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

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 13 February 2003**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 13 February 2003:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Kevin Sullivan	• Brcko District Supervisor press conference
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	• Interim Agreement on Returnee Children • Canton Administration Project • OSCE internal audit workshop • Capacity of Cantonal Legislatures
c. EUPM	Jon Oskar Solnes	• No significant comments.
d. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	• Exercise Joint Resolve 28

2. Twenty-Five members of the media including three 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

This afternoon at 1400 the Brcko District Supervisor, Henry Clarke, will give a press conference at the OHR. He is in Sarajevo for two days of meetings with Bosnia and Herzegovina officials. The object of these talks is to get acquainted with the new authorities and discuss issues connected to Brcko's integration in the single economic space.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Increasing the number of returnee teachers and ensuring that the educational needs of returnee children are met are integral parts of the Interim Agreement on Returnee Children which was signed in March last year. The OSCE is therefore very pleased to note more returnee teachers being hired across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Sanski Most, we have seen a Serb returnee teacher hired to teach geography. In Banja Luka, a Bosniak teacher has recently been hired. In Bosanski Petrovac, two Serb returnee teachers were hired to teach psychology and art, and in Kotor-Varos, a Bosniak teacher was employed as a language teacher.

The Mission strongly encourages the hiring of qualified returnee teachers and looks forward to an even greater increase in the number of returnee teachers in the classrooms in the coming semester and next school year. We see these positive steps as important benchmarks in the current education reform strategy.

In 2003, the OSCE, in consultation with other international partners, will undertake a concerted push for more budget discipline and development-oriented budget policies in the five Cantons (Zenica-Doboj, Central Bosnia, Posavina, Tuzla and Sarajevo) that have joined the Canton Administration Project.

The OSCE sees 2003 as the ideal time to make significant progress towards moderate budgeting in order to begin to generate funds for the much-needed development of the economy.

With the prospect of revenues rising in most, if not all, Cantons, it will be imperative that this additional money is used well to encourage economic development projects and the creation of new jobs in the private sector. Encouragingly, the OSCE's initial assessment of this year's budget process is that CAP Cantons have taken a responsible approach and contained expected expenditures.

In order to encourage better financial management, OSCE launched last year a process whereby all Cantons in the Federation are to establish an internal audit function to ensure maximum expenditure control and the effective use of public money.

Following up on a one-week OSCE internal audit workshop for all 10 Cantons, Tuzla and Sarajevo Cantons have, within the agreed deadline, drafted three sets of regulations to establish the appropriate regulatory framework across the Federation.

The draft regulations have now been forwarded to all other Cantons and, with their agreement, will then be finalised at a second workshop sponsored by the Mission in mid March. This should finally provide a sound basis for the internal auditing of Cantonal expenditures throughout the Federation. The initiative is strongly supported by other international key players, such as the IMF and the Swedish National Audit Office.

Furthermore, OSCE recently launched an initiative to increase the capacity of Cantonal Legislatures to hold the executive more to account. Orientation workshops for the newly elected delegates in Canton Assemblies in Sarajevo, Zenica-Doboj and

Central Bosnia Cantons have already resulted in decisions to improve the Rules of Procedures, draft a Code of Ethics and establish a multiyear work plan with strategic goals for the Cantonal Assemblies.

With the help of OSCE experts, CAP Cantons have made important progress on reform. Most importantly, Zenica-Doboj, Central Bosnia and Tuzla Cantons have improved their human resource practices following recommendations from OSCE-sponsored international experts, establishing a central Human Resource Office with responsibility for recruitment, appointment and other personnel management issues.

Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

No significant comments.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Good morning, I have one point for you and it concerns exercise Joint Resolve 28.

From 17 to 21 February 2003, SFOR troops stationed across Bosnia and Herzegovina will deploy to Multi-National Brigade (NW)’s Area of Responsibility to participate in exercise JOINT RESOLVE XXVIII.

SFOR trains and exercises regularly to maintain a high level of readiness and to practice and hone its operational procedures. This includes regular training in the deployment of its Reserve Forces. Ex JOINT RESOLVE is the name given to a regular, scheduled series of Tactical Reserve Force (TACRES) exercises which take place throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina). They are run quarterly and hosted in turn by each of the 3 Multi-National Brigades (MNBs). Their aim is to exercise the TACRES in a series of rapid multinational deployments using credible operational scenarios.

JOINT RESOLVE XXVIII will be held in MNB (NW)'s Area Of Responsibility (AOR) where the Canadian, Dutch and UK Battle Groups that form this Brigade will be reinforced by multinational units from MNB (N) and MNB (SE), including elements of the Military Specialised Unit. Its purpose is to improve understanding and inter-operability between the different units of SFOR under realistic conditions.

SFOR's Tactical Reserve Force is highly mobile and capable force that COMSFOR can employ rapidly anywhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina to maintain a safe and secure environment.

The exercise will commence on Monday 17 February and conclude on Friday 21 February 2003. There will be a marked increase in troop and vehicle movement, including helicopters, by SFOR and SFOR soldiers will be patrolling more intensely throughout the MNB (NW) AOR as part of the exercise.

Questions and Answers

Q: Nedim Dervisbegovic – Reuters

Kevin, you've been pretty much involved in the **Aluminium** issue, right; OHR has been involved in the obvious dispute with **Aluminium**?

A:Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Well the international arbitrator has been involved in the dispute, yeah.

Q: Nedim Dervisbegovic – Reuters

You are kinda overseeing the whole process and making sure something is going on. Do you think something similar could be expected in the **Eronet** case?

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

I think the issue there is, something which can be resolved with the context of the existing provisions in terms of legal actions. It's essentially a matter for the court, and it should be pursued through the courts.

Q: Nedim Dervisbegovic – Reuters

Bosnia weekly newspaper, Slobodna Bosna, last week created an interesting thing, they say if Gruda municipality take some debt in order to pay the stake in **Eronet** basically they are breaching terms of the same bi-arrangement with the IMF. Have you considered this?

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Again, I mean, that would be a matter for the IMF to consider. But, the technicalities of the case, involving commercial decision which had within it the transfer of shares, is a matter can be dealt with under the existing legal **machinery**, and there isn't any point in OHR commenting further on that.

Q: Nick Hawton – BBC

What plan does the EUPM have and SFOR have for tomorrow's demonstration?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Basically it's a matter for the local police force to ensure that the demonstration takes place in an orderly matter?

A: Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

I would agree with that. We aware of the demonstration tomorrow and the local police have taken some measures but it's a local police matter. We don't have an executive mandate but we are monitoring how they will handle this tomorrow.

Q: Nick Hawton – BBC

So the EUPM will be monitoring, there will be EUPM officers that people can see on the streets?

A: Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

I will expect them to be monitoring, Yes.

Q: Nick Hawton – BBC

No contingency plans from SFOR?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No, as far as contingency operations, we don't discuss that. We are aware that there will be a demonstration tomorrow, and we have full confidence in the local police force to ensure the demonstration takes place in an orderly fashion.

Q: Fedad Forto – FENA

Just to follow-up on this question; do you information that any extremist organizations are going to be involved in tomorrow's demonstration?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

As far as what SFOR knows as far as intelligence information, we don't discuss that in the public forum.

A: Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

I want to agree with my colleague's review.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Kevin, how far your joint task force went with examining the Republika Srpska **ORAO** report?

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

The report is still under examination and when we have a status on that we’ll let you know.