

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference



OHR, Oleg Milisic
ICTY, Matias Hellman
EUFOR, Nicholas Foster

OHR

Srebrenica Meeting & Conclusions

Many of you may have questions relating to the IC/OHR view of the meeting that took place in Srebrenica yesterday and the conclusions that were adopted by the participants.

What I can tell you at this time is that the OHR has received the conclusions and that the HR will be discussing them with senior representatives of the international community before taking a final position.

So no reaction at this point but you can expect a statement soon.

Individuals Barred from Holding Public Positions In Political Parties.

Reports have appeared in the media today, which suggest that

Dragan Kalinic, Mirko Sarovic, Milan Ninkovic and Bozidar Vucurevic may seek to take up office in the SDS once again.

While the OHR is not in the business of commenting such reports it may be useful to remind everyone of the facts: all these individuals were barred from holding office in political parties by the High Representative and that these decisions are still in force.

BiH and all its citizens are bound by domestic and International Law, the DPA, and not least by the recent conclusion of the ICJ to cooperate fully with the ICTY.

The SDS as a party – like every other – is obliged to uphold this obligation and should be putting pressure on the networks that support individuals indicted for war crimes that remain at large and those individuals that are on EU and US black lists.

Police Reform Meeting tomorrow

Many of you have asked for confirmation of a meeting on police reform tomorrow.

As you know the PIC has called for talks to continue and for all parties to adhere to the commitments made in the October 2005 Political Agreement. Bilateral discussions have been ongoing in an effort to generate a means to move forward, and if there is agreement amongst party leaders who make up the government to meet tomorrow then that is positive. It is clear that time is running out for BiH leaders to find agreement on police reform by mid-March.

Political parties must reach an agreement before State and Entities Governments endorse the report of the BiH Police Reform Directorate together with an *Agreement on Implementation and Timelines*. The Directorate's report leaves

room for compromise. Adjustments to the Report are possible, but only in line with the three EU principles.

ICTY

Good morning on behalf of the Tribunal.

Another very busy week is ongoing at the Tribunal. The trial against the former commander of the VRS Sarajevo-Romanija Corps, Dragomir Milošević, is running every day, and the proceedings in the *Popović et al* and *Prlić et al* cases related to Srebrenica and the so-called Herceg-Bosna respectively are taking place from Monday to Thursday. The proceedings in the *Haradinaj et al* and *Milutinović et al* cases are also ongoing.

A status conference in the Vojislav Šešelj case is scheduled for this afternoon and the closing statements in the case against the so-called Vukovar three are scheduled to take place from tomorrow to Friday.

A list of the most recent court fillings can be found in the ICTY Weekly Update we distributed yesterday to you by email. I also have here several copies of the Weekly Update.

In a motion dated 7 March, the prosecution in the *Prlić et al* case seeks leave to appeal the Trial Chamber decision of 1 March cutting the hours allocated to the prosecution to present its case from 400 to 293. Prosecution is asking the Appeals Chamber reverse the Trial Chamber's decision and argues that the ruling violates the fundamental rights of the victims and the international community to a fair trial.

Yesterday, the Trial Chamber I issued an order requesting Domagoj Margetić to respond in writing, by no later than 16 March, to explain why the fine imposed on him on finding of contempt was not paid in full within the 30 days' timeframe. I would like to recall that on 7 February 2007 Margetić was

found guilty of contempt of the Tribunal for disclosing protected witness lists and sentenced to a prison term of three months and a fine of 10,000 Euros. I have several copies of the latest order for you.

I also have a brief filing submitted to the Appeals Chamber by Momčilo Krajišnik requesting to put certain issues related to his wish to work on the appeal himself on the next status conference agenda. The status conference in Krajišnik case is scheduled for 26 March. On 27 September 2006, Momčilo Krajišnik was sentenced to 27 years in prison for participation in the joint criminal enterprise including persecution and other crimes committed against the non-Serb population in 35 BiH municipalities during 1992.

