic and Safet Bico, stressing that the Assembly will now be in a situation to discuss basic topics and prepare for the September elections. Key issues include the passing of the housing laws crucial to return: the law on property and the law on abandoned apartments. The Luxembourg Declaration by the Steering Board has set deadlines that these laws are to be adopted by July 15.

Privatisation Legislation

Other achievements by the RS Assembly last month included the

passing of a full package of privatisation legislation. This package, which includes Bank privatisation laws, was drafted with the assistance of USAID and the British Know-How Fund, and was passed by the Assembly on 26 June.

Aid to Eastern RS

Rogatica health centre, which is being refurbished and reconstructed with aid from the Portuguese government and the European Commission opened again on 11 June.

This was the first of 56 million dollars' worth of projects that the International Community is currently investing in the Eastern region of the RS

HR Westendorp, at the clinic's reopening ceremony, stressed that the International Community is aware of the poor economic situation in this region of the RS, and is determined to place a strong emphasis on aid to this region.

Media

INDEPENDENT MEDIA COMMISSION

The High Representative, Carlos Westendorp, adopted a decision on 11th June 1998 establishing the Independent Media Commission (IMC).

IMC will establish a regulatory regime for broadcasters and other media in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following a transparent recruitment procedure, a Director General, Krister Thelin, has been selected. Mr Thelin, a judge who has served as deputy Minister of Justice in Sweden, took up his appointment on 1 July.

Bosnian experts are now being recruited to serve on the commission.

IMC will work to promote pluralism in the media and to ensure

broadcast licenses are issued and regulated without political interference. The commission will continue to seek advice from station directors and other prominent local experts about its regulatory role.

A regulatory regime will be in place before the commencement of the election campaign. The Director General will be making an announcement about the exact content of the regulatory regime in due course.

The Decision imposes a moratorium on the issuing of any new frequencies for broadcasting purposes until such time as the IMC begins assigning broadcasting frequencies.

Memorandum of Understanding on the Restructuring of RTV BiH

Signed by BiH Presidency members, the president of the RTV BiH worker's union, and the HR, on 10 June, this MoU pledged the reorganisation of Radio Television Bosnia and Herzegovina (RTV BiH). This process will follow lines set out by the High Representative and accord with the letter and spirit of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP).

The MoU committed the signatories to the provision of a public radio television service for the citizens of the whole of BiH and for the Federation. The fundamental structures of both elements of this service are to be in place by the end of 1998.

A public service broadcasting corporation will be established for BiH. The corporation will reflect the constitutional structure of BiH as defined in the GFAP.

As for the Federation, a new public Entity television will be formed using the necessary technical infrastructure of RTV BiH. This public RTV will be subject to principles of administration and transparency as laid out in a new Statute and Charter provided by the High Representative .

The MoU pledges the station will be reconstructed to meet internationally-recognised standards of public service broadcasting. This will require the current RTV BiH, the Entity television, and the public corporation RTV for BiH to display transparency in financial administration, offer balanced treatment in all news, current affairs and other programming and promote tolerance among all ethnic communities.

Additionally the current RTV BiH, Entity RTV and the public corporation will operate in accordance with the new regulatory and licensing procedures that will be administered by the Independent Media Commission (IMC) until new laws on media and broadcasting have been adopted by the BiH Parliament.

Returns

RRTF in Derventa

The Return and Reconstruction Task Force (RRTF) officially opened a new satellite office in Derventa on 26 June, covering the greater Doboj and Posavina regions. Russell (Rusty) Ingraham, the new head of office, welcomed local officials, international guests, displaced persons, and the press to attend the official office opening on Friday night. Senior Deputy High Representative, Hanns Schumacher, addressed the guests and made a strong plea for progress in return both to and from Posavina. The local mayor and other members of the municipal assembly as well as all other 15 Posavina Mayors attended the opening and expressed their commitment to cooperate with the RRTF and the OHR.

