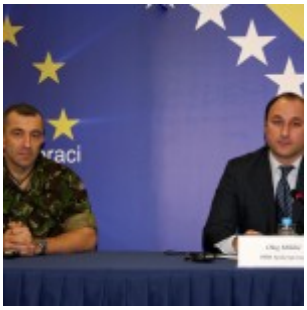
Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference



Oleg Milisic OHR/EUSR
David Fielder EUFOR

OHR/EUSR

Coalition leaders to ensure full functioning of institutions

EU Foreign Affairs Ministers last night welcomed the latest positive developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the renewed commitment to police reform.

However, they also reiterated their concern over the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and slowdown in reform process over the last year.

Foreign Ministers said that it is the responsibility of the political leaders to ensure the full functioning of State institutions and to advance reforms which are essential for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward and assume full ownership of its governance.

The key message for BiH leaders is that EU Foreign Ministers are ready to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with BiH as soon as the four conditions are met. This includes police reform that meets the three EU principles as is set out in the Mostar Declaration and Action Plan on Police Reform,

the completion of the public broadcast service reform, cooperation with ICTY and public administration reform.

In this regard today's meeting organized by the leaders of the parties that make up the governing coalition is of real importance.

Practice has shown that when parliamentary party leaders sit down in the right forum to talk about concrete reforms a positive outcome is possible.

The High Representative/EU Special Representative is attending the meeting today in Banja Luka and has welcomed these meetings as a structured mechanism by all coalition partners to co-ordinate their reform efforts, and find a compromise to secure a common view and a shared interest.

These meetings provide a vehicle for BiH's political leaders to rebuild public confidence and generate a positive political atmosphere. Importantly, they present a real opportunity to address the requirements for EU integration.

The full conclusions of the GAERC are available through the following link:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/97545.pdf

EUFOR

No statement

RTQs:

FENA, Fedžad Forto:

Recently there has been much talk that you have reactivated

theAnti-Corruption Unit. During the last ten years one of the main topics of discussion has certainly been crime and corruption.I would like to know if you will respond in any way to the recent incidentin the Government of the Federation of BiH, specifically involving minister Hećo who sent a letter to the court requesting that his assistant, who was convicted of corruption, be made available to the Ministry for another three months, I quote, «in order to complete work related to merging the mines with the Elektroprivreda.» I mean, what can a man who was convicted – we are talking about a man who was accused and convicted – do? Will this be a case your Anti-Corruption Unit will work on?

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

At the present moment, it is still too early to talk about which cases the Anti-Corruption Unit will be working on. I think there is obviously still some unclarity about the exact role of the Unit, which will in fact be conducting analyses. The High Representative, even before he came here and took up his post in the OHR, had decided to form a small unit. However, once again I would like to emphasize that the Unit is made up of analysts and that they will not be investigating individual cases. Local institutions– the police, the judiciary and the courts – are in place for that very purpose andsuch matters fall within their competencies. Therefore, such a question should certainly be directed to the local institutions, meaning that the local institutions will be the ones working on such cases. However, the Unit will have its competencies, that is certain tasks it will perform – but not in the sense that they will be taking on the responsibilities of the local institutions.

FENA, Fedžad Forto:

After they analyze the overall situation or a specific case, what will happen with their analyses? Who will they be given to?

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

They will first be given to the High Representative.

FENA, Fedžad Forto:

What will he do with the analyses?

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

We will see. I will not speculate about what could possibly happen.

FENA, Fedžad Forto:

What is the point of the analysis then? What will he do after he reads it?

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

As I said, we will see when the time comes. I will not speculate about that.

OBN, Almir Sarenkapa:

I have two questions. The first concerns the proposal that Nikola Špirić once again be appointed mandatary for forming the Council of ministers. What is the OHR's position on that proposal considering that, at least according to the research conducted by the Center for Civic Initiatives, the Council of Ministers under his command, so to say,realized only 25% of the foreseen plan?

The second question is what message exactly is being sent both to the local people and the international community if the High Representative supports the local politicians acting outside the institutional framework of the country? Decisions are being made in catering establishments, and not in the parliaments, assemblies and governments of this country.

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

With regards to the first question, the Office of the High Representative does participate in the forming of either a coalition or the Government. The parties that form the majority have the competency to come to a solution and I think that absolutely falls within their competencies.

As far as the question of supportingsuch meetings is concerned, the High Representative already, as you said, earlier expressed his support for the meeting.I think there has been no interference nor violation of any of the competencies of the institutions. The institutions are there, and they are the ones that in the end have the final word and have to pass the decision. Would you like me to give you an example, say the agreement that was reached on the Action Plan on Police Reform? Do not forget that that agreement was not validuntil it received the approval of the Council of Ministers. Therefore, such meetings are useful for gaining support for specific goals. However, such meetings in no way undermine the significance of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which have the full support of the international community.

OBN, Almir Sarenkapa:

Can you give us at least one example where crucial decisions in Europe were made in barrooms?

OHR/EUSR, Oleg Milišić:

I am certain that the reaching of an agreement between politicians is a perfectly normal and common occurrence in Europe. I would have to make some further inquiries in order to be able to answer your question. Let me make it clear, the fact that meetings are being held in no way undermines nor degrades the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina.