

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

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 3 September 2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Tuesday 3 September 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Mario Brkic	• RS Government report on Srebrenica
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	• Head of the OSCE mission welcomes two new Deputy Heads. • OSCE starts a series of workshops with municipal authorities.
c. UNMIBH	Kate Frieson	• Canton 10 Prime Ministers interference in Police Commissioners selection. • Minority recruitment update. • Police Academy Training.
d. ICTY	Rafik Hodzic	• No statement.
e. SFOR	Major Scott Lundy	• NATO's Parliamentary Assembly fact finding visit to BiH.

2. Twenty-seven members of the media and five television crews attended the conference.

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

C. Barraud
Lt. Col. (FR A),

Mario Brkic – OHR

Good morning and welcome to the press conference.

We have just one statement for you today. It pertains to the Republika Srpska Government's report on Srebrenica. We have all read the reports from the Republika Srpska Government yesterday, announcing that it plans to issue a report downplaying the human cost of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre. This appears to be, as we see it, a callous and irresponsible attempt to misguide voters and exploit the trauma of those who survived or were bereaved by the massacre. This report has been announced as an official government document, to be issued by the Office of Co-operation with the ICTY. If this is true, it is an absolute disgrace simply because history cannot be rewritten in this way. Thank you very much.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Good morning everyone. I have two statements for you today.

Ambassador Robert M. Beecroft, Head of the OSCE mission, welcomes the two new Deputy Heads of the mission who took up their duties yesterday. They are Russian Ambassador Victor Tkachenko and French Ambassador Henri Zipper di Fabiani.

Ambassador Tkachenko has over 36 years experience with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is an expert in international relations and has held a range of diplomatic appointments at home and abroad including appointments at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Prior to assuming his duties with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Tkachenko was the Deputy Director of the Latin American Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Zipper di Fabiani, is a senior French career diplomat. In his last position as Deputy Policy Director of Strategic Affairs at the Ministry of Defence in Paris, he was involved in the project of reinforcing the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy which includes the incoming European Union Police Mission. Ambassador Zipper di Fabiani has a long experience with the OSCE. He has dealt with disarmament, confidence- and security-building measures, and he has served in a variety of posts in the Arab world.

The outgoing Deputy Head, Ambassador Dieter Woltmann, will have an informal meeting with the OSCE Permanent Council tomorrow in Vienna, along with the President of the Election Commission, Lidija Korac. They will be discussing the upcoming elections. Further information on the new deputy heads will be available on our Website.

Secondly, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has started a series of workshops with municipal authorities to improve their public relations. The workshops, so-called 'Public Outreach Initiative', commenced yesterday and will continue for the month of September in 22 municipalities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These workshops provide specialised training to municipal officials to establish steady communication between municipal officials and the public. The training will focus on how to raise the interest of public and civic groups in the work of municipal governments and how to involve citizens in the work of the government. In other words, to create an atmosphere of co-operation and trust.

The main lecturer in the workshops will be Dr. Besim Spahic, an expert in communication sciences and lectures at the Academy of Arts in Sarajevo, in Mostar and Ljubljana. He also works with the communication management agency Pristop that operates in all countries of former Yugoslavia. I have further information on the paper and it will be available

after the press conference. Thank you.

Kate Frieson – UNMIBH

Good afternoon from UNMIBH. We have two announcements today.

First, the Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations in Bosnia, Mr. Souren Seraydarian, yesterday sent a letter to the Canton 10 Prime Minister, Ante Omazic, objecting to his deliberate interference in the work of the Independent Selection Review Board (ISRB) charged with the selection of a permanent Police Commissioner.

On 19 August, the Canton 10 Independent Selection and Review Board, the ISRB, selected a permanent Police Commissioner in open and fair deliberations. However, at the Canton 10 Government session held on 30 August to formally approve and legally ratify the ISRB's selection, the Canton 10 Prime Minister unilaterally rejected – without basis – the Police Commissioner designate and appointed another person as the Police Commissioner.

The Deputy Special Representative made clear in his letter to the Canton 10 Prime Minister that his actions are completely unacceptable to UNMIBH, as they not only violated that law itself, but also the spirit of the law that ensures a separation of politics from police work. More specifically, Prime Minister Omazic violated Article 33 of the Canton 10 Law on Internal Affairs that states the Canton Government must provide the ISRB a written statement on its reasons for rejecting the ISRB's Police Commissioner candidate. Further to this, Article 33, Law on Internal Affairs states that the ISRB has the authority to review and reject the government's rebuttal statement. In cases where the Canton Government's propose alternative candidates for Police Commissioner other than those proposed by the ISRB, the Board has the authority to confirm or to deny the government's proposal. In other words, the final decision of the ISRB in such cases as we have

witnessed in Canton 10 is binding and final. For these reasons, UNMIBH has requested that Prime Minister Omazic's Government take swift action to redress these illegal measures and ensure that the proper legal procedures for the selection of the permanent Police Commissioner in Canton 10 are fully implemented.