A status conference in Milorad Trbić case is scheduled to take place on Friday 23 March at 14.30. I would like to remind you that the Prosecution request to refer Trbić's case to the Court of BiH is pending before the Referral Bench. At the hearing held on 15 January, the accused said he did not object to the referral, whilst the BiH representative stated it would be better to try Trbić before the Tribunal. The Referral Bench has not yet reached its decision on possible referral.

Thank you for your attention.

EUFOR

Change of EUFOR Spokesperson

Lt Cdr Neil Mathieson will take over as the EUFOR Media Spokesperson on Friday 16th March. He replaces Lt Cdr Nick Foster who has been in post for the last six months. Nick would like to thank all everyone who has provided support and help during his time in post and sends his kindest regards to all he has worked with, within EUFOR, the International Community and the local and international media.

Neil is looking forward to working here and he can be contacted by the following means: Work telephone: 00387 (0)3349 5216; Mobile telephone: 00387 (0)61 177 943; E-mail: EUFORPIO@EUFOR.EU.INT

RTQs:

Dnevni List, Rešad Dautefendić:

As Olli Rehn is coming on the 15th or 16th the question is will an agreement on the issue of police reform be reached by that date or not? After that date there is really no point in making any further efforts on that matter. Also, why will you not confirm whether a meeting on police reform will be held tomorrow? I really do not understand why you are hiding this information from the public.

OHR, Oleg Milišić:

We are not hiding this information, all I said was that it would be positive if the leaders of the political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina would agree to meet tomorrow. However, it is clear that we have very little time left, therefore we will see what happens.

Radio Free Europe, Žana Kovačević:

I have just one short technical question regarding the comments on the issue of Srebrenica. What exactly does "soon" mean? One day, two, seven, ten?

OHR, Oleg Milišić:

It means soon.

Radio Free Europe, Žana Kovačević:

"Soon" is a relative notion. I mean, what can we expect and

when, today or in ten days time?

OHR, Oleg Milišić:

If I could be any more specific at this time, I would.

TV Pink BH, Aida Hasanbegović

A question for Mr. Hellmanna. You announced the eventual possibility of transferring the Trbić case to the BH judiciary. What is your assessment of, that is, how do you comment the pace at which cases are being transferred from the Hague Tribunal to the BH courts? In your opinion, may the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina be deemed as competent? Do you have any information regarding other possible cases?

ICTY, Mathias Hellmann:

Yes, absolutely. The fact that the Tribunal has transferred five cases in which indictments issued by the Hague already exist clearly shows that the Tribunal considers that the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina is doing a good job. Of course, it is also positive that progress has been made in these cases and that two first degree verdicts have already been rendered. The following belong to this category of cases, that is cases in which indictments made by the Tribunal already exist: the case of Milorad Trbić, where a request for the transfer of the case to the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina exists; the Milan and Sredoje Lukić case where a transfer request also exists; and there was also the Dragan Zelenović case, where such a request had also been made and still formally exists, however, as Mr. Zelenović has pleaded guilty before the Tribunal he will now also be sentenced by the Tribunal. Therefore, the Trbić case and the Milan and Sredoje Lukić case are cases which could be transferred to the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Besides this category where indictments issued by the Tribunal already exist, there is also another different category of

cases. These are cases which the Tribunal has investigated, gathered evidence relating to them and possibly compiled a dossier, maybe even completed a dossier against the persons involved. The ICTY Office of the Prosecutor will transfer such cases to the Prosecutor's Office of B&H, and then the Prosecutor's Office of B&H will, in accordance with local laws, complete the investigations and issue an indictment where appropriate. Therefore, this is a completely different category and this fact should be kept in mind. The category of cases in which indictments have already been issued by the Tribunal is small, whereas the number of dossiers of unfinished investigations and investigative materials intended to be transferred to the domestic courts by the ICTY Office of The Prosecutor is somewhat larger. Personally, I do not have any more details regarding this process, which is underway between the two Prosecutor's Offices. However, I can confirm that the process is indeed underway and that it will certainly be continued.