

Interview

OSCE MISSIONS HELP DISCUSS INTER-STATE CO-OPERATION IN WAR CRIMES PROCEEDINGS BEFORE DOMESTIC COURTS

Representatives of the judiciary and relevant ministries from Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina discussed co-operation in investigating and adjudicating war crimes at a meeting in Novi Sad.

The two-day event, organized by the OSCE Missions to Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is a continuation of an OSCE-facilitated process, initiated in 2004, which aims to help representatives of local judicial institutions and other government authorities develop closer ties to deal with war crimes proceedings.

Participants discussed best experiences in the field and ways of promoting mutual cross-border co-operation in prosecution of persons responsible for war crimes committed during the 1990s on their territories. Particular attention was given to issues such as the exchange of information, evidence and documents, as well as bringing war crimes trials closer to public through audio-video recording and public broadcasting.

"Bringing to trial before domestic courts those responsible for war crimes is one of the best indicators of the commitment of a country to respect the rule of law and is one of the foremost requirements for European integration," said Ambassador Hans Ola Urstad, Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro.

"Closer co-operation in war crimes proceedings between the three countries of the former Yugoslavia should enhance regional co-operation in other fields."

Representatives of the European Union and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia attended the meeting as observers, while representatives of the Interior ministries from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia (Serbia and Montenegro) attended the sessions relevant for co-operation in their field.

