[BA] Conference on Media Regulation and Policy

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In November 2004 Mediacentar, an organisation entrusted with the task of assisting the development of an independent and professional media sector in the country, gathered together media professionals, experts, media lawyers and NGO representatives to discuss the draft version of the country report on "Monitoring Media Regulation and Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina" . This draft paper is part of the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP) entitled: "Monitoring Television Across Europe: Regulation, Policy and Independence". During the discussion about the draft paper, it was stated that in Bosnia and Herzegovina the devastating impact of the war is still visible in both the economic and the socio-political spheres. Such a situation badly affects the media sector in particular. The country is still strongly polarized along ethnic lines. Furthermore, the international protectorate of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina and its influence on the media was mentioned. The restructuring of the media sector in the country was primarily connected with the expanded role and mandate of the High Representative. Thanks to this the media reforms in the country, mostly dealing with the harmonization of media regulations with European standards, reached an impressive stage. However, implementation of media law remains problematic. Participants at the gathering offered the following recommendations:

- It is essential to complete the creation of a sustainable and professional public broadcasting system in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

- The Communications Regulatory Agency (CRA) has to retain fully its independent status, both financially and operationally.

- The civil society sector has to play the role of the media watchdog more actively.

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