

Transcript of the Press Conference by the High Representative and ICTY Chief Prosecutor Discussing Status of ICTY Cooperation

The High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling:

Sorry for the delay. This afternoon I just came back from Vienna , from the conference of European Union Interior Ministers. The ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte and I just had a very useful meeting together with our aides and with the Principle Deputy High Representative.

This was one of our regular exchanges of information to review the process; there is progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular, and the Republika Srpska is making in cooperation with the ICTY. All the developments are taken very seriously and you can see that from the decision of the European Union to interrupt the negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro . And of course that should not happen to Bosnia and Herzegovina , so we have to look very closely at the developments also in Bosnia and Herzegovina , and specifically in the Republika Srpska.

I would say that we have no specific hints now about Republika Srpska, but I only hope that in this time now the question in Serbia also gets solved in a positive way, because I think it is also bad if the region is in this way making steps back on the road to Europe. My main responsibility is to push this way to Europe in the best way that we can. I would say that we have so far had some setbacks in our parliamentary situation here with the reforms and also the police reform is

quite difficult as we can see. But, I hope that the question of cooperation with the ICTY is really as it was announced by the Prime Minister of Republika Srpska. I am quite happy that we do not have any specific objections to that. So I think it was a positive meeting.

ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte:

Thank you Mr. High Representative. Yes, we had one of our regular and usual meetings. However, I am here in Sarajevo today because as you know, I was participating in the seminar organised by three NGOs from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. I think it was important because the main points of discussion were truth and reconciliation. It was also interesting to listen to the intervention of the Chief Prosecutor Marinko Jurčević and the President of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mrs. Kreso, and of course Judge Schomburg also spoke on behalf of the Tribunal.

So, being here of course I could not omit to have a meeting with General Chiarini, the Commander of EUFOR and General Webber, the Commander of NATO. We discussed fugitives and in particular Karadžić, because as you know I am focusing with Belgrade and I am fighting with Belgrade to obtain Mladić, but I am not forgetting that Karadžić is still also at large. So, what other information we can collect or they have collected? And I must say there is no particular information.

I would like to know if Karadžić is in Republika Srpska or in Montenegro or in Serbia. But I do not know. I have absolutely no information. So, I am asking NATO and EUFOR to be more proactive, because I think it is important that if Karadžić is not here that they make a verification of that kind of rumour, so that I can divert my attention to another country.

Of course, I also met with the Chief Prosecutor and we discussed the transfer of cases and because as you know I was

asking for another 11 BIS cases for Srebrenica, accused Trbic and we discussed the modalities of transfer of documents, and we hope that in the near future it will be possible, under the new law here, to transfer documents electronically because there are kilos and tons of documents.

I can confirm what the High Representative said about our meeting together. We have no particular problems to solve, except – still – for the cooperation of Republika Srpska with us. We hope that the new Prime Minister will do as he publicly said – that he will provide full cooperation. We are still working on that, so it will be the next time I come here that we can tell you more about if I am satisfied or not. Of course, I need the support of the High Representative and I think I have no problem for that. We will see if I need him to use the Bonn powers or not, I hope not because I know I do not want to use them and you can understand that. But let us see and let's hope that I will not have to ask him to use this particular instrument.

Thank you very much.

The High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling:

I just want to add that you know that I have announced that I will use the Bonn powers for the ICTY question if needed. You can be sure of that.

RTQs

Daria Sito-Sucic, Reuters News Agency:

Do you hope that Mladić will be handed over to the Tribunal by June before you address the UN Security Council. Can you comment on Prime Minister Koštunica's denial of the April deadline, that he promised that deadline to you?

ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte:

So, Mladić for me is a big disappointment. Prime Minister Koštunica is also a big disappointment because he promised me, and not only me but he also promised Commissioner Olli Rehn who called him in my presence when I was in Brussels that by the end of April Mladić would be in The Hague . So you can imagine my disappointment. Prime Minister Koštunica is free to say what he wants. I insist and I confirm that he promised to deliver Mladić by the end of April. But, I read this morning travelling here that he said that he did not promise this to the International Community. He did not mention me, he did not mention the Commissioner – he only mentioned the International Community. So, literally it is true – it was not a public announcement to the International Community. So, just in favour of that, how can I say, diplomatic declaration.

And now we are in a new episode of the Mladić story. The negotiations could continue on 11 May as it was fixed. So the decision is not to continue, the talks have been suspended. But, Commissioner Olli Rehn said that if in the meantime Mladić is transferred to The Hague the talks will be continued. I am an optimist. The prosecutor is an optimist – I do not know how much longer, but I am. I hope Mladić will be transferred to the Hague before 11 May. Let us see.

Amer Cohadzic, Associated Press Television:

Ms. Del Ponte, have you heard about this morning's operation in Belgrade – the operation by the Serb authorities on Mladić's house in Belgrade , in fact his son's house? Can you comment on that? This is the tenth of fifteenth operation of this kind in Serbia in regard to Mladić and there have never been any results. Do you think these operations are ridiculous, or funny or...what do you think?

ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte:

Two weeks ago they searched the apartment of the family of Mladić. Two weeks ago. So I do not think that two weeks after

it is possible to find something. So let me say that it is just for show. Unfortunately.

BHTV:

Ms. Del Ponte, why do you rarely talk about Radovan Karadžić?

ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte:

You are right. But, I am not forgetting Karadžić. These weeks and months I am focusing on Mladić. You cannot imagine how much work must be done. I am not forgetting Karadžić. Somebody else in my office is following that. But, as soon as I have Mladić we will put Karadžić as our priority. I also have four other fugitives and I do not forget anybody. I want to have all six in the Hague before my mandate expires.

Thank you very much.