

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

Police Directorate to Find Solution That Meets the Three EC principles

There has been much discussion and debate on police reform and the work of the Police Directorate during recent days.

The Police Directorate's next meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

The focus of the discussion in the Police Directorate is on the first principle, which states that all legislative and budgetary competencies for all police matters must be vested at the State level. It is important that the BiH public understand what this means –

The first principle means that only the state, the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, will adopt laws on all police matters in BiH with no possibility of entity or cantonal laws on police matters.

Likewise, only the state will adopt the budget for all police matters, and all police bodies will be funded through this budget. This means that the entity or cantonal levels will no longer be competent to adopt budgets on police matters.

If the police are to be effective in fighting crime within BiH's borders and if BiH is to be an effective partner in the international fight against crime the importance of this reform must not be underestimated.

OHR is confident that a solution that meets the three EC principles can be found in the Directorate.

BiH Politicians are Responsible to BiH Voters

The citizens of BiH are attending to their own business and are doing this in the context of political stabilization and economic recovery, the Senior Deputy High Representative, Peter Bas-Backer, will tell the opening session of the EU-BiH Interparliamentary meeting this afternoon in Banja Luka.

Ambassador Bas-Backer will emphasize, as the High Representative emphasized on 18 April in his speech to the UN Security Council, that as BiH moves from the Dayton framework into a structure established and owned in BiH and oriented towards Euro-Atlantic structures, the full weight of political responsibility will fall on the shoulders of BiH politicians. The International Community will no longer act as an alternative source of authority.

Ambassador Bas-Backer will point out – and I quote – that “Just in the last few days the parliament of BiH, by a narrow margin and after months of detailed and constructive debate, failed to endorse a package of constitutional changes that would have equipped the BiH authorities to serve citizens more efficiently and would also have equipped the country to meet the demands of EU integration, particularly the very strenuous legislative demands. The International Community argued vigorously and with one voice in favor of the constitutional amendments. The International Community stands ready to offer its support when the issue of constitutional reform is taken up again – and it must be addressed if BiH is to progress further and faster along the road to European integration. But it is now up to the citizens of BiH to consider this new situation and to make up their minds about how their political representatives acted about Constitutional and other reforms, and to express their views at the elections. This is a matter of ownership.”

The full text of Ambassador Bas-Backer's speech will be available later today on the OHR website.

EUPM

EUPM is very pleased to see the first case solved thanks to a call from a citizen following the “Nerijesen slucaj” TV show.

Reacting upon the received information, the members of Doboj police station have arrested A.H. on 26 April in Kotorako. A. H. is wanted by INTERPOL as a suspect in a murder case that happened in 1997 in Slovenia.

“This is a clear example of the crucial importance of citizens’ active participation in TV show “Nerijesen slucaj” and also how their cooperation with the local police can result in arrest of those who committed crimes,” said Brigadier General Vincenzo Coppola, Head of EUPM.

EUPM initiated the idea to implement TV show “Nerijesen slucaj” in BiH. The programme was first aired on October 5th 2005 on BHT 1 and with financial assistance from UK Embassy. “Nerijesen slucaj” is aired once a month (Wednesdays) on BHT 1.

“I would like to use this opportunity to call upon all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to actively help their police solve crimes by providing information. Citizens can call the toll free number Krimolovci at 0800 020 505 and give information while staying completely anonymous.”reminds General Coppola.

The next edition of Nerijesen Slucaj TV programme will be aired on Wednesday, 3rd of May on BHT1.

EUFOR

No statement.