

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

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 31 December 2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Tuesday 31 December 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Kevin Sullivan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vetting of Ministers• EUPM• CPIC Venue• Kirsten Haupt
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Past year 2002 review on changes and new roles• Goals for 2003
c. UNMIBH	Kirsten Haupt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNMIBH completes accreditation of BiH law enforcement agencies• Completion of work of Review Panel• End of UNMIBH Mandate
d. UNHCR	Bakir Jalovcic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No statements
f. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of the Inspector General• SFOR Slovakian helicopter accident

2. Twenty-one members of the media including four television crews attended the conference.

A. Ollivier
Col. (FR A),
Chief Operations and Plans

Kevin Sullivan– OHR

Good morning everybody, thank you very much for coming, and sorry to have kept you which is now becoming routine, our apologies So our new year's resolution from Thursday will be to start the press conferences on time.

First point from OHR this morning concerns the vetting of ministers, which has got a considerable amount of interest over the last few days. As we are now at the high point of forming governments. To clarify the OHR's role in vetting ministers. Only when the OHR has cleared nominations to the following positions can the appointment of ministers be confirmed:

- Minister of Treasury (1'state)
- Minister of Foreign Trade (1'state)
- Ministers of Finance (2'entity)
- Minister of Defense (2'entity)
- Ministers of Refugees (1'state, 2'entity)
- Ministers of Interior (2'entity, 10'cantons)
- Ministers of Justice (2'entity, 10'cantons)
- Ministers of Education (2'entity, 10'cantons)

You have the list in the text which I'll give you at the end of the press conference

The object of the vetting procedure is to help ensure higher standards in government and help a new generation – uncompromised by the past – move into leadership positions. As the High Representative pointed out on 21 October when he extended the vetting procedure beyond the ministers for

Justice, the Interior and Defence, "BiH will fail to make the best use of its resources, and fail to attract the confidence of foreign investors which the economy needs if it doesn't enjoy standards of public administration that are on a par with those elsewhere in Europe. It will only be able to raise standards in these institutions if key ministers are committed to them and personally embody them."

It's also important to emphasize that OHR's vetting of ministers will not hold up the process of forming governments. The sooner names are submitted to OHR, the sooner those individuals can be vetted. The vetting process does not take longer than 10 days. The 10-day process may overlap with parliamentary appointment of ministers. In this case, a negative response will result in removal of the appointed Minister by the High Representative. The nominating authority will have discretion to determine at which point nominations are communicated to the OHR.

Media are invited to attend a short ceremony tomorrow at the UN-EUPM HQ in Nedzarici marking the start of the European Union Police Mission's mandate in BiH. EUPM Commissioner Sven Frederiksen will make a short statement and review a flag parade by EUPM officers and civilian staff.

If you would like to cover this event, you are asked to arrive at 12:30. I've brought along a press release with more details.

As many of you may know, this facility is in the process of being transferred to the University of Sarajevo. The original plan was for the twice-weekly CPIC press conferences to move to a new venue as of 1 January. However, that plan has had to be shelved while new premises are being prepared. So, for the time being, press conferences will continue here at CPIC. We'll let you know in good time as soon as we plan to move. The next press conference will be on Thursday the 2nd.

And finally, tonight will be the end of the UN mandate in BiH; it will mark the end of Kirsten Haupt's appearances here at CPIC. On behalf of all of us here on the podium let me express our very sincere gratitude for all the work that she has done, she has been a great colleague to work with, particularly since she had a lot of interesting stories concerning the "monkey business" which the IPTF and the others have had to investigate and resolve, and she has done with a huge amount of commitment and professionalism and there has been a pleasure to work with her. Thank you very much. That's it all from OHR this morning.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Good morning. For the OSCE mission the past year has brought a number of changes. Not only did we hand over election activities to BiH authorities, but we took on new roles, the one single most important being education co-ordination, which promises an active New Year.

The education efforts took off in a dynamic manner, which saw hundreds of people here get actively involved in the first steps of setting down a strategy. Now that it is in place, the next step is implementation. We aim to see concrete improvements of the school system by the start of next school year. Education involves one of the main focuses of the OSCE mission, mainly working with young people.

That will continue in the year to come, on the education front and equally importantly, helping youth to gain confidence in their own potential – something we see slowly but steadily improving.

It is important to keep in mind that this year has seen many positive developments. Developments that many would have thought impossible only a few years back.

Here I am not only referring to progress in property return, and demobilisation of soldiers, but also to increased

awareness amongst municipalities of their obligations towards citizens.

But many challenges still require a strong engagement and we, OSCE and its partner organisations, will be setting ourselves ambitious goals for the year 2003.

I have mentioned education. We also aim to finish property law implementation by the end of the year.

We aim to see the Secretariat of the Standing Committee on Military Matters become a fully functioning state-level institution.

And we aim to assist municipalities in further improving their budget discipline and budget policies.

With that said, our very best wishes for a happy New Year to you all.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Good Morning, as you can see we are all in a little bit of hectic state in the last days the mission and things still go helter skelter, I mean I was late, I apologise for that, it is my last press conference, I can promise you a clear conscience that it will never happen again.

I have some notes on operational business, and the some general remarks on the U.N mission.

