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

Subject: **JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE – 12 November 2002**

1. The following attended the regular Press Conference held at the CPIC at 11:30 hours on Tuesday 12 November 2002:

Agency	Spokesperson	Topics
a. OHR	Patrick Volf	• OHR in Tuzla • Customs seminar at the OHR • OHR warns against undermining the BiH Presidency
b. OSCE	Henning Philipp	• EISSG meeting
c. UNMIBH	Kirsten Haupt	• Invitation to NL vehicle hand-over
d. ICTY Outreach	Refik Hodzic	• Amended indictment against Ratko Mladic • No proceeding in Milosevic trial today
e. SFOR	Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier	• No statement

2. Twenty-nine members of the media including four television crews attended the conference.

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

A Ollivier
Col (FRA)
Chief Operations and Plans

Patrik Volf – OHR

Welcome everybody to our press conference today. I've quite a few things to talk about today. First of all the High Representative is in Tuzla as you might know because of its central importance in relation to Srebrenica and because of its vibrant NGO community. This visit is part of the HR's visits to key regions in BiH, to see conditions and to hear the opinions of citizens right across BiH. At 9.30 he met with the Srebrenica Families associations to talk about developments at the Srebrenica / Potocari Cemetery and Memorial. He will also for the first time visit the ICMP Podrinje Identification Project Forensic Facility in Tuzla.

In the afternoon the HR will visit the Studentski Dom II Collective Centre, where he will meet with the displaced families who live there. He will wants to see first hand the conditions in this centre. The High Representative has said that one of the benchmarks for closure of BiH's painful recent history is enabling those who want to return to do so.

Secondly, the High Representative believes that the expansion of small businesses and foreign investment are the future of this country's economy. But too few entrepreneurs and investors are setting up businesses and creating jobs. One of the main reasons is clear: the absurdly complex business regulation in our country. The High Representative is determined to clear away the complex and contradictory laws and regulations that make investment and job creation in this country so difficult. At a meeting of the principal international financial institutions (organisations), held at the OHR recently, the HR proposed the establishment of what he has called the "bulldozer committee". This committee will identify the worst job-destroying bureaucratic obstacles at State, Entity, Canton and Municipality level and will propose actions that should be taken. At the end it will help remove

job-destroying legislation and regulations from the statute books, and simplify the whole process of setting up private businesses. This committee will begin meeting in two weeks' time. It will consist of representatives from the World Bank, the IMF, USAID, the European Commission and the OHR. It will seek input from business people and entrepreneurs.

I also have an announcement to make that tomorrow, the OHR will be hosting a seminar on customs reform with representatives of all the parliamentary parties and the relevant International Organisations. In his speech immediately after the elections, the High Representative set out six tests of seriousness on reform against which the parliamentary parties would be judged. Support for the reform of the customs administration in BiH, along with VAT and Council of Minsiters' reform, is one of the most important of these six tests. It is clear that the level of fraud uncovered in the two customs services makes reform now inevitable. BiH cannot afford revenue losses. We are talking hundreds of millions of KM currently going missing through fraud. Each year the customs system puts more money into criminal hands than into the state budget. And this is not necessarily the fault of the Customs officials. They have managed to increase the amount of revenues collected quite significantly. The problem is having several Customs administrations within one country. The questions we will be putting to the politicians on Wednesday are this: Can the citizens of BiH afford a system where the criminals are more united than the customs officers? And can they afford to pay for two customs bureaucracies where in other countries they only have one? How the politicians react will be a key test of their seriousness to commit themselves genuinely to the reforms the citizens of this country need.

And on a final note, the HR today sent a letter to the BiH Presidency warning that changes proposed at the first session of the new BiH Presidency would undo the progress made under

the Presidency' s last mandate, creating an effective and united Presidency. The proposals suggest a willingness to return to separate secretariats. They do not represent the focus on reform highlighted at the BiH Presidency's inaugural ceremony held only two weeks ago. In his letter the High Representative highlights that any attempt to undermine the coherence and clear lines of responsibility in the organisational structure of the joint Secretariat would seriously undermine its efficiency and would hinder co-ordination. It would also violate the spirit of reform, which this country has successfully implemented over the last years. That would be all from my side today.

Henning Philipp – OSCE

Good morning everybody, just a brief announcement: an extraordinary meeting of the Education Issues Set Steering Group, the EISSG will take place in Mostar tomorrow. The purpose of the meeting is the presentation and endorsement of the Education Reforms Strategy Paper to the entity and Cantonal Ministers of Education. The paper is going to be presented to the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels 21 November. Another presentation will deal with the implementation planned for the interim agreement on accommodation of specific rights and needs of returnee children. Immediately following the meeting entity and Cantonal Education Ministers will sign the implementation plan. All media are cordially invited to attend the signing ceremony tomorrow at 1340 in the Federation Government Building in Mostar and a press conference following the signing ceremony. Thank you.

Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

Good morning, I have no special statement today for a change after the long statements I've given in the last weeks. I'd just like to reiterate the invitation to the ceremony that takes place this afternoon at 1430 marking the hand-over of

ten vehicles that were donated by the government of The Netherlands to the BiH Police Forces. Let me re-iterate also again that The Netherlands have been very exemplary in giving donations to BiH; there have been to close to 4.5m US$ given to the United Nations Trust Fund that has been implemented in a number of projects throughout BiH and The Netherlands through bi-lateral agreements between BiH and The Netherlands have donated 8m US$ for salaries of the member of the State Boarder of Service so that amounts to an overall donation coming from The Netherlands to about 12.5m US$. Present at the ceremony this afternoon will be SRSG Klein as well as the Charge d'Affairs of The Netherlands Embassy, Carel D. L. Brands and the Ministers of Interior of Federation and RS. And also just one note, I would like ask the representatives of media organisations to contact me after the meeting, I have some letters to be given to editors-in-chief and directors of media organisations. Thank you.

Refik Hodzic – ICTY OUTREACH

Good morning, I have two items for you today, the first one is dealing with a decision by Judge Orie from 8 November to issue an "Order Granting Leave to File an Amended Indictment and Confirming the Amended Indictment", against Ratko Mladic.

The first Indictment, as you probably know, against Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic was originally confirmed by Judge Jorda on 25 July 1995 and the second by Judge Riad on 16 November 1995.

The Prosecutor's Amended Indictment, filed on 11 October 2002, consolidated the first and second Indictments and reduced the total number of charges, leaving only the most serious counts. In the Prosecutor's view, these amendments were more in keeping with the current charging practices of the Office of the Prosecutor and reflected the evolving jurisprudence of the Tribunal. The Prosecutor also submitted that the Amended Indictment against Radovan Karadzic.

The Amended Indictment charges Ratko Mladic under Articles 7(1) and 7(3) with:

- One count of genocide. One count of complicity in genocide.
- Seven counts of crimes against humanity, including persecution on political, racial and religious grounds, extermination, murder, deportation and other inhumane acts.
- Six counts of violations of the laws or customs of war, including murder, unlawfully inflicting terror upon civilians, taking of hostages and other inhumane acts.

In his "Order Granting Leave to File and Amended Indictment and Confirming the Amended Indictment", of 8 November 2002, Judge Orie agreed that the consolidated Amended Indictment will expedite the proceedings should Ratko Mladic be arrested and therefore granted the Prosecutor's request to file the Amended Indictment.

And the second item just briefly to say that today there will be no trial proceedings in the case *The Prosecutor v. Slobodan Milosevic* due to medical reasons. That's all.

Lieutenant Commander Yves Vanier – SFOR

No statement from SFOR this morning.

Patrick Volf – OHR

Thank you, are there any questions.

