

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

CPIC/Media Conferences

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE - 15 May 2003**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday, 15 May 2003:

| <b>Agency</b> | <b>Spokesperson</b>     | <b>Topic</b>  |
|---------------|-------------------------|---|
| a. OHR        | Oleg Milisic            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adoption of the Civil Service Law</li><li>• High Representative in France</li></ul>           |
| b. OSCE       | Emir Salihovic          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No Electronic Statement Received</li></ul>  |
| c. EUPM       | Jon Oskar Solnes        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive steps towards correcting ethnic structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina police</li></ul> |
| d. UNHCR      | Majda Prnjaca           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No Electronic Statement Received</li></ul>  |
| e. ICTY       | Refik Hodzic            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Chief Prosecutor will be pay a working visit to Sarajevo</li></ul>                        |
| f. SFOR       | Captain Dale MacEachern | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The 40<sup>th</sup> Joint Military Commission (JMC) meeting</li></ul>                         |

2. Twenty Four members of the media including one television crew attended the conference.

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

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## **Oleg Milsic - OHR**

The OHR welcomes the adoption of the Civil Service Law at yesterday's session of the FBiH HoP. We are pleased that the delegates recognized the importance of the EU standards in this regard and adopted a law which reflects the best EU practices and provides the way ahead for establishing a modern and professional civil service in the BH Federation. The law specifies that all future state servants would be employed through public competition based on their professional merits rather than on their political affiliation. All current employees must pass through a review process. We hope that the FBiH HoR will react quickly and adopt adopting a law in the same form at the first opportunity.

The High Representative met the French Foreign Minister, Dominique de Villpin, this morning in the Quai D'Orsay in Paris. The High Representative today is on a one-day visit to Paris to meet with top French Officials from the Foreign Ministry and the Office of the French Prime Minister to discuss BiH's reform programme, the EU role in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the forthcoming EU Thessalonica Summit. The High Representative briefed the Foreign Minister on the challenge that lies ahead of Bosnia and Herzegovina: transition building of State-level structures and process of addressing Bosnia and Herzegovina's recent past, the key to which is the arrest of all those indicted for war crimes. The High Representative also called for continued financial support and for further infrastructure support. In addition, he pointed out that visa-free travel would do much to make Europe come alive in the minds of the region's citizens, and urged the Foreign Minister to support the EU setting out clearly at Thessalonica the conditions that the countries of the region must meet for this to happen. The High Representative thanked M. de Villpin for the support France has provided for Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the OHR in particular. He noted that France is a key member of the PIC, and her support for the High Representative and the Justice and Jobs agenda is essential for the success of his mandate.

## **Emir Salihovic - OSCE**

No Electronic Statement Received.

## **Jon Oskar Solnes - EUPM**

According to its strategic priorities, the EUPM is monitoring closely the deployment of regional ethnic minority police officers in several places in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The importance of this is all the greater in returnee areas, and as you know, the EUPM has already declared that it will monitor closely how the Bosnia and Herzegovina police works towards providing returnees with a secure environment. The recruiting of officers of a local minority ethnicity is not an easy progress, there are a number of structural obstacles that the EUPM is looking into, such as the divergence in salaries. However, we continue to see progress in a number of locations and I want to share with you one example. Up in Bihac, in Canton 1, there are clear indications for the willingness of the Police Commissioner to implement the provisions of correcting the ethnic structure of the police. I can declare that Canton 1 has now recruited eight BSerb police officer to the Kljuc police station. No BSerb police officer was working there prior to this and nine positions out of 62 were thus vacant. Some of the officers reside within the FBiH others in Republika Srpska, indicating that the IEHL is not a hindrance in correcting ethnic structures of local police. Furthermore, in Canton 1, yesterday the police authorities received an official delegation from PSC Banja Luka, also comprising the Chief of PSS Prijedor. One of the topics on the agenda was the recruitment of local ethnic minority police officers. Here, of course, the simple fact that Canton 1 has a surplus of Bosniac police officers which PSC Banja Luka is lacking, and vice versa with police officers of BSerbian ethnicity indicates that co-operation over entity lines will provide logical solutions. It is important to note that co-operation in the widest sense of law enforcement is currently being discussed in the Northwestern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The EUPM according to its mandate is monitoring such discussions. The assessment from our officers in the field is that yesterday's meeting was another important step in dismantling distrust and a way ahead to foster operational police co-operation over entity lines, which should make life harder for organised criminals

## **Majda Prcjaca - UNHCR**

No Electronic Statement Received.

## **Refik Hodzic - ICTY**

The Chief Prosecutor will be pay a working visit to Sarajevo on 20 May. On this occasion she will meet with the BH presidency, Council of Ministers, State Prosecutor, a delegation from the Mothers of Srebrenica and Zepa Enclaves Association and representatives of the OHR, SFOR and EU and Security Council members' ambassadors in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **Captain Dale MacEachern - SFOR**

Good Morning, I have one point today. The 40<sup>th</sup> Joint Military Commission (JMC) meeting will be held next Friday, 23 May 03 at Camp Butmir. This meeting will be attended by COMSFOR, Lieutenant General William Ward, the Secretary General of the Standing Committee on Military Matters, Mr. Pocrnja, Colonel General Dudakovic, Major General Zeko and Colonel General Savic. This meeting will last all of Friday morning and will focus on the reform and restructure of the Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Two opportunities for the media are tentatively scheduled. This first opportunity will be a photo opportunity at the start of the meeting and the second will be a press conference at the end of the meeting, at around noon. Confirmation of these opportunities and specific details will be provided during next weeks Tuesday and Thursday press conferences. Please be advised that any media opportunities pertaining to the 40<sup>th</sup> JMC will only be open to SFOR accredited media.

## **Questions and Answers**

### **Q: Daria Sito - Reuters**

First of all I would like to ask is this change of plan for Carla Depanta. First of all she was scheduled to come to Sarajevo on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **A: Refik Hodzic - ICTY**

This is an official confirmation. We havn't changed the date.

### **Q: Daria Sito - Reuters**

And Belgrade?

**A: Refik Hodzic - ICTY**

Belgrade she will visit on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Q: Daria Sito - Reuters**

Does SFOR have any comment on release from detention of Vasilovic who was allegedly accused of links with war criminals. Do you have any comment on Vasilovic release?

**A: Captain Dale MacEachern - SFOR**

What I can say is that it's our understanding that obviously he's been released and we still maintain our position that SFOR fully accepts the Republika Srpska government to do a thorough investigation of this matter and to take appropriate action as required with respect to it.

**Q: Fedad Forto - FENA**

Maybe not a question but maybe a slight correction regarding recruitment of Serb police officers because you used the expression ethnic minority. According to the constitution of the Federation, Serb people are not an ethnic minority but a constitute of people of Bosnia and Herzegovina so maybe in the future you could use a better expression. Thank You.

**A: Jon Oskar Solnes - EUPM**

Point taken, thank you.