

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

Crucial Week: Parliamentarians' Approval Will Open Road to Europe

The Federation House of Representatives will today discuss the EC approved agreement on police reform that was accepted last week by the RSNA and the Council of Ministers and yesterday by the FBiH Government. The Federation House of Peoples will discuss the agreement tomorrow, and the BiH Parliament will discuss it on Friday.

This means that by the end of this week parliamentarians can have cleared the way for BiH to begin moving down the path to EU membership.

The parliaments must adopt the text of the agreement as it stands, without any amendments, and they must do this without delay. Procedurally, the European Commission will require a certain amount of time to prepare a positive recommendation to the European Council, so if BiH wants to begin SAA negotiations by the end of this year the parliamentarians must approve the agreement this week.

It should be made absolutely clear that this agreement will provide the people of BiH with policing based on the three principles laid down by the European Commission.

- No political interference with operational policing
- All legislative and budgetary competencies for all police matters must be vested at the State level.
- Functional local police areas must be determined by technical policing criteria, where operational command is exercised at the local level.

This means that there will be only one Ministry of Interior at the State level; no Ministries at lower levels and Police regions will be based on technical criteria, not on political criteria, which means that in the few areas necessary, they will cross the IEBL.

The OHR calls on all parliamentarians to endorse this agreement and open the way for the launch of SAA talks and for the establishment of a modern, democratic and efficient single structure of police in BiH.

RS Government responsible for implementation of Dean Lukic Decision

Despite more positive statement by the RS Government presented in their letter dated 7 October. The OHR requires evidence of implementation. The prime responsibility for this still lies with the RS Ministry of Education and the RS Government, and they are yet to take any concrete action.

Nothing less than full compliance to the HR's Decision will suffice. The RS Government has various options to adopt in order to achieve this.

Universities are public institutions and must uphold the Rule of Law. Autonomy is a privilege which must be exercised within the law, it is not a license to break the Law. Otherwise we have chaos. A Professor of law must know this.

This is not about deciding who has the right to be a University professor or who should be denied the right to work. Mr. Lukic can serve as a professor at a non public

university should he secure an appointment, but not at a public University funded by taxpayers.

As Professor of Law he should understand this, and he should understand the bearing of HR's Decisions in the BiH legal framework.

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OSCE

No statement.

EUFOR

EUFOR troops contributed to operations in the Banja Luka area on Sunday and Monday morning, aimed at disrupting organized crime networks which support PIFWC activity. The media has already reported on these operations.

However, it must be stressed that these operations were ordered and directed by the local law enforcement agencies of the Republika Srpska and EUFOR provided additional security assistance at their request – not the other way around.

EUFOR has been impressed by the professionalism and the coordination that the Republika Srpska Police has demonstrated

throughout these operations. We have been delighted to be able to contribute to the Republika Srpska Police operations and look forward to working with them in the future.

Organized crime and its continued support to PIFWCs present a major threat to the future of this country. EUFOR welcomes the concerted actions of the authorities across the country to stamp this blight out. These operations demonstrate their, and EUFOR's, resolve to disrupt and destroy these networks.

EUFOR confirms that Major-General David Leakey CBE will complete his term as Commander of EUFOR in early December. He will hand over command of EUFOR to Major-General Gian Marco Chiarini of the Italian Army during a ceremony on 6 December 2005.

Further details on the change of command ceremony and a full curriculum vitae of Major General Chiarini will be made available in due course.

RTQs

Zorica Rulj, RTRS

Could you comment the announcements made by the parties from Republika Srpska that they will not support the budget in Parliament if it does not include the item concerning the population census?

OHR:

Yes. The question of the census, as we have already said, is a matter which the Bosnia and Herzegovina government has to deal with. In this case they should bear in mind several things: the large expenses required to do this and the amount of time which is needed in order for this to be carried out and organized. The government also needs to resolve the issue of the adequacy, that is the inadequacy of the statistical

system, that is the method of collecting information within a statistical system, which is also one of the requirements of the Feasibility study for Bosnia and Herzegovina . The Law on Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted by the B&H Parliament in April, but has not yet been implemented due to the refusal of Republica Srpska, that is the refusal of the Agency of Republica Srpska to introduce this into the system.