Transcript of the Press Conference in Mostar

	Spokesperson	Topic
OHR	Avis Benes	• DHR Bercot welcomes election of new Deputy Mayor of Mostar • Joint Parliament meeting with Bulldozer Committee • HR to visit Mostar
OSCE	Richard Medic	• No statement
SFOR	Capt. Magistretti	• No statement

Avis Benes – OHR:

Good morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome to yet another press conference of the international organizations based in Mostar. Colleagues from the OSCE and SFOR do not have a statement for today. On behalf of the OHR two short points.

The first issue pertains to the Deputy High Representative and Head of OHR South Ambassador Jean Pierre Bercot who welcomes the election and appointment of the new Deputy Mayor of Mostar Mr. Ljubo Beslic and hopes that he will be a true representative of all citizens of Mostar and their interests. At the same time, Ambassador Bercot would like to thank Mr. Neven Tomic for all his excellent work and efforts during the time he spent as Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Mostar. Mr. Tomic significantly contributed to the creation of a new normalizing chapter in Mostar and it is to be hoped that Mr. Beslic will follow this path in his work. Therefore, Ambassador Bercot expects that Deputy Mayor Beslic will, together with Mayor

Jahic, intensify efforts in the process of creation of Mostar a normal and stable environment. The remaining time of the mandate of the both leading officials in Mostar will be of special significance, since it is clear that the present situation in Mostar is a cause for numerous problems in the City and that measures for its solving have to be undertaken. It is very important that people who will be leading the process in Mostar display a significant level of responsibility and vision.

Second issue refers to the state level and something that the OHR has intensively been dealing with lately – Bulldozer Committee. Namely, for the first time ever, members of the parliaments of BiH, the two Entities and Brcko District will meet in joint session – at the National Theatre in Sarajevo next Tuesday afternoon. The object of this historic meeting is for the Bulldozer Committee to discuss its 50 recommendations for immediate economic reform with parliamentarians from every part of BiH. These recommendations will produce a marked improvement in the business environment, which will in turn create a positive investment climate that can be translated into jobs. This is why the parliamentarians have agreed to take part in this historic joint session– the discussions will directly benefit citizens in every part of BiH. The presentation by the Bulldozer Committee will focus on four areas: Enterprises, Labor, Trade and Registration. Namely, on the 25th of February the Bulldozer Committee has finalised all 50 recommendations. Last week, the Committee's representatives formally presented these recommendations to the BiH Council of Ministers, the two Entity Prime Ministers and the mayor of Brcko District. As I said, further discussion on these recommendations is expected to take place next week.

One more issue on behalf of the OHR. I would like to announce a visit of the High Representative Paddy Ashdown to Mostar on Friday. He is going to meet with the city officials. More

details about his visit will be available in the media advisory that we are going to release tomorrow. As always, there will be enough of media opportunities for you to pose your questions.

That is all on behalf of the OHR. Are there any questions?

Questions:

Q: Mirsad Behram (RTV Mostar): I would like to ask OHR and OSCE to comment – namely, on Monday we received a press release from the Cantonal Ministry of Interior in regards to the explosion that occurred in Mostar on Sunday night. The MoI was not able to identify the location of the explosion let alone a perpetrator or perpetrators. I would like to hear your comment on the work of the MoI. Thank you.

A: Avis Benes: Thank you for your question. At this moment, OHR does not have any comment especially in relation to that.

A: Richard Medic: And the same goes for OSCE.

Q: Zvonimir Jukic (Onasa): I learned that during his Friday visit to Mostar, the High Representative will announce eight principles about the organization of Mostar. Could you tell us if this is going to happen?

A: Avis Benes: The High Representative Mr. Ashdown is coming to Mostar to, among the other things, discuss issues about the City of Mostar. That is what we can definitely confirm. As for details I do not think it is appropriate to talk about them at the moment since it is up to him, Mr. Ashdown to inform [announce] the reasons for his visit.

Q: Tina Jelin (Studio 88): Is there any new information about the formation of the Cantonal Government? At yesterday's warning strike protesters announced a general strike if the Government is not formed within 10 days.

A: Avis Benes: Unfortunately we have no new information and we are not aware that any progress has been achieved in regards to the formation of Government. We can only reiterate position expressed before that this process should really be accelerated.