Transcript of the International Agency's Joint Press Coneference at CPIC

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 28 November 2002**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 28 November 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Kevin Sullivan	• London Conference. • HR visits Bihac and Drvar. • Talks on Council of Ministers Reform.
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	• Ambassador Tkachenko, Deputy Head of the OSCE mission, will be travelling to Vares tomorrow. • We are continuing our education campaign.
c. UNMIBH	Kirsten Haupt	• Sarajevska Haggadah. • Orthodox Museum.
d. HJPC	Sanela Tunovic	• Appointments of judges and prosecutors.
e. IOM	Jennifer Brown	• IOM and UNICEF launch new publication on world AIDS day.

f. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	• 1st Battalion of the UK Staffordshire Regiment will deploy a Tactical Headquarters and a Company of the Operational Reserve Force to conduct a planned operational rehearsal

2. Twenty-five members of the media including two television crews attended the conference.

3. The transcript of the questions and answers is attached.

A. Ollivier
Col. (FR A),
Chief Operations and Plans

Kevin Sullivan– OHR

Good morning everybody, thank you very much for coming. Sorry to keep you waiting that was entirely my fault, so I will deliver my statement at break neck speed. Three items from the Office of the High Representative this morning.

The first concerns the London conference from which as you will know, the High Representative returned from yesterday, the conference was focusing on fighting organised crime in Southeast Europe. In the context of implementing and taking forward the agreements, which emerged from the conference it was agreed that the Office of the High Representative, the European Commission and Greece, which will assume the six month rotating presidency of the European Union on 1 January. Will draw up a paper on organised crime that will be discussed in January. It will be part of the preparations for a summit in Thessalonika, which will be held in June 2003. That will be a follow up to the summit held in Zagreb in 2001. Which focused on the Stabilisation and Association process, as you

know the Stabilisation and Association process is the principal means being adopted by countries in the region with a view to eventual membership of the European Union.

The second item concerns the High Representatives visit this afternoon and tomorrow to Bihac and Drvar, he will be arriving in Bihac this afternoon. We sent out a schedule yesterday, I have some for anyone who did not get one yesterday.

This visit reflects the High Representative's determination that the debate about political reform and economic development is not confined simply to politicians in the principle cities. In fact that debate is taken up throughout the country and by citizens of all sorts aside from professional politicians.

The High Representative will visit a customs office, a police station, schools, a health centre, a returnee family and a transit centre. These are all closely linked to the his reform priorities, promoting the rule of law and economic reform so that citizens can benefit, sooner rather than later, from job creation and better social services, and so that the process of return can be completed.

The High Representative wants to hear the views of customs officers on customs reform, police officers on rule of law and reform of the criminal justice system, and he wants to talk to public sector workers who are the people who actually pay the price of tax fraud perpetrated by organised criminals and he wants to talk to returnees about what they actually need.

The third item this morning from Office of the High Representative concerns the current discussions about reforming the Council of Ministers. The discussions held yesterday, at the Office of the High Representative under the Chairmanship of Senior Deputy High Representative Schroembgens on reform of the Council of Ministers took place in a positive and constructive atmosphere. It is not an exaggeration to say

that those at the Office of the High Representative concerned with these discussions were surprised by the willingness of all sides to consider new ideas and reach a compromise. Broad consensus was reached on the principal issues. All of those present showed an understanding of the urgent need for Council of Ministers reform so that the Council of Ministers can start to serve the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina more efficiently and more effectively.

The text of a draft law on the Council of Ministers was agreed, and a working group will now produce a final refined version before the end of this week. This will reflect the negotiations held yesterday, and discussions held in days previous to that. What we can say at this point is that the rotation of the Chairman and the Ministers will take place after one complete mandate, after a four-year cycle. Ethnic representation and balance will be fully respected. That is it from Office of the High Representative, I shall pass you over to the OSCE.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Thank you very much. Good morning.

Ambassador Viktor Tkachenko, he is the Deputy Head of the OSCE mission, will be travelling to Vares tomorrow, where is going to meet with the Municipal Authorities. The visit will touch upon several of the OSCE activities, such as issues related to human rights, return, improvement of municipal administration and development of democratic institutions. Furthermore Ambassador Tkachenko will visit a primary school in Vares.

We are continuing our education campaign here in Sarajevo, launched last month. We have already announced the media awards, which will be given to the best coverage of education issues in the coming three months. But, we also want to advocate the benefit of education reform amongst students. Therefore, we are encouraging 12 to 16 year olds to come up

with ideas and to design a project related to education. All students are invited to participate in a competition, which runs from December 2002 until March next year. We have issued this leaflet for the kids it encourages children from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina to design a project, which promotes their ideas about how to make the school better. Materials are being distributed to all schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina this and next week. Thank you.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Good morning. I have two items for you today.

The first one is on the Sarajevska Haggadah UNMIBH is currently preparing for the opening ceremony of the exhibition of the Sarajevska Haggadah in the Sarajevo National Museum the ceremony will take place on Monday, 2 December 2002.

Being the oldest Sephardic Haggadah in the World this artefact is very unique and special. It is an early 14th century text of the Old Testament originating from Barcelona. I made its way from there, to Italy and then across the Adriatic to Split, Dubrovnik and finally it ended up here in Sarajevo. In the late 19th century it was sold to the then newly found National Museum in Sarajevo. During World War II and the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995 it was rescued and hidden.

Now it has been repaired and restored and is ready to be made available for public display. Funding for the restoration of the Haggadah was facilitated by UNMIBH and the Jewish Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNMIBH also played an active role in the renovation of the special climate controlled room in which the Haggadah will be displayed the National Museum.

The official opening will take place on Monday evening. The members of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency have been

invited to attend, as well as the diplomatic community, high officials from the both entities, representatives of the Jewish Community and Non-Governmental Organisations. We also expect a large number of national and international media representatives to attend the ceremony. Detailed information will be sent out to you tomorrow and we will take it from there, I hope I will see you all there.

Today, actually in a few minutes at 12.00, there is ceremony going to start in another museum here in Sarajevo and that is the Orthodox Museum here in Sarajevo. Special Representative of the Secretary General Klein, will, together with the Metropolitan Nikolaj, unveil a plaque acknowledging those organisations and individuals that facilitated the restoration of the museum and I believe some media representatives are already there to cover this event. That is all I have for you today, thank you.

Sanela Tunovic – High Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils

At a session of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was held yesterday, it was decided that the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have 15 judges in total. The Bosnia and Herzegovina High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council will therefore appoint eight more judges in addition to the seven appointed by the High Representative on 8 May this year.

The Prosecutors Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have four prosecutors. The Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina is prepared to appoint more judges and prosecutors to these bodies later if their workload will require more staff.

At a session of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of the Federation, which was held on 20 November. It was decided that the Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall have 21 judges and that the Prosecutors Office of the Federation shall have nine prosecutors.

At a session of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council for the Republika Srpska, which was also held on 20 November, it was decided that the Supreme Court of Republika Srpska shall have 16 judges while the Office of the Republika Srpska Prosecutor shall have four prosecutors.

All three councils respectively are in the process of interviewing candidates for these posts and the first appointments are expected to be made next month. That is all, thank you.

Jennifer Brown – IOM

Good morning. This morning, I have joint press release from IOM and UNICEF.

On the occasion of World AIDS Day, the International Organisation for Migration and UNICEF will release a new publication overview of HIV/AIDS in South Eastern Europe on Sunday, 1 December.

The book, will be available in Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian languages and will be presented to the government, UN agencies and local Non-Governmental Organisations representatives during the second meeting of the National AIDS Advisory Board on Sunday.

This publication was supported by Cooperazione Italiana of the Italian Ministry of Health. It provides the most up to date epidemiological data as well as a detailed overview of valuable groups, surveillance systems, responses by governments, international organisations and local Non-Governmental Organisations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia and Romania.