My other statement regards an update on minority recruitment figures of police, a first in the voluntary re-deployment programme. Since the agreement on voluntary re-deployment was signed between the Republika Srpska and the Federation Entities in May 2000, there have been 14 groups of police officers that have moved to their pre-war areas and serve as minority police officers.

The last group, the 14th group that moved in August, represents the largest group since the inception of the programme. There were 43 police officers and they were re-deployed from the Republika Srpska to Federation Ministries.

I can give you a breakdown of the numbers in the press statement of these 12 minority police moved to Bihac and they face becoming redundant as a result of the downsizing of the Republika Srpska, Prijedor border police. An agreement was reached between the Republika Srpska MUP and Canton 1 to hire these officers. It was made speedily in record time and shows that the governments are commitment to this re-deployment programme, we are very pleased with the success of this.

Further, police academy training is one of the second ways we increase numbers of minority police officers. The Republika Srpska Police Academy yesterday began the testing of 632 candidates this is the 7th class of cadets. So, it is a very competitive group and out of this there will be about a 120 selected. There is also a gender breakdown, 237 females and 395 males. We are fairly satisfied, but would like to see the numbers of females increasing. Thank you.

Rafik Hodzic – ICTY

No statement from the ICTY today.

Major Scott Lundy – SFOR

Dobar dan from SFOR.

The Secretary General of NATO's Parliamentary Assembly, Simon Lunn, and a group of 23 parliamentarians are conducting a fact-finding visit here in Bosnia and Herzegovina on Wednesday and Thursday. Representatives from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America are participating in this two-day tour.

The parliamentarians will visit the Commander of SFOR, Lieutenant General John B. Sylvester, meet with senior representatives from the OHR and UNMIBH, and travel to Dobrinja, Bugojno, Zgon and Mostar during their fact-finding visit.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is the inter-parliamentary organisation of legislators from the member-countries of the NATO Alliance, as well as seventeen Associate Members. The Assembly provides a critical forum for international parliamentary dialogue on an array of security, political and economic matters. Its principle objective is to foster mutual understanding among Alliance parliamentarians who represent a broad spectrum of political parties. For more information, please check the Assembly's Website.

Mario Brkic- OHR

Questions please.

Questions and Answers

Q: Ratomir Petrovic – UN Radio

A question for the ICTY; can you give us a comment on the Republika Srpska reports on Srebrenica?

A: Rafik Hodzic – ICTY

I cannot give a comment on the report itself, as we have not received the report and have not seen it. Based on the media reports that came out yesterday, we can say that any such claims that reflect this report are simply outrageous. It actually flies in the face of all efforts put in by the ICTY in one painstaking investigation of the Srebrenica events and the trial of General Krstic and Dranzen Erdemovic. In the trial of General Krstic, it was established beyond reasonable doubt by the trial chamber, that in mass executions committed in July 1995, in and around Srebrenica, many thousands of Bosniak men were killed, most probably 7,000 to 8,000. The fact that these mass executions took place was not disputed by General Krstic in his statement or by his defence in the appeals brief, which was lodged. So, I will repeat: Any such claim as reflected in the media that there were 2,000 victims (at Srebrenica) is simply outrageous and an attempt at revisionism.

Q: Maja Zuvela – Reuters

A question for the UN. Do you maybe have an official estimate of the human costs in Srebrenica? If so, do you have a breakdown of the civilian and military victims?

Q: Kate Frieson – UNMIBH

Sorry, do we have a breakdown of the numbers of victims...?

Q: Maja Zuvela – Reuters

Of the human costs in the Srebrenica massacre – a United Nations' estimate?

A: Kate Frieson – UNMIBH

The United Nations commissioned a report; Secretary General Kofi Annan commissioned a special report on the Srebrenica massacre, specifically the United Nations' role in that. As for the figures of remains, I think that number comes from specialised bodies who can look into this and not UNMIBH itself. UNMIBH has relied on figures that have been determined by other agencies and people investigating this massacre. We concur with the statements made by the other representatives of the International Community here today.

Q: Viola Gienger – Freelance for Cox Newspapers

Scott, related to the visit of the parliamentary group, is there expected to be any discussion of the International Criminal Court issue during the visit?

A: Major Scott Lundy – SFOR

I am not sure exactly what will be discussed. But, I do know the focus here is on fact finding. These are parliamentarians from the respective countries that I have mentioned. They are here to get an 'on-the-ground' understanding of what is going on in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Clearly, NATO has been here since December 1995. These people will be taking back the information and then, I assume, reporting to their countries as to how it is going here. That is clearly the focus of it.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Will the delegation speak with local community representatives?

A: Major Scott Lundy – SFOR

Again, I do not have those details. I know where they are

going roughly, and perhaps after this I can get some more information for you.