

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

RS Government Finally Meets Its Obligations

Having examined the report presented to the Office of the High Representative last Friday the OHR is ready today to confirm that the RS Government has finally taken seriously its obligation to make available the information that they had in their possession about the crimes that took place in Srebrenica in the period from 11 – 19 July 1995.

Let me underline though that this assessment is dependent on all the members of the Srebrenica working group signing the report, as has been announced, at 12.00 today.

Let me underline a few additional points;

1. No names from the report will be made public to ensure that subsequent investigations, prosecutions, and eventual convictions, are not undermined.
2. The report and the documents are now being forwarded to the BiH Prosecutors Office, who will need to process this information and decide how to proceed with any investigations.
3. OHR expects and the BiH Prosecutors will prioritise their investigations to focus initially on individuals who are still holding an office in RS or BiH institutions.
4. The annexes presented in the report do not assess the level of

responsibility nor are they evidence of an individual being guilty of committing a crime.

5. Although the list is comprehensive at this moment the emergence of new names linked to these crimes cannot be excluded. When this does happen the RS Government is required to present that information to the BiH Prosecutors.
6. To conclude, the interests of the families will be best served by seeing justice being done – only by applying the rule of law and the full judicial process through the appropriate international and domestic institutions can this be done.

PDHR Butler Chairs Roundtable with Business Journalists

Principle Deputy High Representative, Larry Butler, will be chairing a roundtable with business journalists at Media Centre in Sarajevo from 13:30 to 15:00 today.

Participants have been invited to discuss key issues affecting business reporting and will take a critical look at the ways in which the Economic agenda can be advanced.

Two short presentations entitled “What’s wrong with business journalism in BiH” and “What’s wrong with the IC economic agenda” will be discussed.

Ambassador Butler will emphasise the role of the International Community is to make it easier for BiH’s authorities to reform than not to reform so as to unleash the latent entrepreneurial energy that is abundant but utterly under exploited in BiH.

He will also outline the role of the media, which must hold BiH’s authorities to account but from the position of knowing what it is they *should* be doing.

Representatives of the media can attend throughout

EUPM

EUPM on illegal smuggling of BiH citizens

The EUPM welcomes the steps taken by the Tuzla Canton Ministry of Interior in the last three days of suspending two police officers and a member of the Tuzla Canton special police unit.

The three are suspended based on the ongoing investigation of the Tuzla Canton Ministry of Interior into the operations of organized crime in the illegal smuggling of BiH citizens into France . The three officers are now suspended on reasonable suspicion of having connections with one of the crime networks involved. The EUPM is advised that internal disciplinary procedures have been launched against the three officers.

In this regard the EUPM has established two special investigation teams that are working closely with the BiH Federation MoI in overseeing their investigations on the matter of illegal smuggling of people, as well as on a number of other serious crime cases.

The investigations by the Federation MoI on the illegal smuggling of people are ongoing in the Tuzla Canton, as well as the Zenica-Doboj Canton, with the BiH Prosecutors Office now supervising the conduct of those investigation cases.

OSCE

No statement.

EUFOR

No statement.

NATO

No Statement

RTQs:

Nedim Dervisbegovic, Reuters:

How many people are on that list that will be forwarded to the Hague tribunal?

Oleg Milišić, OHR:

As I said, I'm not going to discuss specifically what's in the Annexes. I think that should be abundantly clear from the statement that I gave you earlier.

Antonio Prlenda, Oslobodjenje:

A comment would be welcome about yesterday's statement by the European Union Foreign Ministers that there would be no discussions and talks on the Dayton anniversary. They said there would be no discussion about the closure to the European Union on the Dayton anniversary for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Oleg Milišić, OHR:

Okay. I think the High Representative did make a statement yesterday underlining that in fact we can see that the difference between the positions from the EU Foreign Ministers couldn't be starker. On the one hand you have Bosnia and Herzegovina's immediate neighbours Serbia and Montenegro and Croatia with the rest of the region moving forward towards European integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other hand, I think you saw the words the regrettable with regards to police reform. I think that message in itself is absolutely clear and now it's for the RS government to move as quickly as it can towards finding a solution.

Journalist:

The position of the OHR regarding the report made by the Srebrenica working group is not quite clear. What is exactly meant by "taken seriously its obligation"? And what changes did you sign at twelve

o'clock – I was not informed of this?

Oleg Milišić, OHR:

We were informed that the members of the Srebrenica working group are expected to sign the report at 12.00 today. At that moment, of course if this does happen, as I previously said, we are prepared to confirm that the RS government has fulfilled their obligation to transfer, that is publish all details they possess in relation to that event. So, even though we are ready to do this we still have to wait for it to happen.

Glusica Nenad, Studio 99:

I would like to ask Mr. Derek Chappell to answer a question. We know that the NATO troops are not in Bosnia and Herzegovina only and primarily to detain war criminals, but they are here to help. One week we are arresting Mladić, the next week Karadžić, and the week after neither of them. In the meantime Serbia and Montenegro and Croatia are moving forward, whilst we are only getting closer to becoming a black hole. How do you explain this? What is your personal view?

Derek Chappell, NATO:

If I understand the question you are trying to draw a parallel between Croatia , Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia . Carla del Ponte has recently given Croatia a passing grade in terms of cooperation with ICTY and on the basis of that accession talks will start. Bosnia and Herzegovina , Serbia and Montenegro are still faced with the requirement for the remaining PIFWICs, the remaining indicted war criminals. When you say NATO troops are not here to detain them, that is part of our prime mission and as General Webber stated in his interview last week, if we had evidence to indicate that they were here, if we knew they were here, if we knew their movements, we would act very vigorously to detain them. We also act in full support with the local B&H authorities. We are very aware this country is being held hostage in it's ambitions to join Europe on this issue and be in no doubt whatsoever for as long as NATO is here, for years to come, until these people are in custody we will be devoting our full efforts to assisting local authorities, gathering intelligence and detaining them. Not just because it's a

mission, but because this country deserves it.

Oleg Milišić, OHR:

If there's nothing further, thank you very much.