Thus far, Eastern Europe has had a low prevalence of HIV/AIDS. However, its incidence is on the increase and could further increase if preventive measures are not taken

immediately. Last year, 700,000 cases of HIV/AIDS were registered in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, compared to 420,000 just one year before. IOM and UNICEF appeal to the International Community for urgent measures to counter the spread of HIV/AIDS also in Southern Europe. Copies of the book will be available after the 1 December, from IOM. That is all.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

One point from SFOR this morning.

From 1 to 7 December 2002, the 1st Battalion of the UK Staffordshire Regiment will deploy a Tactical Headquarters and a Company of the Operational Reserve Force (ORF) to conduct a planned operational rehearsal. The purpose of this particular deployment is to familiarise the troops with the terrain and the procedures, overarching the ORF deployment, in order to reach the Full Operational Capabilities, by 1 Feb 03. The 1st Battalion of the UK Staffordshire Regiment will deploy with 150 troops together with their vehicles, proving their ability to arrive in theatre fully mission capable at short notice.

The operational rehearsal will primarily consist of cross-boundary activities in conjunction with Multinational Division North and will focus upon terrain familiarisation.

These operational rehearsals, which are conducted periodically, are important as they prove NATO's ability to reinforce, at short notice, those forces already present in the theatre with Over-The-Horizon-Forces.

The operational rehearsal will be co-ordinated by Commander in Chief Allied Forces Southern Europe, who is the Joint Force Commander within the NATO Headquarters responsible for Balkan Operations. The multi-national NATO Headquarters in Bosnia and Herzegovina SFOR will control assigned units.

The Operational Reserve Force is a multi-national, high

readiness force with a wide range of military capabilities. It is mobile, versatile and has the ability to augment in-theatre forces in any military contingency.

This operational rehearsal sends a clear message of the strong resolve and commitment of NATO and the International Community to maintain peace and stability in the Balkans region. There are fact sheets available for you to take after the press conference. That is all from SFOR.

Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Thanks very much, can we have questions please.

Questions and Answers

Q: Zeljko Tica – RTV FBIH

A question for the UN, do you have any comment on the appointment of the Director of Federal Police?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

As I understand the Federation Government is today considering the appointment of Mr. Miletic, who has been proposed by the independent selection and review board for that position, we will have to see what the result of this will be. I believe in connection to that you have seen our press release that we sent out to you yesterday. Again, we have spoken against continued political interference with that process, we have to make a strong comment again that we will not tolerate such political interference with police matters. The entire selection and appointment procedure has been done in full accordance to the law and that should also be respected in the future. So we will see what will come out of that session today in relation to this appointment.

Q: Vanja Ibrahimbegovic – BHTV 1

Yves, we have some information that early this morning in Banja Luka there was some SFOR operation, do you know what? We know about the helicopters, which landed on the building, so what were you looking, who are you looking for?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

If it happened earlier this morning, I would not be aware of it since I have been here most of the morning. I can certainly find out for you from MND Southwest. I know they are conducting an exercise right now throughout MND Southwest, so the movement of troops and helicopters in the region is something that the people in the region should be aware of. Because MND Southwest sent out a press statement on that a few days ago, advising people that troops and helicopters would be on the move. But, I will check for you afterwards.

Q: Vanja Ibrahimbegovic – BHTV 1

A question for the OHR and UN, the statement of Dusan Miihajlovic the Serbian Minister of Internal Affairs, for TV Serbia about the link between international criminal organisations that are smuggling oil to help found war criminals and that the International Community are actually aware of that connection. What is your comment on that?

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

From the point of view of smuggling oil we have made the point very clearly. That particularly in the context of recent oil war, that smuggling and tax evasion are together components of a massive fraud. The proceeds of those frauds have been the subject of considerable speculation as are the proceeds of a variety of organised crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. More specific then that I do not believe we would be in a position to comment.

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

I can not really add anything to that. We certainly have no knowledge of anything to the account of what you have just said. I believe that this issue would have to be dealt with under the overall notion of organised crime that would have to be dealt with by the local authorities.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

Yves, do you have anything new about Sabahudin Fijuljanin?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No, I have nothing new with regards to the detention of Fijuljanin.

Q: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Is he at least still alive?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Yes, he is. He is still in detention.

Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Anymore questions, thanks very much.