

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

1st meeting of the PRC

The Police Restructuring Commission will hold its first meeting on Thursday 22 July, in the Common Institutions Building . The mandate of the Commission is to help BiH put in place a police structure that will be effective and efficient and will enforce the rule of law.

The Recent European Union Functional Review found BiH's police forces to be divided, over-staffed, under-resourced, and unable to operate across the IEHL. On the other hand, BiH's criminals are united, well-resourced, and operate throughout the region with impunity.

If BiH is to get in to Europe, it will have to restructure its police. Europe won't give BiH visa free access, and certainly won't let a country join the EU that can't enforce the rule of law. To underline this, EC Commissioner Chris Patten will attend the 1st meeting of the Commission.

Above all, this is a structural problem.

Chairman Wilfried Martens will primarily deal with practicalities at the 1st meeting of the Police Restructuring Commission, but will also begin discussions about conceptual approaches to best achieve 'a single structure of policing for Bosnia and Herzegovina under the overall political oversight of a ministry or ministries in the Council of Ministers'.

Membership one day of the EU and NATO is this country's best chance of long-term peace and prosperity, and both depend on

BiH restructuring its police forces.

New Head of Tuzla Region Office

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, has appointed Orlando Fusco as the new Head of OHR Regional Office Tuzla. Mr Fusco has been engaged in the region since 1997, working with the OSCE on elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo and heading a mission in Serbia for a large NGO. For the last two years, Mr Fusco has led the OHR Field Office in Travnik.