

## Police in BiH



## "Tackling terrorism is our top priority"

"Thanks to the activities of SIPA's Special Support Unit (SSU) BiH is recognised as an important strategic partner in the global fight against terrorism," said Sead Lisak, Acting Director of the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA), addressing his elite unit on 5 October. "Tackling terrorism will remain our top priority."

Together with Raffi Gregorian, Principal Deputy High Representative to BiH, Brigadier General Vincenzo Coppola, Head of the EU Police Mission, and Mijo Kresic, BiH Deputy Minister of Security, Lisak congratulated the SSU upon their completion of a two-week training session with the Special Intervention Group of the Italian Carabinieri.

The training session had been arranged by General Coppola and focused on special intervention techniques for hostage rescue operations and other major crisis situations.

"I am truly impressed with the strength of the SSU," General Coppola said after

watching a series of spectacular real-life interventions organised by the SSU to demonstrate their skills. "I am reassured that your special unit, with further support, can become comparative to major international special forces."

Lisak commended the work of the SSU, which was created two years ago to respond to the growing need in arresting major criminals, and has so far reacted efficiently in 88 cases.

BiH Deputy Minister of Security, Mijo Kresic, agreed with Lisak that BiH law enforcement agencies need to proclaim the fight against organized crime as their top priority: "SIPA has the knowledge and strength and, with additional investment, it will make BiH more efficient in responding to the security needs of the country."

He added that he will lobby for more financial means to improve the SSU's equipment, starting with the purchase of a helicopter. ■

By Ann Vaessen

## Editorial

In societies seeking to establish post-conflict reconciliation as well as rebuilding shattered communities, uncertainty about the fate of missing persons hampers peace processes. It also limits the full implementation of the rule of law and weakens confidence in democratic and political institutions.



■ Kathryn Bomberger,  
ICMP Director-General

At the end of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina there were approximately 30,000 persons missing. The state government has, with assistance of the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP), adopted a Law on Missing Persons, which supports families' rights to know the fate of their missing relatives and to have access to financial support. The law also established the Missing Persons Institute, a state level institution responsible for the search, recovery and identification of missing persons regardless of ethnic, religious, or other background. This process had previously been undertaken by ethnically divided commissions on missing persons that were themselves based on wartime body exchange mechanisms. Today, we estimate that there still remain around 13,000 persons who are yet to be located and identified.

The introduction of the DNA by ICMP in late 2001 as the primary method in the identification of the recovered mortal remains made the process scientifically accurate and much faster. Working with the local governments, ICMP has now made over 12,000 DNA-assisted identifications of persons missing from all of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. We hope to make a total of 3,000 identifications in 2007 alone.

A significant danger exists in the lack of understanding of the risk that this issue poses if left unresolved. With competing needs for scarce resources many feel that resolving the fate of the missing is not a priority. However, it is a critical political concern that is integral to the development of effective and accountable institutions following conflict. ICMP's advances in identification techniques directly undermine attempts to deny mass atrocities by bringing to light irrefutable evidence that links specific individuals to particular crimes. Identifying the missing through scientifically reliable methods has not only brought long-awaited answers to distraught communities, but continues to contribute to the process of truth and reconciliation. ■

By Kathryn Bomberger,  
ICMP Director-General

# Security forums bar the way to speculations

Muhidin Alic was one of the main initiators of the first Security Forum in Zenica. He is now Minister of Interior of the Federation of BiH. We asked him to look back at those times and give us a glimpse of the future of the Security Forum concept...

*Minister Alic, could you tell us about the reasons that prompted you to set up a Security Forum in Zenica-Doboj?*

The main reason that prompted us to establish a Security Forum in Zenica was a letter sent to both the Office of the High Representative and the EUPM by an *Ostanak*\* association from Bijeljina. They were talking about alleged cases of mistreatment of returnees in the Zenica-Doboj Canton. EUPM's former Commissioner, Kevin Carthy, visited me to discuss security issues related to returnees, and we jointly came to the conclusion that the letter did not represent true facts. This is how I came up with the idea to give returnees the opportunity to judge the security situation in their area. This would lead to true facts instead of speculations.

*Do you remember your police officers' reaction? In other words, what were the first meetings like?*

Their reaction was excellent because our police officers were also frustrated with those lies and pressure, and they wanted to clarify things.

*Besides security issues, are there any other issues that come up at these meetings?*

The scope of our meetings soon became much larger. Returnees would also come up with social welfare and reconstruction concerns, to mention only a few issues that would also indirectly affect their security. We tried to help them in those areas as well. The forum succeeded to persuade local authorities to provide returnees with street lights, phones, etc. In the village of Borovnica, near Vares, we helped returnees to get phone lines. This made it possible for citizens to call the police in the case of an emergency or to report a crime.