Questions and Answers

Q: Sabina Arslanagic – AFP

Yves, you said a few days ago that SFOR is going to hand over Fiuljanin to local police, but that decision has been changed so do you have any new information in this case for us?

A: Lt Cdr Vanier – SFOR

Yeah basically that we had intended to turn Fiuljanin over to Ministry of Interior. We had a couple of days of discussion with them until the point that at this time we have decided, SFOR, to keep on detaining Fiuljanin to pursue are own investigation. The final disposition of Fiuljanin I do not have anything to add to that, other than we still detain him, it is still within our GFAP mandate to do so, we still believe he is a threat to SFOR installation and personal and as such will keep him for as long as we need to, to continue our investigation.

Q: Sabina Arslanagic – AFP

Did the investigation reveal any new information or anything we should know about, I mean is there anything more in that?

A: Lt Cdr Vanier – SFOR

Well there is nothing I can tell other than the more we talk to him, the more information we find and that's why we're intending on keeping him for as long as we need to finalise our investigation on the threat he poses to SFOR and our personnel.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

How long can you keep him?

A: Lt Cdr Vanier – SFOR

For as long as we need to finalise our investigation.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

For ever?

A: Lt Cdr Vanier – SFOR

No, there will come a point when our investigation will be

over and then we'll have to come with the disposition for Fiuljanin, but right now we're well within our GFAP mandate to keep him, detain him, to pursue an investigation as to the threat he poses to SFOR and our personnel.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

Has he been able to contact his family or something?

A: Lt Cdr Vanier – SFOR

Yes.

Q: Aida Cerkez-Robinson – AP

OK, thanks.

Patrick Volf – OHR

There's one question at the back

Q: Vanja Ibrahimbegovic – JS BiH

Kirsten this is for you – it's regarding to the Police Officers that were taken away their licence. What I want to ask, there is no court and their guilt was not proved and your decision there was reaction of all members of political parties and the some people from the government, so are you going to review your decision?

A: Kirsten Haupt – UNMIBH

OK, just to re-iterate again what we have been saying over the last couple of days. You see this covered very widely in the press over the weekend as well as yesterday and today. Let me stress again, what we have done is an administrative procedure of selection. You can basically call this review process that results in certification a recruitment process, what we have done in that process is we have looked at the suitability of Police Officers to be a Police Officer in order to establish that suitability we looked at certain criteria in the

process. I think in the past I have very often spoken about those criteria. Now in the case of those Police Officers who have not received certification we have found that one of the other criteria was not met by them. Now let me re-iterate again that this process is entirely independent from any judicial proceedings. We are no judicial organisation, we cannot take people to trial, we cannot judge their criminal liability in front of the law, but what we can look at is their suitability to perform as a Police Officer, so there are two different processes that are not connected, that are totally independent from each other, and we are, as that are not pre-judging the outcome of any trial which is indeed in the end to establish the responsibility on the basis of existing laws of a certain person. We are not doing that, we are looking at suitability. And hold on, on your question regarding the review you know there is a mechanism in place; every officer receives, every officer who has not received certification is receiving a letter of notification telling him why he has not received certification and informing him that he has eight days to lodge an appeal. We have an appeal panel at UNMIBH that has been created independent from IPTF so that there is no conflict of interest because IPTF has done the review process and so that the appeal process is going to be done by people that have not been in the IPTF section of UNMIBH. So we're talking about civil affairs officers, human rights specialists, legal specialists and soforth. So within eight days these officers can lodge their appeals and we will review the appeal on the basis of the information that is available and let me just come to one more point; it is entirely irrelevant to us what political circles are saying; we are stressing again we are advocating the separation, the total separation of politics from the police. You know that we have been working on this very hard so if any politician wants to make any comments it is their right, they can do that, but it will not inhibit us from continuing to carry out our tasks.

Patrik Volf – OHR

No further questions for today. Thank you very much for being with us.