Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

OHR, Vedran Persic
OSCE, Zinaida Delic
EUPM, Alun Roberts
EUFOR, Chris Percival
NATO, Dwight Mood

OHR

High Representative Meets Police

The High Representative Paddy Ashdown will today visit Doboj where he'll meet police officers and their families. The High Representative will hear their views on police reform, in light of the publication of the recommendations of Chairman of the Police Reform Commission's report last week.

The report recommends establishing a single structure for policing that, if implemented, is designed to provide the citizens of BiH with a more effective and responsive police force that is financially sustainable and free from political interference. Police restructuring is also a requirement for moving towards a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. Currently, BiH police forces are fragmented and limited in movement leaving enough space and time for criminals to operate.

In Doboj, the High Representative will tour the police premises, and then join police officers in their regular patrolling duties. A media address is expected at 16:00 hrs near Doboj Synagogue.

Tomorrow, the High Representative will join police patrols in

Usora and Tesanj.

OSCE

No formal press statement

EUPM

No formal press statement

EUFOR

Weapon Harvest Operation – Sarajevo and Eeast Sarajevo

As part of a continuing programme of weapon harvest operations, EUFOR troops from Multi-National Task Force (South East) will commence a major door-to-door harvest operation in Sarajevo and East Sarajevo on 21 February 2005. This operation will last for two weeks and will be a joint operation, undertaken in close partnership with FBiH and RS interior authorities and police forces. It follows a similar JOINT operation conducted in Mostar during November and December 2004, when excellent harvest results were achieved.

The success of this operation will depend upon the cooperation of the Citizens of Sarajevo and East Sarajevo, who will be asked to voluntarily hand over any illegal weapons, ammunition or explosive devises they may possess, without fear of legal action. Illegal weapons are still a significant threat to the safety and security of this country, with children being especially at risk, particularly from mines and hand grenades. Citizens are therefore strongly encouraged to use this opportunity to make Bosnia and Herzegovina a safer place.

NATO

No formal press statement

RTQs

Almir Sarenkapa, TV Pink

A question related to police reform: Talking to politicians in BiH Parliament I have noticed that all of them are against this proposal, regardless of whether they are in Government or in opposition or of their ethnicity. Some of them find it too radical while others find it not radical enough. How do you plan to implement all this if they are against proposal even before discussion has started?

OHR:

BiH politicians are expected to act in the interest of BiH citizens. If BiH Police experts – with assistance of Commission's Chair Mr. Martens, and other international experts – found solution, recommending how to make BiH Police much better; more responsible, working in the interest of citizens and free of political influence, than politicians should do everything in their power to make those improvements.