

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

Subject: JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 24 October 2002

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Thursday 24 October 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topic
a. OHR	Patrik Volf	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR in New York and Washington
b. OSCE	Emir Salihovic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The OSCE, OHR and the organisations involved in education reform launch a campaign.
c. UNMIBH	Kirsten Haupt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address of SRSG to UN Security Council.• UN Day.• Certification of police officers.• Trust Fund project.
d. UNHCR	Bakir Jalovcic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairman of the Stability Pact Refugee Return Initiative Migration and Asylum Issues four-day mission to BiH.
e. IJC	Sanela Tunovic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registered applications received for the open competition for appointments to posts for Judges and Prosecutors.

e. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder COMSFOR will be available for a question and answer session 29 October.
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2. Twenty-one 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

Patrik Volf – OHR

Welcome to our press conference everybody. I have one announcement for you today and that is.

The High Representative Paddy Ashdown is in Washington today. As you know, he addressed the UN Security Council yesterday, asking the International Community there for continued support for Bosnia and Herzegovina. I quote from his speech, "We learned the lesson in the Balkans, and we must continue to show in the Balkans, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that we have not forgotten it. We have the chance, now, to set Bosnia and Herzegovina, firmly onto that same road, and give its people a second chance at the brighter future that they so cruelly missed out on a decade ago." End of quote. Copies of his speech from yesterday are available outside.

The High Representative will meet with senior United States Administration officials in the course of the day, in Washington. He went to the United States, as you know, to lobby for Bosnia and Herzegovina. At a time of decreasing international attention towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative stressed that there is no danger of Bosnia and Herzegovina not continuing with reforms and that foreign investors should not hesitate to put capital into the country,

and he assured the Council members that all parties have promised to implement reforms. That is all from my side.

Emir Salihovic – OSCE

Good morning everybody.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with Office of the High Representative and the organisations involved in education reform, will launch a campaign this Monday, 28 October.

To raise public awareness about teaching initiatives already taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina's schools and about the need for thorough reform of the education system. The campaign will be launched in six schools in Sarajevo, Mostar, Ljubuski, Bihac, Banja Luka and Tuzla.

Principals of the organisations in the Education Issue Set Steering Group, will launch the campaign, together with Entity and Cantonal Ministers of Education and the School Directors, that are hosting the events. The launch will be followed by a photo exhibition, classroom visits and roundtable discussions on the need to modernise Bosnia and Herzegovina's education. Parents and students will participate at the roundtable's, along with teachers, Education Ministry officials and principals of the education steering group.

All of you are of course are cordially invited to cover these events in the following locations.

*Banja Luka, Gimnazija at 10.30,
Tuzla, Simin Han Primary School at 11.00,
Bihac, Electrotechnical School at 11.00,
Mostar, IV Primary School, Brankovac at 11.00,
Ljubuski, Primary School Marko Marulic, 11.00,
Sarajevo, Dzemaludin Causevic Primary School at 13.00.*
That is all thank you.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Good morning. I have several items for you, the one concerns the session of the UN Security Council yesterday.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General Jacques Paul Klein also addressed the United Nations Security Council yesterday, in New York. He told the council that the draw down of the UN IPTF and the gradual build-up of the EU Police Mission "EUPM" had been carefully co-ordinated.

Mr. Klein welcomed the fact that the EUPM had agreed to give priority to the State Border Service, the State Information and Protection Agency, and the maintenance of effective counter-trafficking measures and that it indeed intended to take a robust approach to organised crime. Copies of Mr. Klein's, in English as well in translation are available outside after the briefing.

Today is the United Nations Day, marking the fifty-seventh anniversary of the United Nations Charter coming into effect in 1945. There are currently 191 countries represented in the United Nations with the two newest member states being Switzerland and East Timor who joined the United Nations in September, this year.

In his message on the occasion of United Nations Day, the Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, called on all leaders of all United Nations member states to fulfil the pledges made at the Millennium Summit two years ago. Copies of the address of the Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, are available outside after the press conference in English as well as in translation.

On the occasion of the United Nations Day, Henri Kolstrup, UN Resident Co-ordinator for Development Activities, today will announce the recipient of the UN Agencies award for journalistic accomplishments in reporting on poverty alleviation issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ceremony will take place today at 17:30 in the UNDP premises here in

Sarajevo.

