OHR’s Statement at the International Agency’s Joint Press Conference

Letter To The Editor, Slobodna Bosna

I am writing to you following the disgraceful and unfounded attack on the integrity of a senior Russian diplomat working on secondment in the OHR (“*Slobodna Bosna*” br. 353, 21 August 2003). The OHR categorically rejects these allegations as unsubstantiated and untrue.

The article fails to meet even the most basic standards of journalism. There are no named sources, as should be the case for libelous allegations of this nature. Nor does it contain our response to these allegations. No serious editor in Western Europe or the United States would have accepted it.

This is not investigative journalism. It resembles more the smear campaigns familiar to us from the days of Milosevic and Mira Markovic’s *Dnevnik*.

Far from setting the standards that others should aspire to, *Slobodna Bosna* is sadly becoming an example of just what should be avoided.

Julian Braithwaite

Privatization Brochure

Brochures produced by the BiH Bulldozer Committee were distributed with newspapers throughout BiH this morning. These brochures (hold one up) lay out, in simple, jargon-free language, the mechanics of privatisation. They have our full support.

Re-launching the privatisation process is a core element in the governments' near-term economic strategy so it is crucially important that citizens know how the process should be working. The Entity governments have made a commitment to tender – by the end of this year – at least five companies each from a shortlist of firms whose successful privatisation could serve as a model for hundreds of other firms.

Many people in BiH still associate privatisation with job losses, or with criminal scams perpetrated by corrupt politicians and their mafia friends. A properly organised privatisation process should *create* jobs, not destroy them and brings BiH the investments that are so desperately needed.

Privatisation is a way of modernising the BiH economy, tackling unemployment and making this country competitive. The Bulldozer Committee brochure describes how privatisation should work. Ideally it will raise public awareness about this central reform issue. The question is not whether privatisation is desirable – the question is how to make it work faster, so that BiH citizens start getting benefits from privatisation as quickly as possible.