

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

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 1 April 2003

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

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Vedran Persic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision extending the ban on the allocation of state-owned land in Bosnia and Herzegovina• Bulldozer Committee recommendations
b. OSCE	Henning Philipp	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Statement
c. EUPM	Jon Oskar Solnes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good Police management yesterday in Potocari• Pro-active policing renders positive results
d. UNHCR	Majda Prljaca	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Statement
e. ICTY	Refik Hodzic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Statement
f. SFOR	Captain Dale MacEachern	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SFOR inspections of AF Bosnia and Herzegovina facilities

2. Forty-one members of the media including seven television crews attended the conference.

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

Vedran Persic – OHR

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today issued a Decision extending the ban on the allocation of state-owned land in Bosnia and Herzegovina, first introduced by a Decision of the High Representative on 27 April 2000. The ban is extended until 15 May 2003, i.e. until the enactment of legislation, in particular the consolidated and harmonized Law on Construction Land in both Entities regulating the issue of state-owned property, including former socially-owned property.

Finally, the High Representative reiterated his commitment to restore domestic authority to initiate transfers of state owned property, but only when legislative reforms are in place.

Detailed press release is available outside.

Parliamentarians are now considering the Bulldozer Committee recommendations. There has been considerable support for the whole Bulldozer process, very much evident at last week's joint meeting of State and Entity Members of Parliament at the National Theatre in Sarajevo.

The parliamentary assemblies have good reason to enact these reforms, which have been drawn up by entrepreneurs – people who run companies and create jobs – and scrutinised to ensure that they do not in diminish safety standards or erode workers' rights or fall below European standards. There is no reason why parliamentarians should oppose reforms that will put Bosnia and Herzegovina back to work.

One article in the press this week takes issue with the proposal to remove compulsory Craft Chamber Membership, which it says will damage the Bosnia and Herzegovina crafts sector. This is proposal number 36/37, which can be found in the

Bulldozer pamphlet released with certain newspapers last week.

Proposal 36/37 originated with craft companies themselves. The object is to make the Craft chambers *more* effective, not less effective. Membership will be voluntary. That means the chambers will have to attract and keep members by providing competitive services. The craft chambers were set up to cater to the specific needs of craft companies, and there is no reason why they will not grow and prosper on the strength of voluntary membership.

The Craft Chambers were invited to participate in the Bulldozer process and were represented at a plenary meeting on 17 December – and of course every Bosnia and Herzegovina businessperson was invited to submit a questionnaire to the Committee – questionnaires were distributed in hard copy through business associations, and were available on the OHR website.

Change always meets resistance. However, there is an overwhelming logic to this proposal and the other Bulldozer proposals, since they offer direct and practical benefits to workers.

Henning Philipp – OSCE

No Statement

Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

For most of us, the solemn remembrance and burial ceremony in Potocari is still very vivid in our minds. The dignity with which this event was organised made a strong impression on me and my colleagues at the EUPM. It is my duty, however, also to note the police aspects, yesterday, in Potocari. The EUPM monitored the event at an upper police managerial level and was involved, from the outset, with the operational plan that outlined the tasks of police in securing the ceremony, guests and vehicles. The EUPM noted a good co-operation between

entities in yesterday's police work and in the planning phase of the event. Approximately 15.000 attended the ceremony, arriving in 189 buses, or twice as many as originally expected. About 1100 private cars were directed to the site. This was thus a substantial police operation, and according to the EUPM monitors, conducted in a good professional manner.

In recent weeks, the EUPM has noted increased activities by the Bosnia and Herzegovina police in a widespread effort against organised crime. The Bosnia and Herzegovina police are increasingly drafting professional operation plans and executing them in such a pro-active manner that they render sometimes impressive results. A short while ago, throughout the Republika Srpska, local police raided numerous premises and found considerable quantities of weapons and drugs. In Trebinje, the EUPM has seen the local police increase its efforts to intercept drugs being distributed via criminal channels. Almost daily, substantial amounts of drugs are seized by Bosnia and Herzegovina police. During the weekend in Pale PSC 100 kilos of Marihuana were seized. This both confirms the increased willingness of Bosnia and Herzegovina police to take on organised crime and indicates increased efficiency in Bosnia and Herzegovina law enforcement. The EUPM also acknowledges the fact that the reports on these findings seem to flow in a cordial and timely manner to the media, which has the important task of informing the citizens of the Bosnia and Herzegovina police contribution to the Rule of Law in this country.

Majda Prljaca – UNHCR

No Statement

Refik Hodzic – ICTY

No Statement.

Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

Good morning, I have one point today concerning the SFOR inspections of AF Bosnia and Herzegovina facilities that took place in the afternoon of 07 Mar 03.

We have not completed our analysis of all the documentation from these operations but what we have seen so far indicates that the 410th MI Unit was engaged was carrying out a number of serious anti-Dayton and obstructionist activities.

The VRS collected and maintained intelligence on SFOR, the OHR, Bosnia and Herzegovina facilities and private individuals in both entities. These actions are in clear violation of Annex 1A of the General Framework Agreement for Peace that requires entity militaries to act in a transparent manner and assist all efforts by SFOR, international monitors, and civilian authorities. Furthermore, these actions equate to treating legally constituted organizations, charged with administering and keeping the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as hostile organizations.

