# Transcript of the International Agency's Joint Press Conference at CPIC

CPIC/Media Conferences

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 10 June 2003**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Tuesday, 10 June 2003:

| Agency | Spokesperson | Topic |
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| a. OHR | Mario Brkic | • High Representative to visit returnees in Visegrad Area<br>• PDHR visits Hidrogradnja<br>• Bjelasnica-Igman Working Group meeting<br>• HR to meet with Queen Noor<br>• Briefing on PIC Steering Board Political Directors meeting |
| b. OSCE | Urdur Gunnarsdottir | • OSCE urges House of Peoples to pass Education Law<br>• Amnesty International's Fair Trial Manual |
| c. EUPM | Jon Oskar Solnes | • Milakovic case being thoroughly investigated at state level<br>• Remarkable release of suspect in Doboj |
| d. ICTY | Refik Hodzic | • No Electronic Statement Received |

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| e. SFOR | Major James Billings | • Anti-Hail Rockets |

2. Twenty-three members of the media including two television crews attended the conference.

3. The transcript of the questions and answers is attached.

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**Mario Brkic – OHR**

**High Representative to visit returnees in Visegrad Area**

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, and his wife, Jane, stayed last night at the return site of Rohci, near Visegrad. Today they are spending time helping to repair the houses and clear ground for cultivation.

This is the most recent in a series of visits that Paddy Ashdown and his wife have undertaken to talk to returnees to find out more about the challenges and difficulties they face. Many of those who have returned to Rohci have been living in tents and face very difficult circumstances, while waiting for reconstruction of their war damaged houses. Agriculture is their main livelihood.

**PDHR visits Hidrogradnja**

Tomorrow at 11.30 the Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, will visit the SIGMA cement factory in Butmir, to help put the privatization process back on track. SIGMA is one of the key companies due for privatization in the next round.

Sigma is part of GIK Hidrogradnja, the construction and civil engineering group that has its headquarters in Sarajevo. Hidrogradnja has more than 1,000 employees and generates income of around 100 million KM every year. It is expanding

its presence in the international civil engineering market, a process that can be facilitated through a strategic investment partnership.

At the start of his visit to the cement factory, Ambassador Hays will speak to the press about progress that is being made on relaunching Bosnia and Herzegovina's privatisation programme. As you know, the results of privatisation have so far been disappointingly modest. At Bijelasnica in April the governments committed themselves to relaunching the privatisation process and ensuring that citizens begin to experience the benefits of this process sooner rather than later. People still tend to associate privatisation with job losses. It is a fact that when money is poured into a newly privatised company the comprehensive restructuring needed to turn the company around often involves job losses in the short term – but in the long term, as companies are returned to profitability, they *create* new and better-paid jobs.

After the short press conference, media will be invited to cover Ambassador Hays' visit to the cement factory. We will be issuing a media advisory later today.

**Bjelasnica-Igman Working Group meeting**

Tomorrow the High Representative will chair the second Bjelasnica Working group meeting, which will take place at the OHR.

As agreed on the previous meeting Cantonal authorities will present full information about the current situation at Bjelasnica and Igman by providing and presenting cantonal plans for development of the project.

**HR to meet with Queen Noor**

Short announcement is that the HR Paddy Ashdown will meet on Wednesday 11 June with the Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan. She is here in her role as a director of the ICMP, and they

will of course be discussing Srebrencia and other issues. More details will follow during the day.

**Briefing on PIC Steering Board Political Directors meeting**

OHR Director of Communications, Julian Braithwaite, will hold a press conference to brief members of the press on the upcoming PIC Steering Board meeting at the level Political Directors, which will take place in Sarajevo from Wednesday evening to Friday of this week.

The briefing will be held tomorrow, **Wednesday, 11 June at 13.00 hrs, at the OHR, Sarajevo**

**Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE**

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the House of Representatives unanimously passing the State-Level framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education. The Law must now be discussed and adopted by the House of Peoples. It is essential that the members of the House of Peoples address this issue in a responsible manner. It is not time for partisan politics but for strategic support to the five education pledges made by BIH authorities themselves last November. The final passage of this state-level framework Law will represent a major milestone for the education reform process in BiH. It clearly sets out the human rights and education principles that are to be applied everywhere in schools throughout BiH and will hasten the implementation of education standards and norms that will allow comparability with the rest of Europe, as well as mobility within it.

