

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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OHR

Implementing reforms expands the capacity of the authorities to offer better public services

The OHR Economic Newsletter for the second quarter of 2005 is published today. As you know, many of the current macroeconomic indicators for BiH are positive. Exports are rising faster than imports, GDP growth is well above five percent, and investment is increasing. None of this gives grounds for complacency. Although poverty is declining, the fact that 18 percent of BiH citizens are still living below the poverty line is unacceptable.

The economic turnaround means that reforms are starting to deliver – which means that the authorities have to redouble their efforts to *implement* reforms.

As PDHR Larry Butler points out in his Introduction to the Newsletter, “The law establishing the BiH Phytosanitary Agency was passed around two years ago, but the Agency is not expected to have operating premises until the end of this summer. Implementing reforms expands the capacity of the authorities to offer better public services. This applies across the board. When the Competition Law is enacted, the Competition Council can start effectively to prohibit

activities that are anticompetitive. When the Consumer Protection Law is enacted, the BiH Consumer Protection Ombudsman can start acting as a powerful advocate for product safety. When the Law establishing a Market Surveillance Agency is implemented, the Agency can start to ensure that, for example, toddlers in this country are not playing with toys that have been made with toxic chemicals. When the Director of the BiH Standardization Agency has been appointed, the Agency will be better able to help BiH companies implement European product safety and quality standards. When the BiH Statistics Agency has adequate capacity, it can begin to deliver the sort of credible and up-to-date statistics that attract investment and help create jobs.

“The clear message is this: getting laws onto the statute books does nothing for this country or its people. Laws have to be implemented.”

I’ve brought along copies of the Newsletter.

OSCE

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on the removal of Minister Lovrinovic

Last week, the High Representative removed Minister Nikola Lovrinovic from his position as Education Minister of Canton 6. This was an unfortunate but necessary measure in order to ensure Bosnia and Herzegovina’s rule of law, and move ahead with its commitments to education reform, which include ending the politicization and segregation of the system.

Minister Lovrinovic’s refusal to carry out his obligations to implement higher level legislation, as well as see through those international commitments Bosnia and Herzegovina’s leadership willingly undertook, in order to improve the quality of their children’s education system is disappointing, at best.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina reiterates its support for the education reform process and applauds all those officials, parents, teachers who have worked together for an education system that benefits all of BiH's children.

EUFOR

No statement.

NATO

No statement.

RTQs

Dušan Stojaković, Večernje Novosti:

I would like to know what stage have you reached with Aleksandar Karadžić? For you Mr. Chapell.

Derek Chappell, NATO:

I think you're well aware of our intention to detain Mr. Mladić and Mr. Karadžić, and to assist the local authorities in every endeavor to locate and arrest them. I was at Srebrenica this weekend; you heard the speeches from all of the VIP's who were present. There was a consistent theme from every representative of the international community: that it is obscene that these two men are still at large, ten years on from this horrific event. NATO is committed to working with our partners here in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to using every resource and every effort we have to bring these people to custody and to present them to the Hague . It's in the interest of justice and that's what we're here for.

Amra Hadžiosmanović, AFP:

Derek, did you receive specific information regarding Saša Karadžić before you decided to arrest him, since you were very well aware that he is the son of Radovan Karadžić for the past thirty-two years?

Derek Chappell, NATO:

When we detain someone, when we do an operation, we do it on the basis of practical, real evidence. These are not fishing expeditions. We act when there are grounds to justify an operation. When we acted against Saša Karadžić last week, we did so on the basis of new information and General Shook has outlined some of that in the interviews he has given at the press conference last Thursday. Part of that was due to the operation we had previously done at his house, but there is new information, which gave us strong grounds to believe that he had information vital to our investigation. Now he is detained, he is detained lawfully and he will stay in custody for as long as it takes for us to conclude this investigation. He is being held with due regard to his well-being and his safety. I've had calls almost every day since Thursday asking about the conditions under which he's kept and I want to reiterate, we are respecting all humanitarian law, the ICRC have been notified, he's being well treated, but make no mistake he is in custody because he is suspected of a serious criminal offense and he will remain in custody as long as it takes for us to conclude that investigation. Again, we are not above the law, we are here to enforce the rule of law, and everything we do with regards to Mr. Karadžić is compliant with all applicable law.

Milan Stojić, Radio Republica Srpska:

A father is usually more attached to his daughter. Do you also intend to bring her into custody?

Derek Chappell, NATO:

Well clearly we are not going to talk about what operations we might undertake in the future, but we reserve the right to take action against any person that we believe is harboring Mr. Karadžić or might have information about his support network or his whereabouts. So that should serve to put anyone on notice that we reserve the right to act when the evidence gives us the grounds to do so, but we will not discuss possibilities, we will not speculate, we will not discuss our plans.

Bernard Milošević, SRNA:

Will NATO press any charges against Aleksandar Karadžić?

Derek Chappell, NATO:

Mr. Karadžić has only been in custody, he's only been detained for about five days. This is a complex case. It's far too early to talk about charges; it's far too early to talk about release dates. It's an intensive investigation and he will stay as our guest for as long as it takes and I think it's far too early to speculate on charges or any possible outcome from this detention.

Mersiha Novalić, Radio 202:

I would like to know, Mr. Tadić said, two or three days or even right before he left for Srebrenica, that Ratko Mladić should be arrested in several days and that they have trustworthy, actually reliable information about his whereabouts. I would like to know whether NATO possesses this information? Thank you.

Derek Chappell, NATO:

If Mr. Tadić has that kind of direct information as to his whereabouts, then we would expect the relevant authorities in his country to act immediately to apprehend those people or that person. It's in everybody's interest. But, that is a

matter for the country, which he represents. It's not for NATO to speculate or to comment on information from an independent country.