

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

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 09 January 2003

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 09 January 2003:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Oleg Milisic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No objections to proposed candidates and West Herzegovina Canton can move to form its Government.• HR and EUPM Commissioner meet with Senior Police Officials.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EUPM official launch ceremony.• High Representative to visit Sarajevo Economic Development Agency.• PLIP Statistics Published.
b. OSCE	Urdur Gunnarsdottir	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers have expressed their support for education reform.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human rights issues main focus of the Deputy Head of Missions visit to Tuzla.• New CIO declares fight against trafficking.
c. ICTY	Rafik Hodzic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Next weeks visit of a delegation from the Tribunal.

d. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop celebratory fire and hand your weapons in to our OP HARVEST programme. • SFOR's inspection of St John's Radio Station.
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2. Thirty-three members of the media including seven television crews attended the conference.

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

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Col. (FR A),

Chief Operations and Plans

Oleg Milisic – OHR

Good morning, I have a number of points for you this morning, so I will move quickly along.

The first item, the High Representative wrote yesterday, to the Speaker of Canton 8, Zoran Vuksic. To say that the appropriate procedures have now been completed by various organisations and that nothing had come to light in the course of this process, that would prevent the nominees for the Minister of Education, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Interior from being considered for these posts.

The High Representative underlined in his letter, that these review procedures are by necessity of general a nature, and that his letter should not be taken as implying political or other support for the individuals concerned, or for actions that they may have undertaken in the past or may undertake in the future. Nor does the completion of these procedures in any way imply responsibility for the appointment of these individuals, which continues to lie with the Government of which they are a part.

Secondly, the High Representative, in his capacity as EU Special Representative, and the EUPM Commissioner, will meet tomorrow in Sarajevo with senior police officials from across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Paddy Ashdown will highlight the increasing role the European Union is playing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which rather than an exit strategy represents an entry strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union and the importance of the rule of law for further development in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The EUPM Commissioner will explain the mission aims of the EUPM, including the priorities of returnee security and fighting organised crime. The co-location of EUPM officers in police stations across Bosnia and Herzegovina, underscores the EUPM's mentoring role, helping the Bosnia and Herzegovina police forces to police more effectively and professionally. There is a media advisory on the tables outside with details of the media opportunities planned for tomorrow.

On a related topic, the official launch ceremony of the EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina, will take place on 15 January. In the presence of the Secretary General High Representative Dr. Solana, the Greek Foreign Minister Papandreou on behalf of the EU Presidency, the High Representative and EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown and the EU Police Mission Commissioner Sven Frederiksen.

The EUPM is, as you know, a significant development in the Union's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. As you know the Mission became operational on 1 January 2003, and is building on the work of the UN's IPTF in establishing professional police forces throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will make a vital contribution towards establishing the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, upon which its future as a modern European country depends. There will be a number of Media opportunities over the 14 and 15 January, and you can all expect details on these media opportunities in the coming days.

Fourthly, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, will visit the Sarajevo Economic Development Agency, also known as SERDA, he will be visiting their offices today, to underline the importance that the Economic Development Agencies play in the regeneration of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The High Representative will be meeting the SERDA Director Omer Vatric, the Deputy Director Sreten Tesanovic and the Presidents of the SERDA Steering Board, Beriz Belkic and Predrag Lasica. There will be a short media opportunity at the end of the meeting, this afternoon at 16:35. The address is Branilaca Sarajeva 21/3, which you will find opposite national theatre, here in Sarajevo. Again, there is a media advisory on the tables outside with all the details.

Finally, as I am sure you all remember we issued a press release, a week or so ago, on the Property Law Implementation Plan statistics for November 2002. I just want to highlight that the figures themselves for each municipality will be published in a variety of newspapers across Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next day or so. That is all I have for you, thank you.

Urdur Gunnarsdottir – OSCE

Good morning, everyone. I have a rather lengthy statement, so I hope you will bear with me.

Let me start with education, the OSCE is very pleased to see that the teachers from the municipalities of Maglaj, Tesanj, Kakanj and Zavidovici, have expressed their support for education reform in a letter to the High Representative.

Teachers are the backbone of the education system and their active involvement in the process of reform has and continues to be imperative for success. We would like to note that the Education Reform Agenda, which was adopted at the Peace Implementation Council, in Brussels, last November, addresses many of the issues raised by the teachers and commits Bosnia

and Herzegovina to urgent reform.

For instance, a common core curriculum is currently being developed which must be in place by the next school year, that is the start of the school year 2003 and 2004. The draft law on education includes the core curriculum and constitutes also a necessary step to comply with the commitments undertaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina, upon its accession to the Council of Europe. This means that most of the subjects, not all, but most of the subjects and content for all subjects in primary and secondary education, will be basically the same in all schools throughout the country, including subjects like literature, history and geography.

