Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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Milan Lukic's arrest in Argentina

The arrest of ICTY indictee Milan Lukic is an important step forward in implementing a basic requirement of the DPA – and of BiH's postwar recovery – that all those accused of war crimes appear before the Hague Tribunal. Full details of this are yet to emerge. However, it should be noted that this is the first time in more than three months that an ICTY fugitive has been brought into custody. The pace of cooperation on the part of BiH – and in particular the RS – authorities must quicken. After a significant effort regarding ICTY cooperation at the beginning of the year there has been an unsatisfactory lull. The pace must quicken if BiH is to meet its international obligations in regard to Euro-Atlantic integration.

This transfer must be followed by other transfers, including that of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. The journey will only be complete when every indicted war criminal is inThe Hague.

SDHR met the President of the NHI, Zubak

The Senior Deputy High Representative, Martin Ney, met today with the President of the New Croat Initiative (NHI), Kresimir

Zubak. Discussion covered a broad range of concerns within the Croat political spectrum in BiH.

Mr Zubak briefed Ambassador Ney on the NHI's position on education reform, PBS and refugee return. In this regard Ambassador Ney emphasised the scope that exists within modern European structures to ensure the protection of citizens' individual and collective rights. In order to maximise this scope it is imperative that BiH fulfil all the conditions of the EU Feasibility Study so that it can move forward with Euro-Atlantic integration.

Other topics discussed during the meeting included defence and police reform. Police reform is the main remaining obstacle to the launch of Stabilization and Association negotiations with the EU. "Securing an agreement on Police Reform that meets the three principles laid out by the European Commission will open the way for BiH to secure its rightful place as a full member of the European family of nations," SDHR Ney said.

OSCE

No statement for today.

ICTY

Good morning from the Tribunal. Given the news of the arrest of Milan Lukić in Argentina , I would like to remind you of the charges against him.

The indictment alleges that Milan Lukić in the spring of 1992 formed a group of paramilitaries which worked with local police and military units in exacting a reign of terror upon the local Muslim population. This group of paramilitaries was often referred to as "White Eagles" and "Avengers". Lukić is charged with extermination, persecutions, murder and inhumane acts, committed in Višegrad between May 1992 and October 1994. The accusations include five separate incidents of murder, two of which are particularly gruesome.

The indictment alleges that on 14 June 1992 Milan Lukić and others forced approximately sixty-five Bosnian Muslim women, children and elderly men into a house on Pionirska Street in Višegrad. The house was barricaded and set afire. Those who tried to save themselves by climbing out the windows were shot at. Almost everyone locked in the house was killed, including seventeen children between the ages of two days and fourteen years.

On 27 June, Milan Lukić is alleged to have committed a crime of a similar nature at another location in Višegrad, again barricading a group of people into a house which was then set afire, causing the death of approximately seventy people.

It is alleged that the acts described in the indictment were part of a widespread and systematic attack against the Bosnian Muslim and other non-Serb civilians of the Višegrad area. The Prosecutor of the ICTY has qualified the charges against Lukić as crimes against humanity and violations of laws and customs of war.

The Tribunal has indicted three persons for immediate responsibility for the crimes committed in Višegrad. The initial indictment against Milan Lukić, Sredoje Lukić and Mitar Vasiljević was confirmed on 28 August 1998. Vasiljević is so far the only one to come to custody of the Tribunal. He was tried and convicted in The Hague of the killing of five men, which is one of the murder incidents Lukić is charged with. Vasiljević was sentenced to 15 years and is currently serving his sentence.

The ICTY looks forward to a prompt transfer of Milan Lukić to The Hague for purpose of trial before the Tribunal.

One should also note that the Tribunal's Prosecutor has requested that the case against Milan Lukić be referred to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In her Request the Prosecutor stated: "*Despite the obvious gravity of the crimes, the Prosecutor*

considers that these crimes, in light of her mandate as articulated by the relevant Security Council resolutions, might be prosecuted in other venues aside from the ICTY and therefore are suitable for referral under Rule 11 his."

A decision on a possible referral of the case to a national court can only be made by the Tribunal's Judges, and they will consider the Prosecutor's Request in due course.

Thank you for your attention.

EUFOR

Milan Lukic's Detention

EUFOR welcomes the news of the detention of Milan Lukic and hopes that he will be transferred from Argentina to The Hague in the near future.

EUFOR will continue to search for persons indicted for war crimes and to conduct activities to make life as difficult as possible for PIFWC's, their support networks and anyone else who may be tempted to help them.

NATO

Detention of Indicted War Criminal Milan Lukic

NATO HQ Sarajevo welcomed the news of the detention of Milan Lukic. Lukic was detained in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 8 August 2005. Milan Lukic was detained under indictment for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia(ICTY) for crimes committed in the Visegrad region.

According to NHQSa Commander, Brigadier General Steven Schook, "The capture of Milan Lukic, and the location where he was captured, is a direct reflection of the tremendous pressure NATO, the local authorities, and the international community have placed on fugitive war criminals in BiH and the continued commitment of everyone involved to bring those fugitive to

justice. I am pleased at the participation of the international community in the effort to capture fugitive war criminals but I want to be mindful that the responsibility for the detention of indicted war criminals ultimately rests with the entities.”

Fugitive war criminals and their supporters represent a threat to sustained peace in BiH and ultimately to the country’s progress and development. The capture of each indicted war criminal is an important step toward lasting peace and stability in the region.