Positive press coverage of the office opening has already had an effect. Six displaced persons searched through Derventa on foot on Sunday to find the office, which they had seen on TV, hoping to make contact with someone who could help them return to Bosanski Petrovac. They met with Mr. Ingraham who will be following up their cases in co-operation with other RRTF

members. The Derventa – Bosanski Petrovac axis is one of the RRTF's highest priorities for two-way return.

Drvar

On 17 June the High Representative's special representative for Drvar, Mr. Andreas Herdina chaired the first in a series of public meetings designed to better inform all people both Serb and Croat, now living in Drvar. The initial meeting covered the rules and procedures governing the distribution of humanitarian aid.

Croatia Return Legislation

In a welcome development, the Croatian Parliament adopted its a "Programme for the Return and Accommodation of Displaced Persons, Refugees, and Resettled Persons" on 26 June 1998. This Programme has been developed in consultation with the UNHCR, OSCE, and key members of the Article 11 Commission and represents an important step forward in enabling pre-war residents to return to their homes of origin. In welcoming this agreement, the High Representative stressed that implementation must now be swift and genuine.

HIWG

The Humanitarian Issues Working Group (HIWG) met in Geneva on 26 June under the chairmanship of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Working Group reviewed the UNHCR Regional Return Strategy and other current issues.

Human Rights

Violence in Travnik

The month of June was marked by the killing of a Bosnian-Croat police officer in a car explosion in Travnik on 12 June. The victim's Bosniak partner was also seriously injured during the incident. On 22 June, two Croat Military Council (HVO)

soldiers were killed in a bomb explosion in a house in Novi Travnik. UNMIBH (IPTF) reports that large quantities of explosives were found in the house following the explosion. Investigations into these incidents have been opened.

Bosnian Serb Indictee Apprehended; Accused Bosnian Serb Found Dead in his Cell On 15 June, Bosnian Serb Milorad Krnojelac was detained in Foca (south-eastern RS) by SFOR troops and then transferred to the Hague. Krnojelac was indicted in June 1997 under a sealed indictment for crimes allegedly committed at the Foca Kazneno-Popravni Dom (KP Dom) detention camp. On 29 June, accused Bosnian Serb, Slavko Dokmanovic, was found dead in his cell at the Hague's Detention Unit. An inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of the accused will be conducted by the local authorities. Dokmanovic died while awaiting the verdict of his trial, which was scheduled to be handed down on 7 July, one year after the arraignment of the accused.

Property Legislation Federation

Since the passing of new laws to enable persons to reclaim their pre-war homes on 4 April, a number of obstacles have arisen in the course of implementing this legislation. The implementation issues encountered so far include:

- Failure by military and police authorities to transfer files relating to apartments to the municipal housing authorities, and refusal by some municipal authorities to accept claims involving military and police apartments.
- Some housing offices have refused to accept claims unless the claimant provides certain "required" documents, although the Ministry of Urban Planning's Instructions require that "the competent authorities shall accept claims regardless of whether or not the necessary documentation is supplied."
- Some housing offices have been requiring persons who are

seeking to claim their apartments to demonstrate that they have already registered with a Municipal Returns Office (MRO), or requiring them to fill out the form used by the MROs.
- Several municipalities, particularly in the Tuzla-Podrinje Canton, have been charging fees for receiving claims.

These, and other issues, were identified through extensive monitoring by international organisations, particularly ECMM. International organisations, including OHR, are intervening to ensure that each of these concerns are resolved, and that the claims process fully conforms to the laws and to the Peace Agreement.

Zvornik 7 Retrial Update

The second day of the retrial of the Zvornik 7 defendants resumed on 1 July at the District Court in Bijeljina (RS). Six of the seven defendants were present in court. One of the seven defendants, who is being tried in absentia, was represented by a new court-appointed lawyer. The trial session included the testimony of six witnesses. A seventh witness is to be called later by the Prosecution. The next session, scheduled for 5 August, will involve a visit to the scene of the crime.