The a common core curriculum could cover up to 80 to 85%, of the total amount of time available at any given level and not only does this provide unfettered and non-discriminatory access to schools throughout the country. But, it also provides for a more cost effective and better managed educational system.

We would also like to point out the focus on reform of legislation and financing. Legislation and regulations are to be clarified in order to achieve a more cost-effective and equitable delivery of education services or teaching in other words. This will allow for a greater share of the spending to go to things such as operations, maintenance and teaching materials, which would of course includes textbooks.

Secondly, human rights issues will be the main focus of the visit of the OSCE Deputy Head of Mission Ambassador Viktor Tkachenko, to Tuzla today Ambassador Tkachenko will meet with the Deputy Federal Ombudsmen. Tomorrow, Friday, he will meet with Mr. Amir Fazlic, the new Speaker of the Tuzla Canton Assembly. Allocation of sufficient funds for alternative accommodation and other aspects of property law implementation, vetting of Cantonal Ministers, situation of Roma, and other issues are what Ambassador Tkachenko will

raise.

Thirdly, the new Chairman-in-office of the OSCE has declared the fight against trafficking in human beings, weapons and drugs one of the key focuses of its Chairmanship for 2003.

I quote, "The Netherlands has decided to focus attention on trafficking in all its manifestations, because it constitutes a growing threat to stability and security in the OSCE area," said the new OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

"The fight against trafficking fits with the concept of human security, which will underpin the one-year Dutch Chairmanship of the OSCE," the Chairman-in-Office stressed that "human security is a combination of peace and the rule of law". The new Chairman-in-Office will formally present the intentions of the Netherlands OSCE Chairmanship to the Permanent Council in Vienna on Monday, when he will also meet the OSCE Heads of Missions, including Ambassador Robert M. Beecroft, Head of the Bosnia and Herzegovina mission. A full text of this press release is outside.

I also want to use this opportunity to encourage you to make use of both our, website and the OSCE main website. On the latter you can subscribe to press releases and other kinds of information regarding specific subjects and areas. The detailed information is outside. Thank you.

Rafik Hodzic – ICTY

Good morning, I have two items for you.

The first, concerns next weeks visit from Monday until Wednesday, of a delegation from the Tribunal comprising of the President, the Registrar, the Prosecutor, members of the Chambers Registry and the Office of the Prosecutor. This will be a working visit to meet with representatives of the OHR. The focus of their talks will be the creation of a chamber

within the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina that will process war crimes cases. The participants will discuss the jurisdiction, structure and procedure of the chamber, as well as the proposed time frame for its creation.

The second item, is to recap on cases that are before the Tribunal at this stage and cases you can expect to develop over the next few months. As you know, Milosevic, Galic, Stakic, Simic et al and Brdjanin cases are currently being heard and will continue to be heard until April.

Judgements are expected in the Plavsic case and in the Naletilic and Martinovic case. In terms of pending appeals, there are Kvočka and others case, Celebici, Krstic, Kordic, Cerkez, Blaskic, Krnojelac and the latest, Vasiljevic.

As you know, at the pre-trial stage we have some 26 individuals. It is clear that some of these trials will start soon, but without court orders setting out the exact dates, I really cannot give you more details on these. That is all.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Good morning, I have two points for you today.

My first point concerns celebratory fire. There has been a marked increase in the amount of celebratory fire since Bajram to the point where the Safe and Secure Environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is threatened. A large number of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have displayed criminally negligent behaviour and endangered the lives and property of other law-abiding citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina by firing weapons indiscriminately during recent weeks.

An innocent person in Pale has now been injured by celebratory fire. In the last two days, several rounds have hit the grounds of Camp Butmir, endangering SFOR troops and local civilian employees. All those who are taking part in celebratory fire will share in the responsibility when your

wife, husband, children, friends and innocent Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens are injured or worst killed. This type of behaviour is not acceptable. Those participating in it would do more for society by handing in their weapons to our OP HARVEST programme.

SFOR is well aware that the Holiday Season is upon us, and we want all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to celebrate their respective holidays peacefully and with respect for one another. Engaging in celebratory fire activities is hazardous and innocent people will get injured or worst, killed. SFOR urges all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to refrain from engaging in celebratory fire and SFOR expects all levels of government and local police forces to implement and enforce the appropriate measures.

The message from SFOR today is, stop celebratory fire and hand in your weapons to our OP HARVEST programme.

My second point deals with SFOR's inspection of St John's Radio Station on 2 January. Although this was a routine inspection media have shown a high degree of interest on this subject. The final report has not yet been finalised but I can tell you today that at this time there is nothing to indicate any non-compliance. It is important to stress that non-compliance during these routine inspections is rare. SFOR expects that its inspections will point always to compliance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace and the Instructions to The Parties chapter 10. The fact that SFOR did not find anything is not unusual. SFOR has been conducting scheduled and unscheduled inspections of commercial and military communications facilities in accordance with Article VI of Annex 1A of the General Framework Agreement for Peace and will continue to do so in the future, this type of activity is part of our normal framework of operation. Thank you.