Coming to an issue concerning the certification of police officers, the process of certification is continuing.

The IPTF Commissioner Sven Frederiksen has decided to certify 5,492 police officers from eight law enforcement agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All these officers have proved to meet the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity. The certification by the IPTF Commissioner stands for the international recognition that these individual police officers have met strict criteria to exercise police powers in accordance with democratic standards. These criteria include the ability to perform police powers, valid educational credentials, compliance with property legislation, completed necessary training and citizenship of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The eight law enforcement agencies are, Canton 2, Canton 3, Canton 9, the Federation Ministry of Interior, Public Service Centre Banja Luka Sector Mrkonj Grad, Public Service Centre Bijeljina, Public Service Centre Bijeljina Sector Zvornik and Public Service Centre Trebinje. I have the breakdown of the numbers for you; I will spare you that now. You have it in the printed version of my statement today

In addition, the IPTF Commissioner has decided that certification for 233 officers will be pending. These officers do not, for the moment, meet some of the necessary criteria as listed above. These pending cases concern police officers who still have to provide proof of citizenship, complete necessary training or obtain clearance from the court. Once these criteria are met, they will receive certification. There is also one group of police officers who have pending court cases. Decisions on certification will be made when we know the outcome of the court proceedings. You also have the rundown of the figures for those pending cases, per the law enforcement agency in the statement.

Finally, the IPTF Commissioner has denied certification to 180 police officers. These officers have failed to meet the necessary standards of democratic policing. They did either not have valid educational credentials or did not comply with property law legislation or failed to uphold rule of law and standards of human rights. You have the breakdown for those as well.

Notification letters will be sent out on 25 October that is tomorrow, to the respective Ministers of Interior and the individual police officers. As you remember, certification of police officers started last week on 18 October, when Commissioner Frederiksen announced the certification of the first group of 794 police officers from Canton 5, Brcko District and the Foca Sector of Srpska Sarajevo. In these areas, 20 officers were denied certification and there were 17 cases that are still pending. More certifications will be announced in the coming days and weeks and I will keep you informed on those.

The last is an announcement, a ceremony marking the United Nations Trust Fund donation to the Dobrinja High School in Sarajevo will be held at the school tomorrow, Friday, 25 October at 11:00. The Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Souren Seraydarian will hand over a symbolic check in the amount of the donation, in the presence of Dobrinja High School representatives and Sarajevo Canton officials. The UN Trust Fund has donated 29,260 KM for the furniture, namely 175 desks and 350 chairs for the school. That is all from me, thank you.

Bakir Jalovcic – UNHCR

Good morning. I have just one announcement today, on behalf of the Stability Pact.

Chairman of the Stability Pact Refugee Return Initiative Migration and Asylum Issues, Mr. Soeren Jessen-Petersen

arrived for a four day mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on October 22.

The mission has included meetings in Banja Luka, with the Republika Srpska President, Vice-president and Minister for Refugees as well as the meetings with Mayors of Bratunac and Srebrenica.

The Stability Pact mission have met with the returnees and displaced persons in Janja, Divic and Ilijas and visited Collective Centre in Bratunac and Collective Settlement in Mihatovici. In Sarajevo, Mr. Jessen-Petersen will have a meeting with the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, OSCE Head of Mission and the Danish Ambassador.

UNHCR, on behalf of the Stability Pact, is inviting the media to attend a press conference on Friday 25 October 2002, at CPIC Press Centre at 12:00. That is all from UNHCR.

Sanela Tunovic – IJC

Good morning from the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils. We have two statements this morning.

Total of 303 registered applications have been received by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils as a response for the open competition for appointments to posts for Judges and Prosecutors in the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Prosecutors Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Supreme Court, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Prosecutors Office, the Republika Srpska Constitutional Court, the Republika Srpska Supreme Court and the Office of the Republika Srpska Prosecutor.

The HJPC's Secretariat is currently verifying all of the applications received, in order to ensure that all relevant information has been provided. A full list of applied candidates with their first preference for application is available outside.

The second statement concerns the vacant posts in the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the open competition for two posts as members of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are to be appointed by the National assembly of Republika Srpska, the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Republika Srpska has received eight applications. The final selection will be done by the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska, upon proposal of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Republika Srpska.

