

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference in Banja Luka



High Representative is the Final Authority on Agreements on Special and Parallel Relations

Prime Minister Dodik reportedly questioned why the OHR would ask for documents on Republika Srpska's Agreement on Special and Parallel Relations with Serbia.

The Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina has in the past ruled that Entities are entitled, under the Constitution, to establish special and parallel relations with neighbouring states without the consent of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the same time, the Dayton Agreement is equally clear that these agreements must be fully in line with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is also clear that the parties must refrain from any act that may undermine this sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The High Representative is the final authority on civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement, with an obligation ensure that all levels of government in BiH uphold the peace agreement.

Therefore, when BiH's Entities negotiate and conclude Special

Parallel and Relations Agreements with neighbouring states the High Representative has an obligation to ensure that those agreements are consistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of BiH.

Previous governments of Republika Srpska accepted the High Representative's role in reviewing the Agreement and its Annexes. OHR expects Prime Minister Dodik to continue this practice.

The OHR reviewed the agreement signed in 2006 and found little change from the earlier agreement signed in 2001. In light of the visit of the Serbian Prime Minister and President last week OHR continues to expect to be informed of the current status and content of the Annexes prior to their signature.

Clearly it is in everyone's interest in BiH to reduce tensions, eliminate the possibility for misunderstanding and to refocus on the country's EU future.

In this regard the High Representative encourages Republika Srpska to inform and consult the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina during negotiations and the conclusion of annexes to the Agreement on Special and Parallel Relations.