Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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High Representative Extends Mandate of ITA Governing Board Chair

The High Representative Miroslav Lajcak today amended the Law on Indirect Taxation System in BiH and re-appointed Peter Nicholl as Chair of the Indirect Taxation Authority's Governing Board until 30 June 2008.

The ITA Governing Board has not yet established a permanent system for the distribution of funds from indirect taxation, Peter Nicholl will continue to assist the Board in finding a permanent methodology for revenue distribution.

Peter Nicholl's mandate was due to expire on 13 January 2008. So far BiH's parties have been unable to agree on Peter Nicholl's successor.

The High Representative therefore today also amended the Law on Indirect Taxation System in BiH to ensure continuous leadership and this institution's functionality in case there is no agreement on future ITA Board Chairs.

“The law now provides for the BiH Finance and Treasury Minister to automatically take on the role of Chair for at least a year if there is no agreement on a new Chair of the Governing Board”, said the High Representative today. “Functional institutions and a secure base from which to continue to build a common economic space are essential for this country’s future.”

This six-month extension also allows time for the ITA Governing Board to establish the administrative capacity necessary for the transition to BiH leadership.

EUFOR

SARAJEVO HOSPITAL SAVES EUFOR SOLDIER

On 7th December 2007, EUFOR Spanish Major Manuel Barón Garcia was evacuated from Camp Butmir to the University Hospital in Sarajevo after suffering chest pains. This was diagnosed later as a heart attack and his condition was assessed to be very serious and at one stage critical. He was attended to at the University Hospital in Sarajevo by a highly qualified specialist team led by Doctor Mirsad Kacila. Major Barón was in intensive care for twelve days after which his condition stabilised. On 27th December he was diagnosed as being well enough to travel home to Spain and on 29th December he was transferred to a military hospital in Madrid where he continues to make good progress.

The EUFOR medical teams were extremely impressed with the care provided by the University Hospital in Sarajevo and indeed commented on the level of sophistication of treatment given by Doctor Mirsad Kacila and his team. Because of Doctor Mirsad Kacila’s skill it is doubted if Major Barón would have survived in any other environment.

COM EUFOR, Major General Ignacio Martín Villalaín will visit the University Hospital on Thursday 10 January to personally thank Doctor Mirsad Kacila and his team for efforts made in the saving of Major Barón’s life.

There will be an opportunity for the media to witness this event and talk to Doctor Kacila. The Media are requested to at the hospital no later than 1100 on this same date.