The number of applications is satisfactory and the Council will proceed with verification and review of the applications, after that is done, the interviews will be scheduled. However, in the case of one application it is unclear if this person has applied, so we will have to do further checks and consult with the person in question, so the total applications may raise to nine. The names of the candidates are available in the press release outside. Thank you.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

Just a quick reminder from SFOR that, Lieutenant-general William E. Ward will be available for a question and answer session with the press at 12:00 noon, Tuesday 29 October on completion of our regular press conference. That is it from SFOR.

Patrik Volf – OHR

Thank you very much on the podium, can I ask you for your questions please.

Questions and Answers

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic – Reuters

Kirsten, when is the certification process due to be

completed, is it the end of the year, when can we expect the final results of the process?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

We will be completing the certification process sometime during the next couple weeks. As I have just explained, there are some cases that are pending, so we still have to wait for additional information to come in, so we can make the decision. The bulk of the certifications will be finished in the coming weeks.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic – Reuters

Are you aware of the reports by Russian radio that alleged a meeting of Islamic radical groups took place in Travnik in Bosnia, do you have any comments?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I am aware of some media coverage about these types of activities. As a matter of course we do not discuss what SFOR knows about these activities for a matter operational security.

Q: Daria Sito-Sucic – Reuters

You would not comment at all about this?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

Kirsten, just to follow up on a question, have you set a deadline for the policemen whose certification is still pending the final decision?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

The deadlines for the pending cases do not depend on the police officers. I mean, some do not depend on them and some do, they have to complete some training and that depends on the organisation of the training. What they have to do is meet the criteria within the next few weeks in order to be able to be certified. Regarding this one group of police officers that have court cases pending, the officers themselves cannot influence the outcome or the duration of those cases, so they will have to wait as long as we have to wait for the outcome of that and then we can make the decision.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

So, you do not plan to leave any of this job to the European Union mission?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

I did not understand.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

So, you plan to clear everything before the European Union mission comes to Bosnia?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Yes definitely, we try to go as far as we can with all cases of certification. You heard the numbers today, I announced more than 5,000. Next week I believe I will again announce a big batch. The pending cases we will try to have cleared by the end of this year. Then it will be up to the EUPM, if there are still open cases for them to follow them up, but it will be a small number compared to the number of those police officers that will have been certified by then.

Q: Merdijana Sadovic – ABC

Yves, why did we have to find out from the United States State Department, that there was a link between the ORAO factory and

Iraq after all and not from you, why did you hide that information from us for so long?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

We did not hide any information from anybody. COMSFOR sent the letter that he had to send to the appropriate authorities. We acknowledged that documents were found by SFOR, which clearly demonstrated non-compliance with the General Framework Agreement for Peace as implemented by the Instructions to the Parties and also demonstrating that non-compliance with UN Resolutions took place. The implication of these issues are still being assessed as we speak, we are working with the International Community on that. There is more work to be done on our part with the investigation. What these Government and International Agencies do with the information that we provided them is entirely up to them. Our concern is with the Instructions to the Parties and we will only deal with the Instructions to the Parties issue, if other Government Agencies want to take the information that we gave them and issue a statement or things of that nature, that is entirely up to them. Our communications are directly with people who need to know.

Q: Merdijana Sadovic – ABC

Maybe this is a question the Office of the High Representative, what do you expect the Republika Srpska Government to do next?

A: Patrik Volf – OHR

There can be no doubt that this is a very-very serious matter and we are talking breaches of UN Resolutions here, we are not talking peanuts. I can only say, that the High Representative stands ready to use his powers to back up any action that is required in cases of international law breaking. It is certainly clear that the relevant authorities are called upon to act as swiftly as possible and take the necessary

measures.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

Can you at this point speak more specifically about weapons and services provided from the factory in Bijeljina to Iraq?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

The short answer is no.

Q: Nicholas Hawton – BBC

Is this a major failure on SFOR's part the fact that a Bosnian company, has been supplying weapons components to Iraq, under the noses of SFOR's patrols, and soldiers, and troops, and helicopters, and eavesdropping and god knows what and this has been going on for months and perhaps years?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I do not think it is an SFOR failure, I think it is an SFOR success that we are able to go into ORA0, uncover all these documents and take the appropriate action of informing the International Community and ensure that these types of activities are reported to the appropriate authorities and then let them deal with it. It is certainly not a failure on our part.