Launching of Campaign to Change Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) Legislation

On 8 June, a working version of a new draft Law on Associations and Foundations was widely distributed for public discussion. This first distribution was primarily aimed at domestic NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the aim being to solicit their views on legislation that will crucially affect them. Domestic NGOs and other interested commentators are actively encouraged to comment and provide input on the law by 8 July.

This initiative marks a crucial stage in the LEA/LINK project, which is supported by a host of domestic NGOs, legal experts and international organisations including the OHR. Established in 1997, this aims to improve the environment in which non-governmental organisations function in BiH. The process of gathering input will run until 8 July, when the legal experts associated with LEA/Link will incorporate comments and suggestions as appropriate. They will then produce a final text Law on Associations and Foundations. This will be officially submitted, with public approval, to the relevant authorities of both Entities, the Ministries of Justice of the Federation and Republika Srpska.

The Office of the High Representative, acknowledging the need for sound and consistent NGO legislation in both Entities, fully supports this process. The development of a strong and independent civic sector which contributes directly to a sustainable peace and democratic society is an important aspect of the implementation of the Dayton Accords. A full report by the OHR/HRCC is available in English and Bosnian on the OHR Web Site. (https://www.ohr.int).

Human Rights Chamber Session

The Human Rights Chamber met in Sarajevo for its Twenty-sixth Session from 8 to 12 June. On the last day of the session, the Chamber publicly delivered decisions in 16 JNA cases, one abandoned property case and two death penalty cases. In the two cases involving the execution of the death penalty, the Chamber ordered the Federation to lift the death penalties against the applicants.

Ombudsperson for Human Rights Presents Second Annual Report On 9 June, the Ombudsperson for Human Rights presented the institution’s Second Annual Report for the period from May 1997 to April 1998. The report welcomes positive developments which took place during the last year, including the cessation of the Federation’s Law on Abandoned Apartments and the

decision of the Supreme Court of the Republika Srpska in November 1997 that the imposition of the death penalty is contrary to the European Convention on Human Rights.

For further details on the current human rights situation in Bosnia, please see HRCC Human Rights Monthly Reports which are available in English and Bosnian on the OHR Web Site.

Brcko

Economy

Marking the start of a coordinated international effort, costing over 5 million DM, USAID held a groundbreaking ceremony on June 25 for the drilling of an additional well to increase the water supply in the Brcko system. Improving the water supply in the Brcko area remains the key infrastructural priority, and these efforts, by donors including the World Bank, ECHO, and the Norwegian Government, follow on from a special conference held by OHR North in January of this year.

Livestock Loan

On 17 June residents of Dizdarusa, Brcko, were among the first to witness the delivery of approximately 40 pregnant heifers to returned and Displaced Persons (DPs). The cattle are given on a loan basis and are part of a consignment of 1000 for RS Brcko, under an EC funded livestock regeneration project.

Returns

Recent weeks have seen increased tension in the sphere of returns. OHR reminded potential returnees that return is subject to approval by the Returns Commission in the area of supervision, to ensure that it is peaceful, phased and orderly. This was to clarify the situation for those who have received confirmation of their legal rights to property in Brcko from the Commission for Real Property Claims (CRPC) but, in fact, cannot yet move back into their property as it is

currently occupied by DPs.

At present the Returns Commission only authorises return to vacant and/or destroyed property, and OHR with local representatives is continuing to mark and catalogue unoccupied or badly damaged houses available for reconstruction and return. Following protests by Serb DPs in the area of Klanac, Brcko Supervisor Robert Farrand, in a meeting on 17 June, reminded the RS government, municipal and community leaders of their obligations under the supplemental award to achieve progress on returns to the town, and their responsibility to keep their citizens informed of the procedures of the returns process.