Oleg Milisic – OHR

Are there any questions?

Questions and Answers

Q; Eldar Sarajlic – FTV

I have two questions for Oleg. The first one, what is the reason that the OHR believes Miloslav Korlic, is not a suitable man for the government?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

I caught the first part of the question, but maybe not the second let me answer the first part and then you can repeat the second part again. With regard the doubts about the candidate, all I will say for now is that this is not a vetted position and that in any case final vetting decisions are taken by the High Representative himself. The second part of question could you repeat it.

Q: Eldar Sarajlic – FTV

What are your comments on the sales of shares in Eoronet in Grude?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

I would say this is largely a matter for the Provisional Administrator and the CRA. But, let me say two things, firstly, the Provisional Administrator has a legal duty to maximise the value of the assets of the Hercegovacka Banka, so that the small depositors can be compensated as fully as possible and the branch network can reopen. The OHR fully supports her work and will not intervene in her decisions. Secondly, the CRA is an independent regulator and is responsible for interpreting and implementing the Telecommunications Sector Policy as agreed by the Council of Ministers. Again, we will not allow that independence to be compromised.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Oleg, there have been several complaints in the media and from the local population, concerning Mr. Charlie Powel from Srebrenica, have you received any official request for his removal from the local representatives?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

I have to say, I am not 100% sure if we have actually received the letter as yet, when I looked into this yesterday, we had not. Obviously, we treat all such matters seriously and if and when we do receive the letter, we will look into the matter and reply.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Can you check during today?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

Yes, I can check into it today.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

What about the Council of Ministers issue, when can we expect this to be finally solved?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

As we were saying yesterday, and I am sure you will agree, the vetting process is part of raising standards in government and encouraging the process of bringing a new generation not compromised by the past to power. Obviously, the OHR is trying to complete this process as quickly as possible, but certainly the most important thing is to make sure this is done properly.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Yves, how do you decide you are going to inspect a

communications centre or a radio station, upon which criteria do you decide to do the inspection?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

That is based on our operational criteria and that is something we do not discuss in public.

Q: Viola Gienger – Freelance for Cox Newspapers

Oleg, when is the next meeting of Peace Implementation Council to consider the responses to the fund raising appeal for the court?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

My understanding is that, there will be a Peace Implementation Council either at the end of January or early February. I would have to check into that for you, but I think within the next month.

Q: Almir Sarenkapa – Jutarnje Novine

Two questions for Mr. Vanier. The first one is, do you see this celebratory fire as a defeat of the HARVEST operation that you have been leading for a couple of years now? The second question is, because you have not found anything at St. John's Radio, that would indicate non-compliance are you going to continue that kind of inspection in the area of Pale?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

To answer your question, OP HARVEST has been very successful; this year was our most successful year ever. There are a lot of weapons in this country, a lot of people still hold on to their weapons even though they should not, it is not a failure on our part. On your second question, with regards to inspections of communications facilities, SFOR will continue to conduct scheduled and unscheduled inspections of communications facilities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is part of our mandate and we will continue to do so.

Q: Marcus Bickle – Jungle World

Yves, do you remember when Sabahudin Fijuljanin was arrested?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I think he was detained on the 26 October.

Q: Marcus Bickle – Jungle World

So, it has been more than two months, correct?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Correct.

Q: Marcus Bickle – Jungle World

So, can we expect any official charges or him being handed over to the Bosnian authorities?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I have no further details on the detention of Mr. Fijuljanin. I have nothing additional to say other than what I have said in the past. His detention continues it is based on maintaining a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But, as far as, way ahead and what will happen in the future, I cannot speculate. I just do not know we will just have to wait for time to go by.

Q: Marcus Bickle – Jungle World

Is there any rule, which provides a limit for him to be prison before a trial?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

For any further questions on Fijuljanin, I have been instructed to pass you up to NATO Headquarters for additional

information. I have got nothing additional to say on the detention or any other things of that nature for that matter.

Q: Marcus Bickle – Jungle World

Oleg, can you comment on the Djindjic, remarks concerning a revision of the Bosnian or Balkan borders in general?

A: Oleg Milisic – OHR

In essence the principle remains the same the High Representatives, view is that borders in Europe are not the subject and will not be subject to international conferences. Whatever the status of Kosovo, this will not effect neighbouring sovereign states.

Q: Elder Sarajlic – FTV

Mr. Vanier, do you have any additional information regarding Muamer Topalovic, or his possible connections with certain Islamic groups?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

As far as information on so called terrorist activities, persons or organisations, as a matter of course we do not comment on any of that.

Oleg Milisic – OHR

If there is nothing further, thank you all very much.