Q: Zeljko Tica – RTV FBiH

Given that the Instructions to the Parties have been violated how serious will the sanctions by SFOR be?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

At this time it is way too early to talk about sanctions. We are still looking at documents that we have on ORA0, it is going to take a few more weeks to go through all these documents, to get a clear picture as to what actually took place at ORA0, what had been done right and what has been done

wrong. I will not comment on possible sanctions until we have a clear picture of what took place.

Q Sabina Arslanagic – AFP

Yves, back again to, is this a failure of SFOR. ORAO was there for years and you were not even aware of the company itself, so how possible is it that we have more such companies, doing such things and you do not even know about it?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier

SFOR is responsible for ensuring that General Framework Agreement for Peace and the Instructions to the Parties are applied, but governments also have a more serious responsibility to ensure that these Instructions to the Parties are implemented. We do not see this as a failure at all, actually it is a success. The inspection was very well conducted, we have a wealth of information from ORAO and more will stem from that, to call it a failure; I totally disagree with that. Having said that, ORAO only became a Government Ordinance Factory recently and then subject to routine inspection by SFOR.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

Again about your failure...

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I have difficulty hearing can you speak up please.

Q: Fedzad Forto – FENA

Did you even know that a lot of Bosnian companies before the war spent years in Iraq, building weapons and other military facilities, it was not only ORAO, but the UNIS and Energoinvest companies, were also directly involved in building up Iraqi weapons capabilities?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

As a whole SFOR, has a lot of information on many things and as a rule we do not discuss the specifics of our knowledge.

Q: Nevenko Eric – SRNA

Mr. Klein said at a press conference yesterday, that in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are still between 200 and 400 Moujahedeen's, and that at the level of the International Community, it has been agreed that these people will stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because they are safest there. Do you agree with this conclusion, when was this agreed were the local authorities aware of the agreement and does it constitute a violation of the Dayton Peace Accord? Given that it quotes, "after war the foreign soldiers must leave Bosnia and Herzegovina."

A: Patrik Volf – OHR

As I said it is a serious matter and as I also said we are not taking this easy neither should any of the relevant authorities this is all I have to say.

Q: Nevenko Eric – SRNA

I do not understand.

A: Patrik Volf – OHR

May be I understood your question wrongly.

Q: Nevenko Eric – SRNA

At a press conference yesterday in New York Mr. Klein, said that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were still between 200 and 400 Moujahedeen's. He also said, that it had been agreed at the level of the International Community, that these people would stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because they are safest there and under control in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that the

Office of the High Representative supports this position. When was it agreed at the level of the International Community, that Moujahedeen's, would stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by who and were the local authorities aware of this agreement and does it constitute a violation of the Dayton Peace Accord. Given that the Dayton Peace Accord says that, foreign mercenaries must leave Bosnia and Herzegovina?

A: Patrik Volf – OHR

I am not even aware of, Mr. Klein's statement in this regard. So, I am not able to comment on what he might or might not have said. I will have to look at what his wording actually was and what he meant before I can get into this. This is first time I have heard about it.

Q: Nevenko Eric – SRNA

Who controls Moujahedeen's and who will be responsible in the case of any type of consequences, I mean who supervises if as Mr. Klein said, they stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

I can only reiterate Patrik's statement, that I am not aware of the statement that was made and to comment on that would not be appropriate at this time.

Q: Nicholas Hawton – BBC

Is SFOR or the Office of the High Representative, aware of any military links between the Republika Srpska and Burma?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

As far as what we know about relationships between governments here in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other governments outside, that is considered something operationally related and we do not normally comment on those types of questions.

Q: Nicholas Hawton – BBC

I do not understand are you aware of links between the Republika Srpska military and Burma or not?

A: Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

We do have information on a lot of issues that occur in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we are not going to comment on any specific issues relating to government to government relationships around the world.

Q: Nicholas Hawton – BBC

Is the Office of the High Representative, aware of these links?

A: Patrik Volf – OHR

No.

Patrik Volf – OHR

Thank you very much.