

# OHR's Statement at the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference in Mostar

## OHR Welcomes Federation House of Representatives Endorsement of Defence Reform

OHR welcomes the fact that the Federation House of Representatives has unanimously endorsed one of the outstanding reforms needed to make BiH ready for participation in PfP and membership of NATO. We are hopeful that the Federation House of Peoples will today endorse the House of Representatives' position and we understand that the Council of Ministers will discuss the defence legislation package at its session tomorrow and adopt a Decision that will ensure that the parliamentary passage at State level can begin.

NATO and EU membership are the twin tracks that will carry BiH towards enduring peace, stability and prosperity. To accelerate along these tracks BiH must demonstrate that it is cooperating fully with the ICTY, and it must complete the restructuring of the Police in line with the three EU principles.

Until this is done, the doors to full NATO and EU integration will remain closed. Defence Reform does not replace the need for Police restructuring.

## PDHR to Visit Foca, Gorazde, Discuss Investment, Jobs

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Larry Butler, will visit Eastern Bosnia on Thursday. Ambassador Butler will meet Mayors and businesspeople, and focus on steps that must be taken – many of them long overdue – by the municipal, Entity

and BiH authorities in order to secure more investment in BiH and thus create more jobs.

Ambassador Butler will highlight, among other things, the need to make the Competition Council, Consumer Protection Ombudsman, Market Surveillance Agency, Standardization Agency & Statistics Agency fully operational. These under-reported institutions play key roles in helping BiH companies to run competitively. It has taken too long to secure staffing and funding for each of them, and because of this, business expansion and job creation have been delayed. Ambassador Butler will also highlight the need for speedy enactment of business legislation to replace the obsolete laws on Obligations, and he will stress the urgency of credible efforts by the appropriate authorities to implement corporate governance legislation, notably with a view to cleaning up public companies.

After visiting Sutjeska National Park in the early morning, the Principal Deputy High Representative will arrive in Foca to attend a meeting of Mayors from the REDRIN economic areas.