

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

OHR Seeks Progress in Higher Education Law Before New Academic Year

The OHR notes the agreement between the Republika Srpska Council of Peoples and the Republika Srpska National Assembly to adopt the RS Higher Education Law. Republika Srpska, its Government and its students have recognised the importance of the Bologna process, the benefits it brings to students, and its potential to improve employment and economic opportunities.

Despite adoption of the RS Law, there is still no State-level BiH Law. A first step is the adoption of State level-legislation. The BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs has prepared a draft Higher Education Law that meets BiH's commitment to the Bologna Process. The Constitutional and Legal Commission of the BiH House of Representatives are discussing it on Thursday 24 August. This means that it too could be adopted before the start of the new university year.

The draft State-level Higher Education Law would standardise the quality of diplomas across the country and ensure their recognition elsewhere in Europe and beyond. It would also provide greater student mobility and contribute to greater economic growth for the entire country.

The OHR looks to BiH's Parliamentarians and students to use the current momentum in advance of the new university year to ensure this legislation moves forward.

After the State-level Law is passed, Entity and Cantonal legislation would need to be harmonised with it.

The Bologna Process is an inter-governmental initiative that aims to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010. Forty-four countries have already signed up to this process.

The Bologna Declaration establishes what is necessary to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010. It aims to establish a number of common features in education systems of the various States, such as a common degree structure and a system of grades that is comprehensible outside their borders. The result would be greater student mobility across Europe and common structures of higher education systems across Europe. It does not seek to create a system that eradicates national characteristics.

High Representative to Visit Temporary SIPA HQ

The need for effective State-level Law enforcement and security is clear if BiH is to investigate war crimes and other crime effectively. For this reason, BiH's institutions must therefore ensure that SIPA – the State Investigation and Protection Agency – receives the support it requires.

The High Representative is committed to a fully functioning SIPA and it is in this context that he will be visiting the SIPA Headquarters tomorrow. SIPA is still housed in temporary facilities that physically limit SIPA's growth from the present 900 employees to a full strength of 1,600 operatives.

BiH Security Minister Barisa Colak and the EUMP Commander Vincenzo Coppola will tomorrow accompany the High Representative.

Journalists will be able to film the High Representative's arrival at 13.00 tomorrow. The High Representative will address media at 13.35. SIPA will be issuing details of the press opportunities for this visit today.

ICTY

Good morning on behalf of the Tribunal. As you have seen, the Popović et al 'Srebrenica trial' commenced yesterday with the prosecution opening statement.

After the Trial Chamber seven days ago granted the request to separate the case against Zdravko Tolimir, who is still at large, the trial is currently conducted against the following seven accused:

Vinko Pandurević, Drago Nikolić, Ljubiša Beara, Vujadin Popović and Ljubomir Borovčanin who are charged with genocide against the Muslim population in Srebrenica in July 1995, extermination and killing of thousands of Bosnian Muslim men and boys from the Srebrenica enclave and for the persecution and forcible transfer of Muslim population from the Srebrenica and Žepa enclaves.

Radivoje Miletić and Milan Gvero are charged with persecution and forcible transfer of the Muslim population from the Srebrenica and Žepa enclaves and killing of Bosnian Muslim men and boys from the Srebrenica enclave.

Let me briefly summarise what the indictment alleges against each accused.

Vinko Pandurević

According to the indictment, Vinko Pandurević was a Lt. Colonel in command of the Zvornik Brigade of the VRS and he issued orders to forces participating in the attack on the Srebrenica and Žepa enclaves. It is also alleged that he personally

authorised the detention, summary execution and burial of thousands of Bosnian Muslim men held in schools in Ročević, Kula, and the Pilica Cultural Centre, and that he assisted in many other executions.

Drago Nikolić

According to the indictment, Drago Nikolić was Chief of Security of the Zvornik Brigade and was responsible for managing the brigade's Military Police Company. It is alleged that Nikolić assisted in the transportation and organising of Muslim men to detention areas in the Zvornik area and oversaw and supervised their summary execution. Nikolić is also charged with assisting in the operation to re-bury bodies of victims.

Ljubiša Beara

According to the indictment, Ljubiša Beara – Chief of the VRS Main Staff Security Organ – organised the detention, transportation and execution of Muslim men along the Konjević Polje – Milići – Srebrenica road on 13 July 1995, assisted in the transportation of Muslim men to detention centres in the Zvornik area, and oversaw and supervised their summary execution.

According to the indictment, Beara also participated in the operation to capture Muslim men fleeing from the Žepa enclave over the Drina River to Serbia.

Vujadin Popović

According to the indictment, Vujadin Popović was the Assistant Commander of Security on the staff of the Drina Corps and was, *inter alia*, responsible for managing the units of the Drina Corps Military Police. It is alleged that Popović was present on duty in Potočari overseeing the transportation of Muslims to areas outside of the RS; he assisted in the transportation and organisation of Muslim men from Bratunac to detention

areas in Zvornik and oversaw and supervised their summary execution.

Ljubomir Borovčanin

According to the indictment, on 10 July 1995, Ljubomir Borovčanin was appointed Commander of a joint force of MUP units. The indictment further alleges that Borovčanin was present in Potočari commanding MUP troops in the separation of Muslim men from their families with full knowledge that those men would be summarily executed.

Borovčanin is also charged with planning and organising the detention and transfer of Muslim men along the Konjević Polje – Milići road and that the same day he was personally present at the Kravica warehouse when hundreds of Muslim prisoners were summarily executed.

Radivoje Miletić

According to the indictment, Radivoje Miletić was Chief of Operations and Training and was standing in for the Chief of Staff of the Main Staff of the VRS. It is alleged that Miletić took part in and helped implemented the policy to restrict humanitarian aid to the Muslim populations of Srebrenica and Žepa.

It is further alleged that Miletić monitored the transfer of civilians from the enclaves and the removal of remaining Muslims from Zepa.

Milan Gvero

According to the indictment, Milan Gvero was the Assistant Commander for Morale, Legal and Religious Affairs of the Main Staff of the VRS and reported directly to General Mladić.

The indictment alleges that Gvero contributed to the operation of forcible transfer and deportation of the Bosnian Muslim population by releasing to the public media false statements,

by lying to UNPROFOR and to international representatives.

A few additional notes about the future conduct of the case.

Following the opening statement by the prosecution, each accused's defence counsel will have an opportunity to present an opening statement, or may choose to do that later in the course of the proceedings, after the prosecution closes its case. The presentation of evidence will begin with the presentation of the prosecution case, then the defence will present their case, and finally the Trial Chamber may call additional witnesses if necessary. Each witness is first examined by the party calling the witness and then the witness may be cross-examined by the other party. I have prepared for you copies of the Trial Chamber order of 14 July 2006 concerning guidelines on the presentation of evidence and the conduct of parties during trial proceedings.

I have also brought with me copies of yesterday's press release concerning the Tribunal's decision to assign Vojislav Seselj defence counsel and copies of the decision itself.

I also have copies of yesterday's opening statement by Carla Del Ponte.

Thank you for your attention.

EUFOR

No statement.

RTQs:

Dragomir Simović, SRNA:

Does the OHR find the fact that Republica Srpska adopted the

Law on Higher Education first, problematic? I do not see what the problem could be, except of course that now the state is running late in that regard.

Oleg Milišić, OHR:

First of all, I made no comments regarding who adopted the Law on Higher Education first, and I do not intend to do so. However, as you we mentioned in our statement today, it is now important that steps be made towards the adoption of State-level legislation and the OHR feels that there is till time for this to be done before the start of the new academic year.