

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

OHR, Ljiljana Radetic
EUFOR, Jem Thomas

OHR

OHR welcomes completion of legislative basis for defence reform

The OHR would like to welcome the adoption by the RSNA and the Federation Parliament of all outstanding pieces of legislation that complete the legislative basis for defence reform. The OHR also welcomes the signing of a transfer agreement on defence between both Entity governments.

The passage of this legislation is a significant step forward for BiH and means that this stage of Defence reform has been completed on schedule.

When implemented the laws will transform the entity armies into a professional NATO-compatible single BiH military force that can operate effectively in the context of integration into NATO and regional security. They will establish full democratic oversight of the armed forces and ensure that BiH's military reflects the country's security needs and capabilities.

HR to invite parliamentarians to briefing on vetting legislative

The High Representative will this week send out a letter to parliamentarians inviting them to a briefing by OHR staff in

order to explain draft legislation which would provide a basis for domestic authorities to scrutinize candidates for state ministerial positions. You will recall that the High Representative last month announced draft amendments to State legislation that would place the vetting process, which is currently carried out by the OHR, into the hands of the BiH's House of Representatives.

The aim of the draft legislation is to limit politicians immunity. It will give BiH's Parliament responsibility for ensuring that candidates are suitable for office by establishing a public process of parliamentary scrutiny for key executive appointments. The aim is to adopt the legislation by the spring of this year, so that it is in place in time for the October elections.

EUFOR

VITEZIT DIF

Over the next few weeks EUFOR will be assisting the Ministry of Defence (MOD) of BiH and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in dealing with issues surrounding the large amount of unsafe and insecure explosives and materials at Vitezit Defence Industrial Factory (DIF).

Unsafe explosives and materials are being transported from Vitezit DIF to a processing plant for subsequent destruction. Within its remit to maintain a safe and secure environment in BiH and possessing significant technical expertise in explosive ordnance, EUFOR is providing technical supervision for the programme.

The materials at Vitezit present a considerable danger to the environment and population of BiH. EUFOR welcomes the initiatives being followed by the government of BiH and the UNDP to tackle these dangers, and is very satisfied by the responsible approach of State MOD towards dealing with these

issues.

For further details of the disposal programme, please refer to the State MOD of BiH or UNDP.