

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

CPIC/Media Conferences

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 5 June 2003**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday, 5 June 2003:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Kevin Sullivan	• High Representative in Mostar • DHR at Konrad Adenauer Forum
b. OSCE	Emir Salihovic	• Common Core Curriculum Steering Board
c. EUPM	Jon Oskar Solnes	• No Electronic Statement Received
d. UNHCR	Bakir Jalovcic	• PLIP Statistics for April 2003 • Mine accidents impede the return process
e. SFOR	Captain Dale MacEachern	• No statement today

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

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

Kevin Sullivan – OHR

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, is in Mostar today. This afternoon at three o'clock he will visit a centre for children and young people with special needs and an old

people's home. The High Representative will give a press conference at the OHR in Mostar at four o'clock. Clearly, he will address the failure of the political parties to form a government in Canton Seven. The High Representative spoke about this in Vienna yesterday when he was attending the OSCE permanent council. He made the point that when the BiH parties behave in this scandalous way – leaving citizens without a government for eight months and therefore at the mercy of deteriorating services – Europe may reach the conclusion that this country is not serious about further integration.

Deputy High Representative Patrice Dreiski, the head of OHR's Economics Department, is giving a speech in Siroki Brijeg this morning at a conference organised by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. He will be talking about the summer reform campaign which the BiH authorities committed themselves to when they met the main international organisations at Bjelasnica in late April. This will focus on:

- creating a cleaner, better regulated business environment and
- improving corporate governance
- re-launching the privatisation programme
- rapidly stepping up exports

BiH currently attracts Foreign Direct Investment at ten percent per capita of the Croatian figure. The only way to change that is to clean up the economic space. The Entity Civil Procedure Codes will make it infinitely easier and safer to do business in BiH – which means more investment, which means more jobs. The RSNA has just enacted the Civil Procedure Code and we expect the Federation Parliament to do this by 1 July. Mr Dreiski will also address the efforts now underway to relaunch the privatisation process. Too many people in BiH see privatisation as a threat rather than an opportunity. The process has been discredited because it is associated with job losses. We have to change that. The governments have

committed themselves to taking the process in hand and ensuring that a series of successful privatisations is set in train over the summer. They have also promised to amend the Entity privatization laws. It is in the interest of BiH workers and BiH citizens as a whole that this be done quickly. Mr Dreiski will also be speaking about the Bulldozer Process. As you know Phase II was launched yesterday at the ceremony to mark the signing of the Prosperity Protocol. Bulldozer Phase I was an initiative aimed getting the governments and parliaments to enact 50 economic reforms. The reforms were drawn up directly by businesspeople. More than 500 companies participated, along with international organizations, in the process of choosing and developing the reform recommendations and presenting them to the authorities. It took 187 days from start to finish – now those 50 economic reforms have been enacted. Phase II will create six regional bulldozer committees and three specialized committees. The regional Bulldozer Committees are being established by organizations representing local businesses in their areas. Their focus is to identify new reforms at the municipal/cantonal/regional level as well as to oversee the implementation of the Phase I reforms at the local level. The regional Bulldozer Committees will expand the dialogue and will involve the trades union, in order to help identify private business reform issues that are of concern to the BiH society as a whole. By giving responsibility to all three partners (private sector, governing bodies and unions) in developing, bringing forward, and implementing the reforms, support for the overall process is likely to be ensured.

Emir Salihovic – OSCE

Entity and cantonal ministers of education meeting yesterday in Banja Luka signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Common Core Curriculum Steering Board and Subject Specific Working Groups, which reiterated their commitments to implement a Common Core Curriculum to the maximum extent

possible throughout BiH by the start of the next school year in September. The Common Core Curriculum shall provide increased access and mobility for all students to schools across BiH and a common foundation for the further modernisation of the education system. These commitments are in accordance with the Education Reform Strategy endorsed by the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels last November. "Yesterday's meeting has been a significant one. It has helped clearly define what precise steps need to be taken over the next couple of months in order for the education authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to deliver on the commitments they made to the students, parents and teachers in time for the new school year," stated Ambassador Henry Zipper de Fabiani, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. "The summer recess will be a busy time for those working in education reform. But the children of BiH must see substantial progress in September." You have the full text of our press release outside. On the initiative of the humanitarian agency DUGA, a manual has been published for teachers involved in programs of inclusive education. This manual gives practical examples of the implementation of programs for children with special needs in lower grades of primary school. There are also essays by experts involved in inclusive education, as well as materials from workshops on inclusive education. The samples of this manual you can also find outside. Thank you.

Jon Oskar Solnes – EUPM

No electronic statement received.

Bakir Jalovcic- UNHCR

In April 2003, UNHCR recorded 4,734 minority returns bringing total recorded minority returns for the first four months of 2003 to 17,181 throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Overall return figures of both refugees from BiH and displaced persons population in BiH thus stood at 18,569 at end April 2003.

This brings the total number of refugees and displaced persons who have returned to their pre-war municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement to 949,257. Out of this total, 430,370 were refugees and 518,887 were internally displaced persons. Cumulatively, a total of 406,519 so-called minority returnees have thus been recorded. UNHCR remains concerned about the overall security situation for returnees, and in particular the continued presence of landmines scattered throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and the resulting tragic consequences for returnees and the population at large. The most recent mine accident took place on Tuesday 3 June, in the village of Malesici, Gracanica municipality, when 60 year old Vejsil Husic was fatally injured. Before this latest accident, 27 mine accidents have been reported since the beginning of 2003 alone, with some 50% of them resulting in fatal casualties, according to statistics compiled by the International Committee of Red Cross. ICRC reports that the total number of post war mine victims in BiH had reached 1,452 at end April, 35 percent of which resulting in fatal injuries.

Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

No statement today.

Questions and Answers

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

Can give us any comment on yesterday's meeting, how it came out about defense reform commission? What happened at the meeting, you know if there is any outcome or something?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

I believe that would be more appropriately addressed to one of my colleagues in OHR or OSCE.

A: Emir Salihovic – OSCE

As far as I'm concerned I would prefer giving you the information later in the day because I don't have anything available right now.

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

Yeah, and the information should come from the commission or from it's appointees so I would also refer to the commission.

Q: Antonio Prlenda – Oslobodenje

How can I reach them?

A: Kevin Sullivan – OHR

I believe that's possible to do. I will supply you with the necessary contacts.

A: Emir Salihovic – OSCE

Well as I have just said, if we talk later in the day I'll be able to provide you with contact names and numbers as well.

Q: Ljubic Spomenka – FTV

At the meeting of NATO ambassadors and EU representatives, it was said that it would be premature for SFOR forces and foreign forces to leave Bosnia and Herzegovina. How would you comment on that since America is basically the country seems to be opposed very much to it?

A: Captain Dale MacEachern – SFOR

It would be actually inappropriate for me to comment on that. SFOR is a highly professional, highly effective military force and I would like to emphasize military force. The subject that you're bringing up right now is very much at the political level and the people that would best address, most appropriately address that question, would be at NATO themselves.