

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference



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OHR

Government Formation in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton

The Herzegovina-Neretva Cantonal Assembly is meeting tomorrow in a last-ditch attempt to form a government – exactly ten months after elections took place.

The extent of this delay constitutes clear abuse of the trust of electors who voted on 1 October last year and of all citizens.

Elected officials have a responsibility to the electorate. While parts of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton have literally been going up in flames in recent weeks, politicians there appear more worried about clinging to the benefits of office than addressing the many issues that afflict the Canton.

The Office of the High Representative has vetted all individuals put forward for ministerial position and all have passed the vetting.

There are, therefore, no obstacles to the formation of a government beyond those created by the political parties whose squabbling has led to the current situation.

The High Representative has given 1 August as the deadline by which a government has to be in place. If this deadline is missed, serious sanctions will be imposed.

The High Representative also wishes to make clear that he will be taking targeted measures against those individuals who are responsible for the continued deadlock.

Delegates of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton should, therefore, be aware that there will be immediate consequences, if they fail to form a government tomorrow

High Representative/EU Special Representative in Banja Luka

The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Miroslav Lajčák, is in Banja Luka today. He has meetings with both Presidency member, Nebojsa Radmanovic, and RS Prime Minister, Milorad Dodik.

Stakeholders Must Re-Focus Policymakers' Attention on Economy

Tomorrow, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Miroslav Lajčák, will hold a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the social dialogue that brings together workers, employers and government officials.

Tomorrow's discussions will touch on the steps that unions, entrepreneurs, investors and employers can take in order to re-focus the attention of policymakers on legislation that will help create jobs and raise living standards.

As you know, key economic reforms have been put on hold for the past two years because of parliamentary gridlock and an apparent lack of political will among party leaders – despite the fact that laws which will improve the business environment and stimulate investment and employment have already been drafted and can be implemented as soon as they receive

parliamentary approval.

Tomorrow morning, the High Representative and EU Special Representative will meet President of the BiH Employers' Association Tomislav Grizelj and President of the BiH Trade Union Confederation Edhem Biber.

The Employers' Association and the Trade Union Confederation are working to establish – with their partners in government – a BiH Economic and Social Council. This Council will allow those who create and sustain jobs to communicate directly and effectively with policymakers. There are good prospects for establishing an Economic and Social Council before the end of 2007, if the parties in government focus on this task.

Tomorrow afternoon, The High Representative and EU Special Representative will meet Foreign Investment Promotion Agency Director Haris Basic, Foreign Trade Chamber Secretary General Tarik Djodjic and Foreign Investors' Council President Mark Davidson.

HEL Adoption

The Framework Law on Higher Education that was passed yesterday is the first major piece of Europe-orientated reform legislation to be passed in Bosnia and Herzegovina for more than a year, and the first to be passed by this parliament.

The passing of this Law demonstrates that parliament has the capacity to pass complex legislation for the good of all citizens and find compromise. It should also serve as a spur to the passing of further Europe-oriented reforms.

EUFOR

COM EUFOR Visit to Ammunition Storage Site

On Thursday 2 August 2007, COM EUFOR, Rear Admiral Hans-Jochen Witthauer, will be visiting the ammunition storage site at

Duzi, to the West of Trebinje, in Southern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sites like the one in Duzi, which are located in communities all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, house thousands of tonnes of unstable and excess ammunition. These sites are considered by EUFOR to pose a threat to the safe and secure environment and this threat has been intensified due to the extreme heat experienced in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past few weeks.

COM EUFOR wishes to give a Press Statement during this visit to highlight to the media, the threats these sites pose and the actions that need to be undertaken to reduce this danger.

All media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina are invited to attend this event and if doing so, should be at the main entrance to the Duzi ammunition storage site **NO LATER** than 1140 hrs on Thursday 2 August 2007.

Directions to Duzi storage site:

1. Take the main road from Trebinje, North West towards Ljubinja and Stolac.
2. After approximately 5 kilometres turn left towards Ljubovo.
3. Duzi is approximately 4 kilometres down this road.

Any questions or queries on this advisory should be addressed to the EUFOR Press Office on the number above or e-mail euforpio@eufor.eu.int