

Transcript of the International Agency's Joint Press Conference at CPIC

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 5 December 2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 5 December 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Julian Braithwaite	• I C is setting up a Task Force to monitor the investigation into the ORAO affair by the RS authorities. • Prijedor bombing.
b. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	• No statement.

2. Twenty members of the media including three television crews attended the conference.

3. The transcript of the questions and answers is attached.

*A. Ollivier
Col. (FR A),
Chief Operations and Plans*

Julian Braithwaite– OHR

Thank you very much for coming on what is I know for many of you a holiday. The OHR has just two issues.

The first is that the International Community is setting up a

Task Force to monitor the investigation into the ORAO affair by the Republika Srpska authorities.

The High Representative, COMSFOR and the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina Ambassador Beecroft, sent a joint letter to the Republika Srpska President Cavic, yesterday setting out the International Community's position on the ORAO investigation. The letter expresses, and I quote, "the co-ordinated views, not just of our organisations, but of the wider International Community."

The letter criticises the preliminary report submitted by the Republika Srpska authorities for not addressing the key issues, including the issue of where individual responsibility, both military and political, for this affair lies. The fact that these issues have not been addressed is, and I quote again, "a matter of grave concern, given world-wide attention to this matter and the damage already done to Bosnia and Herzegovina's international reputation."

The letter goes on to say, and I quote, "In order for Bosnia and Herzegovina's international friends who monitor United Nations Security Council Resolutions to be satisfied that no further action, such as sanctions, are required. The final report must elaborate on what went wrong, where accountability lies, and what will be changed to ensure that the Republika Srpska Army and the military industry are firmly under civilian and democratic control."

The letter also criticises the Republika Srpska authorities for politicising the preliminary report by taking a position on the General Staff and Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has no place in a factual report of this nature. While reminding the Republika Srpska authorities that responsibility for this investigation and the necessary reforms lies solely with the Republika Srpska authorities, the letter sets out the steps necessary to ensure that the final report addresses the key issues and prevents further damage to

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

First, that the International Community will establish a Task Force to monitor the investigation to ensure it is serious, comprehensive and transparent.

Second, the final report should be completed promptly and no latter than by 3 January 2003.

Third, the final report should follow guidelines that reflect best practice, and answer the key questions. These guidelines and questions are set out in Annex A to the letter, copies of, which are available afterwards.

The Task Force will be led by SFOR, with the participation of OHR, OSCE and other relevant international authorities. It will have complete access to all relevant documentation and officials. It will also pursue related incidents and concerns that may occur elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The key questions we expect the investigation to answer include:

Who authorised the transactions that violated United Nations Sanctions and who carried out those transactions?

Who authorised the travel to Iraq, and who went to Iraq?

Who authorised the entry of Iraqi citizens into Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Who were they, how long were they here, and why were they here?

Who authorised the travel by the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the Republika Srpska General Staff to Myanmar?

Who was formally, legally and functionally responsible for the oversight of ORAO?

Who is responsible for the failure of this oversight?

Why did the September 2002, report on ORAO fail to identify

any violations of United Nations Sanctions, and who is responsible for that failure?

And lastly, what actions have been taken against those responsible for the violations of United Nations Sanctions?

The second issue I have for you today, I would like to set out the High Representatives position on yesterday's, bomb attack on the Medzlis in Prijedor.

This as you may know, was the third attack on this building since the beginning of the year. It follows several other acts of violent intimidation against Bosniak returnees and their institutions in the Republika Srpska over recent days. Coming on the eve of Bajram this only serves to make these attacks all the more outrageous.

Let's be clear what this is about. This is about intimidating people who have bravely returned to their homes so that they leave again, and so that others in their community who are considering return do not do so. These attacks stem from the same psychology that destroyed this country in the early 1990's, a psychology closer to fascism than 21st century Europe. That is why we hope and expect the Republika Srpska authorities, from the President down to the local police, to condemn these acts and to commit themselves to bringing those responsible to justice. Thank you very much.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No statement from SFOR this morning.

Julian Braithwaite– OHR

Any questions?

Questions and Answers

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

About the ORAO investigation, will it only be an investigation into ORAO or will other companies in the Republika Srpska and the Federation also be investigated?

A: Julian Braithwaite – OHR

This Task Force is principally set up to monitor the Republika Srpska investigation into ORAO, but it will also look into other concerns that have or may arise.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Does that mean there will be no Federation officials in the Task Force?

A: Julian Braithwaite – OHR

The Task Force is only made up of internationals. As I said, it is lead by SFOR, the OHR and OSCE will participate as will other international authorities, but it will be a Task Force of the International Community.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

So, basically it will be an international investigation?

A: Julian Braithwaite – OHR

No, they are monitoring the Republika Srpska investigation. They will monitor the enquiries and investigations in the Federation should those be necessary.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Having this in mind, can you give me any comment on the recent International Crisis Group report on this issue? It was primarily about the arms situation in Yugoslavia with Iraq,

but it also touched on some issues like, the involvement of the Federation factories in this trade, do you have any comment on this?

A: Julian Braithwaite – OHR

Our only comment on that, is we believe the authorities of this country in both the Republika Srpska and the Federation, should investigate to end where this trail goes to and that we will be expecting them to do so.

Q: Darko Doslo – PSB BiH

Mr. Vanier, please tell us about the situation with Mr. Fijuljanin, can we expect SFOR to give this case to the local authorities?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Right now, Mr. Fijuljanin is still being detained by SFOR. As I have said previously, he will remain in detention as long as SFOR conducts its investigation. The final disposition on Mr. Fijuljanin remains to be determined, but we will take the time necessary to ensure SFOR's investigation is fully completed.

Julian Braithwaite – OHR

Any further questions... thank you very much.