

# Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference

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## OHR

### **High Representative to Lobby for BiH with UK Presidency**

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, will be in Brussels and London tomorrow. In Brussels he will attend a meeting in his role as the EU's Special Representative chaired by the EU's High Representative of a Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana. The meeting will also be attended by all the acting EUSRs (there are 7). Discussion will focus on the future of the EU's foreign policy.

This meeting will take place after the PIC announced last week that the sooner BiH starts the SAA process, the sooner the PIC will be in a position to launch the process of phasing out the OHR and move to an Office of an EUSR.

In the Balkans, the meeting will discuss the EU's policy in the light of the region's ambition to begin EU accession. The EU's substantial economic, military and political engagement in the region and in particular BiH shows the EU's commitment. However participants at the meeting will also note that BiH must prove that it is also committed to starting the EU accession process by undertaking the necessary reforms. They

will note the political statements must be backed up by results. Until the necessary reforms are undertaken, BiH's progress towards the EU will be stalled.

Later in the afternoon the High Representative will travel to London, where he will meet British Foreign Minister Jack Straw. The topic of this meeting will also be the current status of BiH's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration. As you know, the UK is about to take over the six-month Presidency of the EU. In his talks with the Foreign Secretary the High Representative will lay out the political and parliamentary scenarios whereby BiH can still make the most of its remaining chance to cross the threshold to SAA negotiations in time for the tenth anniversary of Dayton.

### **BiH Farmers Are Right to Demand Coordinated Agricultural Policy**

OHR regrets that BiH farmers have been placed in a position where they feel the need to protest against the implementation of Free Trade Agreements. The essence of the problem of agricultural imports isn't the FTAs themselves – it is the failure by the BiH authorities, at the State and Entity level, to organize, administer and support the agriculture sector in a competent and optimal way.

OHR supports the farmers' call for a properly coordinated BiH agricultural policy. In this regard the OHR urges the State and Entity authorities to convene an agricultural Working Group without delay so as to implement the recommendations made in the European Union's Sectoral Review of BiH agriculture.

BiH farmers are protesting because the authorities have failed to set in place the sort of coordinated agricultural policy that is the norm in every other country in Europe. When this coordinated policy is formulated and implemented, BiH farmers

and consumers can start to benefit from the Free Trade Agreements negotiated by the BiH CoM.

### **SDHR in Mostar**

Senior Deputy High Representative Martin Ney will make his first visit to Mostar on Thursday. During his visit Ambassador Ney will meet City and cantonal officials, including Mayor Ljubo Beslic and President of the City Assembly Murat Coric. After the meeting with the Mayor and Assembly President there will be a doorstepper at the City Administration building at 12.45. More details will be provided by the City Administration Press Office. At the conclusion of this visit SDHR Ney will meet Cantonal Prime Minister Miroslav Coric.

During this initial visit Ambassador Ney will be briefed on the progress that has been made in implementing the new Mostar Statute and the achievements till now in dismantling parallel structures and turning Mostar into a normal European city.

### **PDHR, Unions, Employers, Bulldozer to Discuss Ways of Improving BiH Policymaking**

Principal Deputy High Representative Larry Butler, will join trade union and business representatives at a roundtable today at the Trade Union headquarters in Sarajevo to explore ways of expanding the role of workers, entrepreneurs and employers in BiH policymaking. There will be a short media opportunity at the conclusion of the roundtable, from 14.14 to 14.30.

### **House of Peoples Can Deliver Major Benefits to Citizens**

Tomorrow the BiH House of Peoples is scheduled to hold the final reading of the Framework Law on Debt, the Railways Law

and the PBS System Law.

Each of these laws – when enacted – will bring tangible benefits to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The PBS Law will establish a modern, affordable and unified broadcasting system for the whole country – one that reflects the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of all of BiH's constituent peoples. And it is, as you know, one of the two principal remaining requirements of the European Commission's Feasibility Study. Pass this law and the House of Peoples will remove one of the last obstacles on the road to Europe.

The Debt Framework Law will create the conditions for setting up a functioning bond market. This will provide the governments in BiH with a mechanism – used by governments in all developed economies – to raise money by issuing bonds. The law is part of a comprehensive debt settlement that will allocate compensation to creditors of the governments while ensuring that government liabilities are manageable. This will remove what has been until now a disastrous deterrent to inward investment. By removing this deterrent it will help clear the way for more job creation.

The Law on Railways is part of a larger process of transforming the railway sector in BiH and opening it up to foreign and domestic investment. The fact of the matter is that the economy can only grow so far with the railway system in its present state of disrepair. Companies might produce more widgets, but they can't get their widgets to market unless there is rolling stock available to transport the widgets. So, this is not just about railways – it's about the whole economy.

So, if the House of Peoples can conduct its business with efficiency and common sense, it will deliver huge benefits to the people. If it can't, the whole country will be held back.

## ICMP

Good morning from the International Commission on Missing Persons. I have two items for you today.

Firstly, as we approach the tenth anniversary of the 1995 fall of Srebrenica, I would like to bring you up to date on the latest figures of identifications of Srebrenica victims. The total number of Srebrenica victims identified by the International Commission on Missing Persons to date is now 2070. That figure includes more than five hundred victims who will be buried at the Potocari memorial on July 11<sup>th</sup> this year.

In fact, this morning, ICMP forensic pathologist Dr. Rifat Kesetovic completed identification of the 570<sup>th</sup> Srebrenica victim who will be buried during the memorial ceremony. Last week, we said we believed that approximately 550 bodies would be buried; as you can see, we have been working hard to identify as many victims as possible, and we have already surpassed that figure.

However, we are not sure at the moment exactly how long it will take for all the identified bodies to be prepared for burial, so at this stage, I am not going to try to give a more precise estimate of the actual number of victims that will be buried during the ceremony. So far, 350 bodies have been moved from ICMP's Podrinje Identification Project in Tuzla to the Visoko company that will prepare them for burial. Next week the remaining bodies will also be transferred to Visoko.

And on a different note, the International Commission on Missing Persons has sent a further two experts to Phuket in Thailand to assist with the identification efforts of tsunami victims. ICMP DNA scientist Rijad Konjhodzic, who is normally based at ICMP headquarters in Sarajevo , and DNA matching software expert Zlatan Bajunovic, who works at the ICMP

Identification Coordination Department in Tuzla , left yesterday for Thailand .

At the ICMP laboratory in Sarajevo , ICMP is currently obtaining DNA profiles from bone samples of tsunami victims sent from Thailand and is matching them to DNA reference samples, also sent from Thailand . Riyadh and Zlatan will do the final review of those matching reports in Thailand before handing them over to the Thai authorities.

And as a final note, I would just like to underline that the resources ICMP is investing in the identification of tsunami victims is in no way affecting the identification of the missing from the former Yugoslavia . As you can see from the number of Srebrenica victims we have identified recently, our commitment to this region is not wavering. Furthermore, the Government of Thailand is funding the work on tsunami victim identification. Donations from Governments for this region are being used exclusively for this region.

#### **OSCE**

No statement.

#### **EUPM**

No statement.

#### **EUFOR**

No statement.

#### **NATO**

No statement.