The OSCE Mission to BiH has financed the translation and printing of 450 copies of Amnesty International's Fair Trial Manual, which is now being distributed to all courts, prosecutors' offices, Ombudsmen offices, police stations, prison administrations and law faculties throughout the country. The purpose of this initiative is to support lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police and administrative

officers in carrying out their duties in a professional manner, and in compliance with international standards. The manual itself is also a useful tool in the application of international and regional standards for fair trial found in human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Europe Prison Rules of the Council of Europe. It provides assistance to lawyers, judges and others to understand international standards of human rights protection and fair trail. All recipients so far have welcomed the handbooks as a valuable asset to their work.

**Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM**

As the Media will know, one of the most serious aspects of organized crime in BiH remains the crime of trafficking in women. Investigations have revealed that one of the main suspects of this illegal trade, which also constitutes a major violation of human rights, has been the Milakovic family and their several night bar establishments in Prijedor, in the Republika Srpska entity of BiH. Moreover, six Human Trafficking victims were found locked up at the family's premises in Prijedor when Milakovic and some of his associates were arrested. The media will recall the raids on the Milakovic premises in Prijedor earlirer this year, which secured a range of evidence on the activities of the Milakovic crime business. EUPM therefore welcomes the decision of the State Prosecutor, last Friday, to extend the detention of Mr. Milakovic and three of his main associates for a further two months. This is in order that the RS Ministry of Interior's special investigation team can continue to gather information. The EUPM notes that here we are seeing professional law enforcement activities that tie in with the state level prosecution. Establishing good linkage between the two is essential in bringing complex criminal cases to the desired end.

A few days back, another case of a serious criminal offence

took place in Doboj. There a male declared that he was going to kill another male, went to his home and returned with a hand grenade. Given the fact that the police had learned about his intentions, they were able to prevent a much more serious incident happening. That is, all of this took place in the street with numerous members of the public nearby. Fortunately they were warned to move back from the scene by the police, which appeared swiftly on the scene. However, after several minutes talking to the subject, the police observed him removing the safety pin of the grenade and which he then threw. The grenade exploded and caused damage to 6 vehicles at the location but more importantly no injuries to any persons standing by. The suspect was then detained and found to be under the influence of alcohol. The EUPM is, however, surprised by the fact that the suspect was then released from custody pending the completion of the investigation. Here it seems, that a more sensible balance must be found, between detaining suspects and releasing them. By every European standard, a suspect who was observed by a number of witnesses throwing a hand grenade in a urban built-up area, should not be out in the street the following day. This is a case which the EUPM will look closer into from a law enforcement perspective as such reckless use of explosive devices is unacceptable in BiH.

**Refik Hodzic – ICTY**

No Electronic Statement Received.

**Major James Billings – SFOR**

Good morning. I have one point this morning pertaining to SFOR's position regarding the employment of anti-hail rockets. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that employment of rockets for hail reduction is a decision for the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Control of BiH airspace rests with BiH authorities – specifically, Mr. Drago Radic, the director of Civil Aviation (DCA). He and his

agency have the responsibility to ensure that these rockets are employed in a safe manner. SFOR has no objection to the use of these devices if it can be accomplished in a manner that does not jeopardise aviation safety. While SFOR takes the concerns of the people of BiH very seriously and supports the efforts to reduce hail and protect the agricultural industry, it is not SFOR's responsibility to control the safety of BiH airspace. Over the past month, SFOR has received requests from the government of the Republic of Srpska to approve the firing of rockets for the purpose of reducing hail in the agricultural areas of northern BiH. These requests should go to the DCA. The DCA must formulate a thorough and detailed plan to employ anti-hail rockets. This plan must address the required co-ordination with the many different organisations concerned with the airspace above BiH and it must place significant emphasis on the safety of air traffic. In a letter from the Chief of Staff (COS) at SFOR Headquarters, Brigadier General Bruno Kasdorf, to Director Radic, SFOR indicated that it stands prepared to assist the DCA by helping to identify the many agencies that have interests in the skies above BiH. In order for BiH to continue to move forward, the government of BiH should take responsibility for matters affecting the people of their country. They should take the initiative and address the concerns of their people. Thank you.

## Questions and Answers

There were no questions.