# Transcript of the Press Conference in Mostar

| | Spokesperson | Topic |
|---|---|---|
| OHR | | O FBIH Ministry of Social Affairs, DPs and Refugees' Reconstruction Programme for the Mostar Region. |
| OSCE | Richard Medic | O No statement |
| SFOR | Maj. De Lambert | O Update on Harvest |

## Richard Medic – OSCE

Ladies and gentlemen good morning and welcome to this morning's press conference. Avis will be away obviously this morning but we do have a statement from the OHR, which will be read out to you and which will be later available to you in writing.

## OHR

Following the request from OHR-South for the FBiH Ministry of Social Affairs, Displaced Persons and Refugees to discuss the most burning problems surrounding the Ministry's reconstruction program in the Mostar region, Deputy Minister Tuka initially agreed to come to Mostar to meet with IC representatives. However, we must report that at the last minute, the Ministry cancelled the meeting and another date has not been determined. A full public explanation of the Ministry with regard to its reconstruction program is still outstanding. It is not to OHR that the Ministry has its main obligation with regard to transparency, but to the citizens of the country. Until now, the Ministry has not shown itself to be serious about addressing the problem or to even take

responsibility for its own actions. OHR-South remains committed to resolving the issue.

## Richard Medic – OSCE

There is also a press release from the Canadian Embassy on their support to the PBS – NH Radio 1 in Banja Luka, which you are welcome to take. From the side of the OSCE, we do not have anything today. Now I'll hand over to Maj. De Lambert.

## Maj. De Lambert – SFOR

Dobar dan. Just to let you know that the Harvest campaign will take place around Gacko, in a time period between the 19th and 29th of August. The first week of campaign will be dedicated to the advertisement, where in the second week, SFOR will start with the collection of weapon and ammunition.

AGENDA :

- Monday 26th August in NADINICI and STEPEN
- Tuesday 27th August in GACKO
- Wednesday 28th August in GACKO
- Thursday 29th August in GACKO.

That's it from my part. Thank you.

## Questions:

**Q: Tina Jelin (Studio 88):** Question for OSCE. At least more than 7.000 voters on the voters' register lists in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton are deceased persons. This was discovered by SDP and Radom za boljitak parties. They directly accuse Municipal Election Commissions for failure to conduct their work properly, i.e. to update or 'clear' these lists. I

would like to know if you have any information on that? Also, as parties emphasised, instead of carrying out their pre-election activities they have to do somebody else's job.

**A: Richard Medic:** I am aware of this case. I guess the first thing I'll say is I cannot really say much because this is something for the Election Commission of BIH. One thing I can say is that when the EC was established OSCE handed over this list to the Election Commission of BIH. We do realise it is the responsibility of the Election Commission and the Municipal Election Commissions. However, I should add this is also the responsibility of the public, including the SDP, to make sure these lists are updated. They were available to the public and they have been since the Election Commission was established. As far as I know there will be an updated list in the next month or two, I am not sure about the date, when basically the names of the deceased people should be deleted from those lists, from the updated lists. But, as I said that is something you really have to take up with the Election Commission for further details.

**Q: Pejo Gasparevic (HINA):** A short question for Mr. De Lambert. Could we know what exactly happened on Sunday morning in Trebinje. Local media reported that SFOR was allegedly searching for Karadzic in one or two houses. Can we believe these reports?

**A: Maj. De Lambert:** Also I heard all. When I heard the news broadcast, I phoned the journalist and I denied this explanation. But what can I say is the SFOR soldiers conducted, in co-operation with IPTF and local police, an operation on Sunday morning in Trebinje area. The goal of this operation was not to search Mr. Karadzic but to search for weaponry. We received information that were pointing that weapon or ammunition were stored in these houses. I do confirm that there is no connection with Radovan Karadzic or any other indictees. When SFOR soldiers came accompanied by IPTF and local police to search the house, they saw a truck parked near

by and suspected that the weapon are hidden in.  But unfortunately nothing was raised and SFOR soldiers left around 9.00 hrs. So it was just a routine operation.