A review of data covering a two-month period within the last year indicates that the subjects of intelligence reports were as follows:

46% private citizens or internal organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

38% Federation or Bosnian State Military and civilian institutions;

11% SFOR; and

5% European Union Police Mission or other IC Institutions.

Early in our investigation and analysis, documents were discovered which suggest a direct relationship between the VRS leadership and the operations of the 410th Intelligence Detachment. This relationship combined with the unit structure, the secrecy, and the target of the intelligence

activity suggest Republika Srpska government support of anti-Dayton or obstructionist activity.

We have shared this information with the Office of the High Representative. More information on this matter will be made public if and when it is appropriate to do so.

Thank You.

Questions and Answers

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Dale, looks like you don't have any information that Republic of Srpska Army conduct espionage activities against Republic of Croatia also. Does it mean that you don't have any, any findings that this is the case?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

With respect to the inspections and the information gathered from the 7th of March, I have shared all the information that we are able to do at this point. As I mentioned at the outset of my statement, the process of analyzing the information is still ongoing and we will share more information in the future when and if it becomes appropriate to do so.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic – Reuters

Vedran when can we expect that the High Representative will take some steps with regards to the two affairs the OROA case and the last one?

A: Vedran Persic – OHR

Well we're not going to speculate as to when he is going to take steps. Of course has already announced that he's going to do that but these two cases suggest that we should carry-

out a systematic reform of the Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina and place them under appropriate civilian and state level control obviously.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic – Reuters

Was it not announced following the PIC meeting in Brussels that his steps would be publicly announced this week; when can we expect that?

A: Vedran Persic – OHR

We can't speculate right now as to when he is going to make that decision or decisions.

Q: Amra Hadjosmanovic – AFP

You said that some individuals were subjected to the intelligence service activities. Were they witnesses or the Haige trial witnesses or could you tell us anything more about it?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

Again, at the risk of sounding repetitive with respect to these inspections and the information we gathered from these inspections, I have shared all that I can at this point and we're still analyzing the information and in the future when it becomes appropriate to do so, if it becomes to do so, we'll share more information.

Q: Amra Hadjosmanovic – AFP

Are you going to do anything against military officials in the Republika Srpska because this is your responsibility?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

At this point I'm not prepared to speculate with respect to what kind of action will be taken as a result of the findings from the investigations.

Q: Amra Hadosmanovic – AFP

Did you share these information with the ICTY investigators as well?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

I do not have that information, however, if you give me a call this afternoon, I will check in to see whether or not that was actually formally and officially done.

Q: Amra Hadosmanovic – AFP

Does the ICTY have something to say?

A: Refik Hodzic – ICTY

No comment so far, no comment so far.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

Okay, you can't share any information with us specifically about this case but this

46% they were spying on private citizen, how unusual is that for a mil, okay let me ask this question, how unusual is that for a military intelligence, what does a military intelligence do in general that would be so different than what these people have done? I mean military intelligence spies yeah.

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

Right, but as I said in my statement, in accordance with Annex 1A of the general framework agreement for peace, these basically they violated the particulars of that annex.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

In which part did they, by spying on SFOR and EU, or these private citizens?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

Not conducting themselves in an open and transparent manner. I'm not prepared to get into a discussion as to the particular details of this. Again, the analysis is still ongoing, we will release more information when and if it becomes appropriate to do so.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

I'm sorry for asking but I really didn't, I don't know what to do with this information that they were spying on private citizens. I thought that's what military intelligence do. They don't? Other military intelligences all over the world they don't spy on people?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

I'm not military intelligence. I'm not in a position to answer that.

A: Unidentified Male

It is unsustainable that a intelligence agencies spies on another one in the same country so that they actually present a threat to each other. That cannot betolerated.

Q: Meridajana Sadovic – ABC

Any news on your recent operation in Pale?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

No, I have nothing to add from the operations in Pale. As I have indicated throughout the weekend, the operations that we conducted there are consistent with the normal operations conducted by SFOR. We regularly do such operations as presence patrols and vehicle checkpoints and we do this to ensure that our mandate is effectively carried out, that we maintain a safe and secure environment.

Q: Meridajana Sadovic – ABC

And are those regular as you say operations over now?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

The operations in the Pale area have concluded, yes they did, that was yesterday.

Q: Meridajana Sadovic – ABC

Could you please comment on the information published by Betan that is that Lekya has contacted the ICTY and offered some information on Lodig and encourage is hoping to get a status.

A: Refik Hodzic – ICTY

Now I have absolutely no information and that is far as I'm informed. Lekya has commented the prosecutor's office and I believe that the prosecutor office has already commented on that.

Q: Meridajana Sadovic – ABC

But could that be really possible? Could the ICTY grant him a status of protected witness?

A: Refik Hodzic – ICTY

No, I really want to avoid speculating about any details on this case. The prosecutor is going to decide on who is going to be the prosecution witness and status of these people. That is they are witnesses. Therefore I would prefer not to speculate on the issue and say anything that could be deemed controversial.