



PRESS RELEASE

Published Thursday, 30 January 2003

ADVANCE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On **Monday 3 February 2003 at 10:00 a.m.**, the Human Rights Chamber for Bosnia and Herzegovina will hold a public hearing in the large conference room of the Hotel Prijedor, located at Srpskih velikana 14 in the city centre of Prijedor, the Republika Srpska, on the admissibility and merits of case no. CH/00/6183 *Dužanka Bilbija v. the Republika Srpska* and case no. CH/00/6231 *Stjepan Pepić v. the Republika Srpska*.

Factual background

These cases concern the continued operation of the first private school of higher education in the Republika Srpska — the Higher Business School of Industrial Engineering, Organisation and Management in Prijedor (the “Higher Business School”) — and the validity of the diplomas issued by the Higher Business School to its students. In April 2000, the Ministry of Education of the Republika Srpska issued a procedural decision prohibiting the work of the Higher Business School due to its failure to fulfil the conditions prescribed for working and performing activities. The Higher Business School appealed against this procedural decision to the Ministry of Education, and when the appeal was rejected, it initiated an administrative dispute proceeding before the Supreme Court of the Republika Srpska. These proceedings are still pending.

Alleged human rights violations

The applications raise issues under Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 (right to education) to the European Convention on Human Rights (the “Convention”) and Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions) to the Convention and discrimination in the enjoyment of these rights. The applications further appear to raise issues under paragraph 1 of Article 6 (access to courts) and Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) of the Convention.

Hearing procedure

Representatives of the parties will present oral arguments at the public hearing. In addition, the Chamber has invited several students of the Higher Business School and Mr. Vid Ožegović, Education Inspector of the Ministry of Education of the Republika Srpska, as well as Dr. Nenad Suzić, former Minister of Education of the Republika Srpska, and Prof. Dr. Stanko Stanić, Dean of the Faculty of Economy of the Banja Luka University, to offer testimony as witnesses at the hearing.

It will be possible to follow the hearing in both the national languages and English.