

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

CPIC/Media Conferences, 27/6/2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 1130 hours on Thursday 27 June 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Mario Brkic	• Legislative delay • High Representative to Visit Mostar and Foca/Srbinje.
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	• OSCE increasing its support for political parties by opening a new Political Resource Centre. • Press Conferences reminder. • The Ministry of Defence, OSCE and SFOR introduce an information book. • Farewell to Stefo.
c. UNMIBH	Stefo Lehmann	• De-authorisation and non-compliance. • Farewell.
d. EU	Frane Maroevic	• Invitation to the signing of the cards 2002 action programme.
e. SFOR	Major Scott Lundy	• SFOR and civilian authorities will sign a Statement of Understanding. • Farewell to Stefo.

2. Seventeen members of the media and one-television

crew attended the conference.

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

C. Minck
Lt. Col. (FR A),
Chief Operations and Plans

Mario Brkic – OHR

Good morning and welcome to the regular press conference, from the Office of the High Representative, there are only two points.

Firstly, the Office of the High Representative calls on Bosnia and Herzegovina government leaders to end delays in passing crucial economic legislation. As you know, the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, in his inaugural address to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliamentary Assembly defined his priorities as first justice, then jobs, through reform.

Also in light of this strategy on Tuesday, Principal Deputy High Representative Ambassador Donald Hays, sent a letter to all three Prime Ministers Mikerevic, Behmen and Ivanic. Expressing grave concern about the failure of the state and Entity governments to secure passage of laws that are crucial for the creation of the single economic space and the normal functioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina's economy. A press release on the letter to the Prime Minister's will follow during the day.

Also in the letter, Principle Deputy High Representative Hays called for a new show of commitment to the passage of twelve of the most important laws for this area; these laws are also going to be included in the press release. This underlines what the High Representative said in his inaugural speech "the

only reason why the economy of this country is failing is because we have refused to reform the system that dooms it to failure."

The High Representative is of the opinion that in modern economies, governments are responsible for creating the conditions in which investors and entrepreneurs can create jobs. He agrees with those who say that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, economic legislation is often inadequate and contradictory, this discourages rather than encourages private entrepreneurs and foreign investment. The High Representative believes that the governments both at the state and entity levels need to do more to make Bosnia and Herzegovina an more attractive place for foreign investment and job creation, and in particular to get sensible economic legislation onto the schedule.

Let's say for example, in the transport sector appropriate legislation must be passed as soon as possible to attract direct foreign investment and facilitate and encourage exports. In the communication and electricity fields monopolies continue to exist, which mean high rates for the individual citizens, an international telephone call as you all well know, is expensive from Bosnia and Herzegovina unlike any other country in Europe.

These are common sense laws and they are for the everyday functioning of a normal economy, these laws are not radical or controversial, they set in place the practical conditions that enable business people to get on with the job of creating wealth, expanding trade, employment, and raising living standard for the hardworking people of this country, Ambassador Hays wrote in his letter. As I said it will be produced in the form of a press release later on this afternoon.

Ambassador Hays also urged the government leaders to do everything possible to have these laws passed, assuring them

of the full support of the International Community in performing this task.

And the second issue today is the announcement for the on going event, which is the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, today visits Mostar and Foca/Srbinje.

In Mostar he joined Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi and other dignitaries at a ceremony to recognise the beginning of the reconstruction of the arch of the Old Bridge.

In Foca/Srbinje, the High Representative will visit or is visiting at the moment the offices of the regional economic development agency, Region Drina, where he will meet Project Manager Mirjana Djordjevic, as well as Office of the High Representative Special Envoy George Vlachogiannis. In the course of his visit he will take part in a live radio show at Radio Srbinje starting at 15:15. In his continuous efforts to encourage successful business the High Representative will visit the Mold Textile Company and at the conclusion of his visit, he will take part in a Town Hall meeting in the Hotel Zelengora starting at 17:30. Thank you very much, that is all from the Office of the High Representative today.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Good morning everyone, I have three points for you today.

The OSCE is increasing its support for political parties by opening a new Political Resource Centre in Travnik, funded by the United States Government. The opening is taking place as we speak. The Centre in Travnik is the 12th in a network of Political Resource Centres established in 1998. The aim is to provide political parties and independent candidates with the necessary resources to participate in the creation of a pluralistic and multi-ethnic political environment. The work of the Political Resource

Centres have resulted in a significant increase in political

party contacts and in co-operation among opposition parties. They have also enabled parties to establish and maintain direct contact with their supporters and to reach out to new voters. Equally importantly, the Political Resource Centres have enabled local people to call their elected representatives to account and to ensure that politicians hear their voices. The full text of this press release is on the table outside.

Tomorrow will be the day of press conferences and I want to remind you of two, both of importance.

The first regards trafficking. The ministry of human rights and refugees is hosting a press conference to launch a report called: The Trafficking in Human Beings in Southeastern Europe. The report presents the current situation and responses to trafficking in the countries of Southeastern Europe: Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Moldova and Romania. It shows ample evidence of a wide range of national and regional anti-trafficking. The report is the result of a joint initiative of UNICEF, OHCHR, OSCE and ODHIR and reflects commitment of these organisations to combat trafficking. The report will be presented by Steve Allen, UNICEF Special Representative for the Balkans, Madeleine Rees, Head of UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgette Gagnon, Director of Human Rights of the OSCE mission here in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr. Marijan Baotic, Assistant Minister on immigration and asylum issues will participate in the press conference, which starts at 10:30 tomorrow morning at the Joint Institutions Building.

