

OHR's Statement at the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference in Banja Luka



Blame Game

Concerning various statements made yesterday on the occasion of the RS Police Day, the OHR considers it da nije u redu I da nije tacno da (inappropriate and inaccurate) for the RS authorities to blame the OHR for their own failure to come to an agreement with other leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina on police reform.

As Prime Minister Dodik previously announced, the Proposal of the Police Reform Directorate is a good basis for an agreement on police reform. Moreover, there are solutions on the table for resolving the final outstanding issues.

The RS National Assembly took a position on police reform when it approved the Agreement on Police Reform of 5 October 2005. The European Union is waiting on implementation of this Agreement before it is possible to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Public Officials Must Be Priorities For Genocide Investigation

The judicial and law enforcement authorities of BiH must urgently investigate whether individuals responsible for crimes committed as a part of the Srebrenica genocide are

still employed as police officers or other public officials, Principal Deputy High Representative Raffi Gregorian said during a meeting with representatives of Srebrenica victims associations in Sarajevo yesterday.

“Fast-tracking investigations into the 814 individuals identified by the RS Srebrenica Working Group as being in or around the Srebrenica area in July 1995 and who have been appointed to public office must be a priority for the BiH Prosecutors office and law enforcement agencies,” said the Principal Deputy High Representative.

Since assuming the post of Principal Deputy High Representative, Dr Gregorian has been following these cases and has been informed that the Chief Prosecutor has focused additional resources on investigating the Srebrenica genocide, and has established firm links with SIPA to examine the Srebrenica Working Group List. The PDHR also visited State Border Police and RS Police in Zvornik last week to see first hand how effective activities related to ICTY cooperation are, and whether law enforcement authorities have the resources they need to do the job.

“It is absolutely unacceptable that victims may still be confronted with perpetrators in their daily life,” said the PDHR.

During the meeting, Dr Gregorian underlined that the proper investigative steps must be followed. Underlining that the whole international community wanted to see swift justice the PDHR warned that: “The Srebrenica tragedy would only be compounded if individuals were to walk free because the proper procedure has not been followed”.

The PDHR confirmed that the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board at its meeting in February directed OHR to make ICTY cooperation a priority. He said that OHR has already

stepped up its engagement to ensure perpetrators will be brought to justice. "The problems encountered by returnees underscores the urgent need for reform in the police," Dr Gregorian concluded.

The PDHR met yesterday with Mrs Munira Subasic and Mrs Kada Hotic of the Mothers of Srebrenica and Zepa Enclaves Association, Mrs Bakira Hasecic of the Women Victims of War Association and Mr Murat Tahirovic, of the BiH Association of Camp Inmates Association.