

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

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE - 23 January 2003**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 23 January 2003:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Mario Brkic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR having a media address with the USA Ambassador at large for war crime issues.• HR and SDHR to attend PIC meeting.
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipal budgets.• International Roma conference.
c. EUPM	Jon Oskar Solnes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EUPM Acting Police Commissioner visited Chiefs of Police and Mayors in Foca, Grazda and Pale.• Scheduled visit to Srebrenica.
d. UNHCR	Bakir Jalovcic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No statement.
e. SFOR	Major Shawn Mell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incident update.• 39th meeting of the Joint Military Commission.

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

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

A. Ollivier

Col. (FR A),

Chief Operations and Plans

Mario Brkic - OHR

Good morning, I have just three very short announcements from the OHR.

As we speak, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, together with the United States Ambassador at large for War Crime Issues Pierre-Richard Prosper is having a media address at the OHR, there will be more details on this later on today.

Also, there will be another press conference today. At which, the Head of the Delegation of the European Commission Ambassador Michael Humphreys, the High Representative and European Union Special Representative Paddy Ashdown, and the Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic Mihail Koukakis, representing the Presidency of the European Union, on the European Union's position on Customs and VAT. That press conference will be at the European Commissions Offices in Sarajevo, Dubrovacka 6, at 12:00.

The last announcement is that, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, together with both of the SDHR's Gerhard Enver Schroembgens and Bernard Fassier, will attend the Peace Implementation Council meeting scheduled for next week on 30th and 31st in Brussels. They will be talking about the IC agenda and the OHR's Mission Implementation Plan among other issues, there will be more details released next week. Thank you very much.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir - OSCE

Good morning, I have two brief points.

As municipal budgets are currently being adopted all over the country, the OSCE is pleased to notice that the

following Municipalities, Gradiska, Prnjavor, Srebrenica, Foca/Srbinje, Bijeljina, Srpska Ilidza, Lukavac, Jajce and Srebrenik. Have significantly increased their budgetary allocations for Alternative Accommodation in the effort to finish Property Law Implementation by the end of 2003.

As the responsibilities for Alternative and Emergency Accommodation are shared by the Municipalities, Entities and Cantons, the OSCE calls upon the latter two, Cantons and Entities, to make adequate budgetary provisions. That can be done either when drafting budgets or when making a rebalance, so that Municipalities are not left alone to bear the burden of providing Alternative Accommodation.

Secondly, a two-day International Roma conference will be held here in Sarajevo, next week, starting on Monday 27. It will gather representatives from various International Organisations, local authorities and from Macedonia and Kosovo, to name a few.

The conference, which is organised by the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, ODIHR, is hosted by the OSCE Mission here, it will focus on refugees and displaced Roma's. It will also discuss specifically the situation of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which measures have been taken to assist the Roma refugees and discuss the main concern of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ambassador Beecroft Head of the OSCE mission, and Mr. Mirsad Kebo Bosnia and Herzegovina's Minister for Human Rights and Displaced persons, will give the opening speeches. You will receive further information about the conference in a media advisory that should be sent out tomorrow. That is all, thank you very much.

Jon Oskar Solnes - EUPM

Good morning, I have one point from the EUPM.

Yesterday, the EUPM Acting Police Commissioner, visited Chiefs of Police and Mayors in Foca, Grazda and Pale, the meetings were constructive, the key discussed were the safety of returnees and the fight against organised crime.

Next week, there is a visit scheduled to Srebrenica. There will be a media advisory released advising you of the media opportunities. That is all from me today.

Bakir Jalovcic - UNHCR

Good morning, the UNHCR has no statement today.

Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

Good morning, I have two points today.

First, I would like to provide an update to the incident on Sunday, January 19th, involving three United States personnel. In response to the incident, the Commander of SFOR, Lieutenant General William Ward, has ordered these individuals returned to United States authorities who will continue the investigation under national law. The three individuals departed Bosnia and Herzegovina yesterday afternoon.

My second point, the 39th meeting of the Joint Military Commission, or JMC, will be held tomorrow to discuss the future role of the Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Primary issues to be discussed will include the Standing Committee on Military Matters, Partnership for Peace Task Force work, Active Reserve Concept, Obsolete Weapons, and other important subjects.

The JMC is composed of the Commander of SFOR, Military Advisor to the Office of the High Representative, Chief of the General Staff of the VRS, Commander and Deputy Commander of the VF, other senior military officers, and advisors from the international community. Meeting quarterly, these officials play a constructive role in the development of the Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the Dayton Peace Accords. That is all I have, thank you.

Mario Brkic - OHR

Any questions?

Questions and Answers

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic - Reuters

Shawn, is there any update on the Fijuljanin case?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

The situation with Mr. Fijuljanin, remains the same. The response by the Commander of SFOR is in progress to the Tri-Presidency and the Federation Prime Minister. As for everything else it remains the same.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic - Reuters

You the said, "the response is in progress"?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

Yes. He is responding to letters that he received a few days ago.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic - Reuters

So, what does that mean? Has he sent his response to the Presidency?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

He will be responding to those letters.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic - Reuters

When?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

Hopefully within the next few days, it should be accomplished.

Q: Fedad Forto - FENA

A question for the OHR and OSCE, the allocation of seats in the House of People at State level, out of 5 Serbian seats, 3 were allocated to the SDS and 2 to Ivanic's PDP party. Dodik's party, which had 25% of the Serbian votes, now has absolutely no seats in the House of People at State level. Ivanic's party, which had about 10% of the votes, will have 2 seats in the House of people at State level; do the rules provide for this opportunity, this is confusing?

A: Mario Brkic - OHR

We do not comment on coalition forming. That is business among the parties and how they will solve it is purely up to them.

A: Urdur Gunnarsdottir - OSCE

I think, you are referring to the election ruling and how it is interpreted. As you know, that is solely the responsibility of the Election Commission, as has been shown on many occasions since they were appointed. So, we are not going to comment.

Q: Merdijana Sadovic - ABC

A question for SFOR, are you still saying that nothing unusual is going on in the village of Gornja Maoca, have you checked that?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

Yes. With Maoca, my response too you is still the same as last time. There is no increased activity in that area so there is nothing significant to add at this point.

Q: Merdijana Sadovic - ABC

Have you checked reports that most of the villagers have left Gornja Maoca, do you think there is any truth in that?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

We are aware that some folks have left, but the reason why is not clear.

Q: Merdijana Sadovic - ABC

Are you satisfied with the co-operation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, when it comes to Fijuljanin? Did you get everything you needed from them?

A: Major Shawn Mell - SFOR

We continue to co-operate with Federation MUP and it has been a good co-operation. So I would say, yes, the Commander of SFOR is satisfied.

Mario Brkic - OHR

Thank you very much.