Secondly, the Ministry of Defence, the OSCE mission and SFOR will introduce the Guide, an information book on programs available for demobilised soldiers, tomorrow at Dom Vojske, also known as Dom Armije. The guide is produced by OSCE, financed by SFOR as a contribution to the demobilisation efforts of the government. As we speak, training is taking

place for army officers who will act as consultants in the field for demobilised soldiers to assist them in the transition from military to civilian life. The information guide is part of the training. Tomorrow morning the Guide will be introduced formally by Minister Mijo Anic and deputy minister Ferid Buljubasic, Ambassador Beecroft, Head of the OSCE mission and General John Sylvester, Com. SFOR. The press conference starts at 11:30 in the Main Hall, of Dom Vojske and you should have received a media advisory from the respective ministries, if you have not, you can contact me after the press conference and I will give you copies. Thank you.

Stefo Lehmann – UNMIBH

Good afternoon, I have been almost four years in Bosnia and Herzegovina and this is my last press conference, so I will conclude with an interesting story, that is not new.

After conducting a comprehensive review of the acts and the missions of various police officers serving with the police forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the IPTF Commissioner Sven Fredriksen, has decided to withdraw the provisional authorisation to exercise police powers from six police officers for various types of misconduct. This misconduct ranges from transporting illegal immigrants to smuggling to illegally occupying apartments. I have all the details here enumerated and I will not go through every one of them, but will certainly provide this for you.

Removal of provisional authorisation in no way precludes the obligation of the respective Ministries of Interior from taking their own appropriate internal disciplinary action, in addition to necessary criminal investigations as required by law. As you know, the commissioner's decision is effective immediately and prevents these officers from participating in any aspect of police work anywhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina, either now or in the future.

Also this week another 13 police officers have received non-compliance reports for various types of misconduct. I also have the details of these 13 officers, which will no doubt interest you.

Continuing, a ceremony marking the UN trust fund reconstruction of part of a building of the Association of Citizens for Helping Mentally Challenged Persons named OAZA will be held tomorrow, 28 June. We will issue a media advisory providing further details. The ceremony will be held at the Associations building in Sarajevo in Bakarevica Street 37. Special Representative of the Secretary General Klein, will address the ceremony this project involves a donation of close to 23,000 KM, I also have the back ground here for you.

And finally, I do not have any sentimental last words, from my last press conference. But I have in fact calculated that, I have given over 220 press conferences in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Brcko, in Mostar and in Sarajevo. One morning I woke and realised I had spent about 15% of my life in this country. So, at 32 years old, I figured it was time to move on and I am currently considering various options abroad.

I will certainly miss working with you, I think it went pretty well. I will certainly miss working with my colleagues, in Mostar, in Brcko and I will miss working for the UN mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is certainly one of the most successful missions that the UN has. I will also certainly miss working with Mr. Klein, who is certainly dedicated and a great boss to work for. Thank you very much for everything – that's it.

AUDIENCE APPLAUSE

Frane Maroevic – EU

Good morning, I just one announcement for you today.

There is an invitation to the signing of the cards 2002 action

programme, which sets out the priorities for the European Union assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina worth 71.9 Million Euro from the 2002 budget. The signing will be done by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers Dr. Dragan Mikerevic, and the Head of Delegation of the European Commission Ambassador Kretschmer. Tomorrow at 13:00 in the Joint Institution Building, Marijin Dvor. Further details will be available later today and of course at the signing ceremony you will be provided with detailed breakdown of where the funds will be invested. Thank you.

Major Scott Lundy – SFOR

Dobar dan from SFOR.

Representatives of SFOR and civilian authorities will sign a Statement of Understanding (SOU) on Monday, 1 July 2002 that will mark the beginning of the next chapter in airspace normalisation for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The SOU signing ceremony, scheduled for 11:00 on the civilian side of the Sarajevo International Airport, will mark the start of the first phase of the transfer of authority for the Sarajevo International Airport from the SFOR Air Detachment (DETAIR) to civilian authorities.

Transfer of authority will occur in three phases, as follows:

Phase One – DETAIR begins handing over responsibilities for security, rescue, fire fighting and medical emergencies at Sarajevo International Airport to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Department of Civil Aviation and the Airport Director;

Phase Two – DETAIR will reduce its presence and support functions at Sarajevo International Airport as the civilian authorities become increasingly proficient in the performance of their security, rescue, fire fighting, medical emergency and other essential services; and

Phase Three – Civilian authorities assume complete responsibility for all aspects of airport operations, allowing DETAIR to withdraw completely from Sarajevo International Airport. This phase will be complete by the end of 2002.

Phase One of the transfer of authority is now possible due to the excellent performance of civilian airport and municipal emergency services during Exercise RED WING, an SFOR-sponsored air accident response exercise conducted in May 2002.

Those journalists who are interested in covering the SOU signing ceremony should contact the Sarajevo International Airport authorities for more information.

And finally, on behalf of everyone at the table as well as our predecessors, I would like to thank Stefo for the great work he has done. He has been charming, witty, and very frank in his dealings with the spokespersons as well as with you and certainly Stefo, you have given me some lessons, which I have hoisted in. Thank you very much and again thanks for your time.

AUDIENCE APPLAUSE

Stefo Lehmann – UNMIBH

Thank you...

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

I think, I want to add to that actually...(Laughter) to further embarrass Stefo...

Stefo Lehmann – UNMIBH

What do you want to add? (Laughter)

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

To thank him for all the improvised statements, this one is improvised as well and wish him the very best in the remaining

85% of his life, and wish him many, many more press conferences.

Stefo Lehmann – UNMIBH

Thank you very much, thank you.

Mario Brkic – OHR

Thank you, any questions? Thank you very much,