



Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

OHR/EUSR, Frane Maroevic
EUFOR, Maj. David Fielder

OHR

I have two issues for today.

First is that the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Miroslav Lajcak, travels to Brussels today where he will hold a series of high-level meetings with the EU and NATO.

Tomorrow the HR/EUSR will visit NATO to meet with Secretary General, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer and address the North Atlantic Council.

The High Representative will be briefing NATO and later the EU's Political and Security Committee on the current situation in BiH, the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council meeting last week.

The HR/EUSR will assure both NATO and the PSC that the international community retains the necessary instruments to counter destructive tendencies and that it will not allow attempts to undermine the Dayton Peace Agreement, whether from inside or outside the country.

Last week the PIC underlined that the situation in BiH is now of the utmost concern to the international community; since June BiH has moved no closer to initialing a Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

Given the lack of progress on key reforms, the PIC gave its unanimous support to the need to refocus on completing implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, including efforts to tackle the evident dysfunctionality of state institutions.

In his meetings with EC Officials the HR/EUSR will underline that the Mostar Declaration of 28 October can serve as the starting point for a positive reengagement of the government coalition parties. However, concrete steps are now needed to demonstrate that this is a serious effort.

EUFOR

SEDE VISIT TO EUFOR

On Thursday 8 November a delegation of Members of European Parliament (MEPs) from the EU Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) will visit EUFOR in order to discuss progress made by EUFOR with COM EUFOR, Rear Admiral Hans Jochen Witthauer

There will be an opportunity for the press to meet this delegation on Thursday 8 November at 1700. Members of the press are requested to be at the main gate of Butmir Camp no later than 1645 in order to be escorted in. The press conference will be indoors.

RTQs

Dnevni List, Rešad Dautefendić:

Considering that in the aftermath of this severe political crisis there has been more and more talk among the people here about the possibility of another war and similar, I would like to ask Mr. Fielder what can he, on behalf of EUFOR, say in order to reassure and calm the citizens?

EUFOR, Maj. David Fielder:

That is a good question and a very important question. EUFOR's current position is that we see no threat or any change to the current security situation. EUFOR has been here since 2004. Its predecessors have been here since 1995. During that time we have seen peace. EUFOR has strong capability to maintain that peace. So we would like to reassure the population that we have the strength and the capability to maintain that.

Oslobođenje, Antonio Prlenda:

The European Commission will be submitting its annual Progress Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina's preparations for further integration with the European Union to the BiH Council of Ministers today. Could you please comment on this. What will be in the report? Corruption, police reform? What is your view on all of this today, before the report is presented?

OHR/EUSR, Frane Maroević:

The report has been neither formally submitted nor issued yet. Therefore any comments regarding the report would be nothing more than speculation. It is no secret that BiH, at this time, has made no progress in key reform processes – neither in police reform nor any other areas and reforms that are necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to make progress on the road to Europe. And that is what is crucial for everyone to see. However, I do not want to make any further comments on something that has not yet been issued. As far as I know, the European Commission will formally submit the report at 15:00 hours and then hold a press conference at 16:00, where and when the Commissioner will be able to answer your questions in more detail.

FTV, Antonija Djak:

Could you briefly comment on the meeting held today at Jahorina? What did the High Representative and Mr. Dodik discuss?

OHR/EUSR, Frane Maroević:

They discussed Srebrenica. The Srebrenica Investment Conference was held today. It is a very important process for attracting investment to Srebrenica and for initiating the complete regeneration of this extremely important municipality and its surrounding area.

FTV, Antonija Djak:

Does the OHR have any comments in reference to the statement Mr. Dodik made last night, when he said that in the event the High Representative passed a decision to remove him from office he would neither accept nor acknowledge it, and would continue to perform his functions even if attempts were made to prevent him from doing so?

OHR/EUSR, Frane Maroević:

Regarding any politicians being removed from office, you all well know what the standard answer is to such questions – we do not speculate about our future activities. Therefore, neither will we speculate about the consequences of any such activities. It is all just speculation.