

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

BiH must continue with reforms

The news that the European Commission has approved a Feasibility Report assessing the readiness of Serbia and Montenegro a Stabilisation and Association Agreement is a welcome development. Increasingly the Balkans makes its way to EU membership. Serbia and Montenegro had to complete their tasks including ICTY cooperation and tough negotiations on the Constitutional Charter. Now BiH must complete its tasks including the very difficult issue of police reform. The door of the EU is ajar and there is everything to play for.

The news shows that ICTY cooperation and fulfilling the conditions set by Europe achieves results.

Town Hall meetings on Police Restructuring

As part of the public information campaign leading up to key negotiations on police restructuring, the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) and the Office of the High Representative (OHR) will continue a series of public meetings being held throughout BiH on police restructuring. Today's event will be held in Ljubuski. The purpose of these meetings is to present the Police Restructuring Commission's (PRC) proposal to citizens, police, civil society representatives, and other interested stakeholders, and to open a broad dialogue on the ongoing process of police reform.

Each public meeting will focus on answering questions from members of the public.

The meetings will be held in **LJUBUSKI at the TOWN HALL in Andrije Simica Street on Wednesday, April 13, 2005 at 18.00 hours**. Details of each event will be announced on local radio before each event.

Police Restructuring Educational Material Available

I would like to use this opportunity to show you the latest educational material on why Bosnia and Herzegovina needs the police restructuring. This pamphlet also points out the five main misconceptions that we face when discussing the police restructuring:

1. The restructuring of the police is not the first step towards the abolishment of the entities
2. The reorganization of the police will not abolish the Ministry of Interior of RS
3. The High Representative will not and cannot impose the police restructuring
4. Police restructuring does not necessarily mean that the police will be organized in Sarajevo
5. Police restructuring is a condition set by EU for reform of police.

The European Commission has made it clear that if BiH wants to begin negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement, police restructuring must ensure that

- All legislative and budgetary competencies are vested at the state level.
- Police services are based on geographical regions drawn up to ensure maximum efficiency; and
- Political interference in policing in BiH is eliminated.