

# **Opening of Premises for the Bosniak Returnees' Children in the Stolac School Building**

The OHR is pleased to announce that on May 2, 2000, around 80 Bosniak returnees' children will join their Croat colleagues at the municipal primary school in Stolac.

The opening of 4 classrooms and 1 staff room in the primary school in Stolac is an interim compromise solution that resulted from long-lasting negotiations that OHR (South) and Senior Deputy High Representative Ambassador Dr Matei Hoffmann have had on various levels. So far, the Bosniak returnees' children have been taught in two private houses under very poor conditions. Thanks to the very active and direct engagement of the new Mayor of Stolac, Mr. Zdravko Kuzman and the Canton Authorities, a solution has been found to overcome this serious problem.

Although Croat and Bosniak children in this school will be taught according to their respective curricula until a general solution to the school curricula in B&H has been reached, the OHR is greatly encouraged by this initial step. Further positive developments are expected on the road towards reconciliation.

OHR hopes that the cooperation between the responsible authorities on this issue will set an example for similar problem areas elsewhere in B&H. Further progress in this field can only be made if all the sides concerned show a higher degree of flexibility, understanding and mutual respect.