At the 29 July session of the Returns Commission it was agreed that a representative of the RS municipality of Brcko will undertake the actual marking, within a team composed of representatives of OHR, the local community in question, the RS municipality of Brcko, and the Federation municipalities of either Ravne or Rahic Brcko.

The Supervisor condemned as a ‘cowardly act of violence’ the placing of an explosive device in the business premises of a Bosniak returnee to the town centre. While extensive damage was caused, no one was hurt. IPTF are monitoring the local police investigation.

On a more positive note, Bosnian Croats who have applied to the Brcko region of Ulice arrived on 17 June to sign an agreement with the RS municipality of Brcko, and with Mercy Corps Europe/Scottish European Aid, who will implement a European Union project to rebuild 300 houses for returnees to Ulice. The reconstruction programme is expected to provide 300 jobs for RS firms, and was described by Supervisor Farrand as ‘a watershed for the Croat community, and the beginning of (their) substantial return.’

Multi-Ethnic Administration and Police

The staffing plan for the multi-ethnic administration was due to have been fully implemented by 1 July. The Executive Board met on 1 July and reached a compromise over the question of discharge of Serb employees. The total number of employees in the administration will be raised from 132 to 154, entailing only 15 dismissals. Meanwhile another 22 Bosniaks and Croats are enabled to join the 35 now already working in the administration. To reach the proportions outlined in the 15 November 1997 Supervisory Order, another 8 Serbs will have to leave the administration by 9 July, the time of the next session of the Executive Board. The compensation and retraining of employees who suffer dismissal is ensured.

The first week of July marked the six-month anniversary of Brcko's multi-ethnic police force, inaugurated on 3 January, 1998.

Freedom of Movement

Mostar Airport will be opened to civilian air traffic at 12.00 on 7 July. The first planes to arrive will be a plane from Croatia Airlines, arriving from Zagreb, and a plane from Air Bosna, arriving from Sarajevo. In a formal ceremony following the arrival of these airplanes, the High Representative and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Mostar will cut a ribbon at the entrance to the civil air terminal. Croatian Airlines has already scheduled flights from Zagreb to Mostar on a regular basis.

Inter-Entity Links

Inter Entity Judicial Cooperation

The Inter- Entity Legal Cooperation Commission which was established by the BiH Presidency in February 1998 held its inaugural session on 4 June, at the Office of the High Representative. It was held in the presence of the advisors to the Presidency, the Federation Minister of Justice and

representatives of the Republika Srpska government. The commission is chaired by the senior Deputy High Representative Ambassador Hans Schumacher and consists of eight experts, three of whom were appointed by the Presidency, two by each Entity and one by the OHR.

Once established the commission will provide a forum in which concrete recommendations can be made to expand and improve legal cooperations between the Entities. It will also provide advice on implementing the Memorandum Of Understanding on Legal Assistance between institutions of the Federation and the RS.

Water Understanding

On 4 June the Federation Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management & Forestry and the RS Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management & Forestry signed an important Memorandum of Understanding concerning Water Issues.

Under the terms of the document, the Entities will form a Joint Commission for Water Management Issues. The Commission will consult on all issues relating to water management, including international water treaties, international projects such as the Danube Programme and the Mediterranean Programme, harmonisation of water quality standards and related legislation. Four members will be appointed by the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and four members by the Government of Republika Srpska.

At the signing of the document, Federation Minister of Agriculture, Water Management & Forestry, Ahmed Smajic, commented that water-related issues transcend territorial delineations. Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Water Management & Forestry for the Republika Srpska, Mihajlo Stevanovic, observed that cooperation by the Entities on water issues is the starting point towards economic self-sustainability.

HR Westendorp expressed satisfaction not only with the ability but the willingness of the Entities to cooperate in protecting the water resources of BiH. “Today we all stand witness to that success, which can serve as an example for other areas of future cooperation as well.”

Diary

7 July – Opening of Mostar Airport

The OHR Bulletin is produced by the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo and aims to give an overview of what is happening on the ground in the civilian implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

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