

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

New Drugs Law is About Saving Lives in BiH

Saturday's record drugs seizure by Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Police highlights the growing problem of narcotics smuggling and production in BiH.

The authorities can no longer ignore this problem, which needs to be tackled with the full force of the Law.

It is therefore a matter of serious concern that the Council of Ministers has yet to ensure that State-level legislation on banned substances is moved into Parliamentary procedure when it reconvenes in early September.

The draft Law on Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs will modernise Bosnia and Herzegovina's drug control system and close gaps between Entity laws. Current legislation, which is at the Entity-level only, together with outdated drug control mechanisms, means that Bosnia and Herzegovina is not complying with international narcotics controls to which it has subscribed. It also means that vulnerable groups of BiH citizens, notably young people, are being exposed to potentially lethal drugs while police

measures to combat dealers are rudimentary.

The bulk of narcotics produced in or trafficked from Bosnia and Herzegovina end up being sold in Western Europe, which is one of the reasons that the European Commission's Feasibility Study requires Bosnia and Herzegovina to take action to prevent the illegal use of chemical precursors and to reinforce its anti-narcotics trafficking structures.

But updating outmoded legislation and setting in place an effective drugs-control system in BiH will protect BiH citizens as well as citizens in the rest of Europe. Illegal drugs are destroying lives in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Council of Ministers must adopt this law without delay, so that it can be sent to Parliament, where it can be debated as soon as business resumes in September.

OSCE

First Conference on Inclusive Education to take place on Bjelasnica tomorrow

In an effort to raise debate and ensure exchange of best practices and better networking between non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders that closely work on inclusive education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is hosting the first conference on inclusive education with the focus on "Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in BiH", tomorrow, on 31 August, at Hotel Marsal, on Bjelasnica.

Many NGOs and other stakeholders across the country will participate in the conference, which will include discussions and workshops on improving the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in BiH society.

The role of inclusion, particularly of children with special

needs, is very significant. As stipulated by the Education Reform Strategy, it is necessary to assess the number of children with special needs and the difficulties they face in order to determine the challenges that impede their inclusion into the general classroom.

EUFOR

No statement available.

NATO

No statement available.

EUPM

No statement.

RTQs:

Fedā Forto, FENA:

Kevin could you please tell me if the OHR has a statement to make concerning the continuation of the talks on police reform which will take place on Bjelašnica the day after tomorrow, considering that they will now be moving on from eel to lamb, so besides that is there anything else?

Kevin Sullivan, OHR:

I mean this is essentially an issue for the BiH authorities. It is they who are organizing this, it is they who are charged with reaching an agreement and the OHR's position and the international community's position has been the same

throughout and that is that they must reach an agreement that's consistent with the requirements of the European Commission and beyond that I really do not have anything to add.