

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

OHR, Kevin Sullivan

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OHR

Council of Ministers Must Act By Thursday to Meet Police Reform Deadline

The Council of Ministers must establish a Directorate for the implementation of the EC approved plan for police reform by the deadline that they themselves set – 31 December. This deadline has been approved by the BiH parliaments and by the EC. In order for the requisite personnel to be appointed in time for the end of year deadline, the Council of Minister must adopt the Decision establishing the Directorate, acceptable to the EC and the US, who are monitoring this process, no later than this Thursday. The Decision to establish the Directorate is only the first step in setting it up and as things stand the BiH authorities are in danger of missing their first deadline – that they set themselves and that was approved by the EC – in this process. That would be a very negative signal given that implementing Police reform is a clear SAA requirement.

More Jobs Means More Returns

This evening the High Representative will speak at the opening of a photo exhibition organized by UNHCR. The High Representative will stress that the biggest obstacle to return is no longer political or administrative; it is a lack of economic opportunity. He will emphasise that, "Every reform that makes it easier to start a new company in BiH, or makes it easier to attract investment, or makes it easier to create new jobs enhances the ability of remaining refugees and DPs to return to their homes."

High Representative Commends Major-General Leakey, Welcomes Major-General Chiarini

And, at two o'clock this afternoon the High Representative will take part in the formal handover, at Camp Butmir, of EUFOR's command, from Major-General Leakey to Major-General Chiarini. The High Representative has commended General Leakey for taking the bold steps that have been necessary in order to establish EUFOR as a credible force in BiH capable of maintaining a safe and secure environment. Not only has EUFOR taken over the tasks that were previously carried out by SFOR, it has *expanded* these tasks, creating for itself a key role in the fight against organized crime and assisting the BiH authorities in their efforts to address the festering scandal of the continued liberty of persons indicted for war crimes.

OSCE

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina marks the International Human Right Day

On the 10 December 1948 the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which proclaimed the freedoms and rights of all peoples. Since then, the world has coined the celebration of this document as "Human Rights Day".

To honor this day, the OSCE Mission to BiH is engaged in a variety of activities that are taking place across the country.

Ambassador Douglas Davidson, Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, is visiting Mostar today, and will take part in a debate on human rights with high school and university students from Mostar. This event has been organized by the Nansen Dialogue Center.

At the beginning of November, the OSCE launched a BiH-wide essay competition for high school students. A significant amount of entries from all around the country have since then been received.

Ambassador Davidson, Vildana Selimbegovic, Editor-in-chief of Dani magazine, Mirsad Kebo, State Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, and Srdjan Dizdarevic, President of Helsinki Committee of BiH will meet this week to make a decision on the winning essays. This Friday, on 9 December, we will hold a press conference to announce the competition winners. We shall also take this opportunity to honour the spirit and principles enshrined within the Universal Declaration on Human Rights – such as respect, equality, tolerance and diversity.

In addition, the OSCE Mission to BiH, in cooperation with BHT1, has developed 15 TV shows for a serie called “I have a right to...” that specifically deal with human rights issues. The first serial will be aired this Saturday, on the actual international Human Rights day.

ICTY

Good morning to you all on behalf of the ICTY.

I have one announcement today. Tomorrow morning at 8am, Trial Chamber I of the ICTY will pronounce its judgement in the case against Miroslav Bralo.

Bralo admitted on 19 July his guilt for crimes committed in the Vitez municipality, including the villages of Ahmići, Nadioci and Kratine, between April and July 1993. He pleaded guilty to eight counts of persecutions, murder, torture, rape, unlawful confinement of civilians and inhuman treatment.

My office has prepared for you cd-roms with copies of the following documents from this case:

- Plea agreement
- Factual basis attached to the plea agreement
- Amended indictment
- Prosecution’s Sentencing Brief (in English)
- Public version of Defence Sentencing Brief (in English)
- Defence submission of supplementary sentencing materials (in English)

Both Prosecution and Defence sentencing briefs contain statements of witnesses. The Defence Sentencing Brief also contains a hand-written statement from Miroslav Bralo titled “My apology”. The Defence submission of supplementary sentencing materials further contains information on developments related to discovery of remains of victims of the crimes committed by Miroslav Bralo.

The Prosecution has requested a sentence of 25 years’ imprisonment for Miroslav Bralo. Bralo’s defence did not give a specific suggestion for length of sentence.

I invite you to follow a live web broadcast of the judgement hearing on the ICTY website. At the conclusion of the hearing, we will also issue a press release.

That is all I have today, thank you for your attention.

EUFOR

No statement.

RTQs

Ognjen Begovic, SRNA

Kevin, what is with the 28 million KM that the indirect taxation authority owes to the RS government?

Kevin Sullivan, OHR:

Well, as you know this is an issue that has emerged from the Governing Board of the ITA. The Governing Board has three finance members – finance ministers as members – and it is the appropriate place for this issue to be resolved, and it is important that it is resolved there and resolved quickly so that there is no uncertainty ahead of the introduction of VAT on the 1st of January. That is our position.