Some of you were yesterday at the ceremony in the Sarajevo International Airport yesterday, where UNMIBH awarded the accreditation certificate to the BiH State Border Service, completing the accreditation of all law enforcement institutions in BiH. The formal handing over of the certificate of accreditation to the three Directors of the SBS means that it joins Republika Srpska, all 10 Cantons, the Federation Ministry of Interior and Brcko District in having met basic standards of democratic law enforcement.

Speaking at the accreditation ceremony at Sarajevo Airport, SRSB Jacques Paul Klein said that the SBS was the first State-level, multi-ethnic law enforcement agency of Bosnia-Herzegovina and has become the most modern border service in the Balkans and a role model for the region. By securing the national borders, Klein added, the SBS helped protect the citizens of this country from international crime and encourage economic growth by providing a safe environment.

The SBS accreditation ceremony was attended by high-ranking representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including two members of the BiH presidency, Mr Sulejman Tihic and Mr Dragan Covic, as well as by representatives of the two entities, the diplomatic corps and international organizations in BiH.

Coming to another key project of UNMIBH – certification of individual police officers – the Review Panel has completed its work as well. The panel received a total of 552 files of which 471 have been reviewed. In 123 cases, the IPTF Commissioner has reconsidered his original decision, in 348 cases he decided to uphold his original decision of not awarding certification. The remaining 81 cases have not yet been reviewed as they had been filed late or with insufficient documentation.

So that on operational matters, now there're a few remarks on the end of the UNMIBH mandate.

Today is our last day, marks the culmination of the mandate of UNMIBH – seven years work to complete the most extensive police reform and restructuring mission in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The task given to the United Nations under Annex Eleven of the Dayton Agreement has been fulfilled. The UN Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina is finishing its work and leaves behind a legacy of democratic law enforcement – a police force fit for Europe. A platform now exists from which the people of

Bosnia-Herzegovina, with continued help from the international community, can build a society based on the respect for rule of law and functioning democratic institutions.

Tomorrow, on the first day of the New Year, the European Union Police Mission will start its work and build on UNMIBH's achievements. This transition stands as a prime example of the cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization. The start of the EUPM also stands for greater European involvement in this country, assuring its citizens that their country is an integral part of Europe.

In view of the achievements, we also have to acknowledge that a number of challenges still lie ahead. One of UNMIBH's prime concerns was to eliminate political influence on the police. This fundamental principle needs to be respected in order to safeguard the integrity of the police and to ensure the sustainability of achievements made so far in police reform and restructuring.

In the context of overall establishment of rule of law, accelerated judicial reform is needed to complement progress made in police reform. Full attention and support to judicial reform is required to eliminate parasitic criminality and to build a firm base for economic development in BiH.

The success of this mission has primarily been possible, as it has been an enterprise between the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the United Nations. Today, a historic chapter will be closed and a new one will be opened. The theme is the same, namely to continue building a future towards Europe to the benefit of all citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina. So that concludes my last statement and I would like to thank the remarks from my colleagues. I would also like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all of you for your cooperation, and just to make it short, I wish you a wonderful new year and a great day today and a great night today, and I'm sure I'll see you next year, as I will continue working here in the UN

Liason Office, so you will see me once in a while. Thank you.

Bakir Jalovcic – UNHCR

Good Morning. On behalf of the UNHCR, I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Good morning, I have two points for you today.

My first point concerns the Office of the Inspector General. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is an independent, State-level office led by SFOR. The purpose of the OIG is to conduct inquiries and investigations into alleged misconduct of members of the AFBiH and to give assistance to soldiers and civilians by correcting injustices and eliminating conditions detrimental to the morale, efficiency and reputation of the AFBiH. The OIG was established in 1999 to enforce the provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Chapter 14, Instructions to the Parties (ITP). It is specifically charged with the responsibility of training and educating the AFBiH in professionalism and ethics.

In order to provide information about the OIG and promote the work of the organisation, a new website has been created. This can be found at www.oig-bih.com and provides details of background, structure and upcoming events, along with full contact details and names of the SFOR and AFBiH officers that work at OIG.

Any member of the Armed Forces or civilian in BiH may request assistance from the OIG in regards to military related matters. This can be done by contacting the office at Camp Butmir directly or submitting a request for assistance through the website (www.oig-bih.com). Individuals should first try to use normal channels such as chain of Command or appropriate government agency to solve issues, but if these channels fail the OIG is available as a valuable source of assistance.

My second point deal with last week's air incident where a Slovakian helicopter assigned to SFOR crashed near Travnik on 24 December. Commander SFOR, Lieutenant-general Ward wishes to express his sincere appreciation to the Mayor of Travnik for the support given to SFOR. In particular to members of fire service of Travnik, to the police officers from the Turbe and Travnik stations and to local residents for their quick response following the crash of the helicopter, their efforts ensured that all three crewmembers were quickly transported to a medical facility. Medical personnel at the Travnik Hospital and the Sarajevo Kosova University Hospital and ambulance crews are also commended for their professionalism in administering emergency medical care. The three crewmembers have been transported to Slovakia where they are now recovering which would not be the case without the help of the citizens and emergency services of Travnik.

Thank you

Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Do you have any questions? Something I forgot to mention was that the High Representative will issue a New Year's statement later this afternoon for use tomorrow. If we have no more questions.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

I also have two more statements for you. I have one statement that will be particularly interesting to you; it is on the case. A little bit later I will send around some end of mission statements to you, and just to remind you once again at two o'clock we have our very last press conference on the stop team in the UN House. Thank you.

Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Thank you very much.

Questions and Answers

(No questions)