**Speculations and negative media coverage stopped almost immediately after the first security forum.**



*So, if I understand you well, these forums became a platform for all kinds of concerns...*

Yes. This is a good example of community policing. Speculations and negative media coverage stopped almost immediately after the first security forum. We used to get a lot of letters from religious officials complaining about the security situation of returnees, and this also stopped immediately afterwards.

*Security forums were then also exported to the Republika Srpska...*

Yes. But we have to make an important distinction there. The Security Forums in the Federation were initially called 'Forums for Citizens Returnees'. They were held at the Cantonal level and focused on the returnee problematic exclusively. The Republika Srpska then took over the con-

cept and created the so-called 'Security Forums' which are held at the municipal level and gather everybody.

*Besides establishing phone lines in Borovnica, do you remember any other success stories?*

I remember a case in Perin Han, near Zenica. The *Ostanak* association had accused someone of the murder of a Serb returnee. However, this incident prompted Serb returnees to suggest that the police officer in charge of the village be a Serb. We assessed their request and decided to accept it. We also decided to include a representative of that village in our forum.

Bocinja is another very sensitive area in which we managed to appease tensions thanks to the Security Forum. The majority of the population consists of Serb returnees, but there are also some *muja-hedin* settlements. The president of the Security Forum in that area is a Serb. And if you take a look at the statistical data in that area they are close to normal. We have more problems dealing with rob-

\* The *Ostanak* association consisted of NGOs in the Republika Srpska which promoted the policy of 'stay where you are right now'. In other words, they were against the returnee process in the Federation.

beries than with incidents towards returnees in this area. Yet, it is still a very sensitive area. By appointing a Serb representative as the President of the Forum we managed to stabilise the situation in the area and reestablish trust.

*Since then, the Zenica Security Forum has become a model for other Security Forums around the country. Are there more to come?*

When we first wanted to export the forum concept, we faced a whole range of attitudes, both amongst politicians and police officers. Politicians thought that the security conditions in their area of responsibility were good and that they did not need some security forum. The police expressed similar views. We told them that they would get first-hand information from returnees and have the opportunity to present their activities directly, thus short-circuiting any possibility for manipulations. We managed to convince them that they would benefit from these meetings.

**Security forums are a perfect way to avoid manipulations and speculations of any kind. It is a perfect transparency tool.**

*Have you turned into a kind of advocate of Security Forums?*

Yes, that is for sure. (smiles) We need to convince people all the time. Our main argument is that security forums are a perfect way to avoid manipulations and speculations of any kind. It is a perfect transparency tool.

*What are the prospects for the future? Are there any new areas to which you would like to export your concept?*

I talked to the Minister of Interior of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton a month ago. I suggested that we establish a Security Forum in Mostar. He said that he will think about it. I also asked people from the EUPM and OHR to talk to him so that the process can be completed.

*What is the status right now?*

I hope that we will meet again at the end of this month, and I will see his position, and debate about it one more time.

*Why Mostar?*

Well, because of returnees. I think it would be good to establish forums in all areas with returnees.

*What do you think about the accountability of the police in general in BiH?*

Security situations should be judged based on citizens' own sense of security, rather than on statistical data. This means that police officers need to come closer to their citizens so that they can detect their basic security problems and show citizens that they are doing their work in an efficient and professional way.

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*You mentioned that the Security Forum concept is a good example of community policing. Are you going to push for its integration into the nation-wide strategy for community policing?*

We established a commission which is in charge of developing and implementing that strategy. First, we need to consult the cantons in order to find out what we could implement jointly and what they can do alone. ■

*By Ann Vaessen*

## News brief

# Zenica Security Forum - a model to ensure the security of returnees

Recently, the Minister of Interior of the Zenica-Doboj Canton Aziz Brotlija congratulated the members of the Zenica Forum of Citizens Returnees for their dedication to the security of returnees and their overall contribution to police accountability.

For three years, the 11 members of the Zenica Security Forum - all volunteers - have been gathering on a regular basis, reaching out to the returnee community in their area of responsibility, sharing their security concerns and ensuring their day-to-day protection.

"The Zenica Security Forum was established in February 2005," remembers Alessandra Londero, Deputy Chief of EUPM's Political Department. "It is a citizens' body with a problem-solving rather than political role. It focuses on security-related complaints and on the work of the police, but can also address any other matter of concern to returnees."

The Forum's members are returnee representatives elected by the returnee community in the Canton, as well as members of the Serb Citizens Council (SGV), the most important association for Serbs in the Federation. The Cantonal Ministry of Welfare, Returnees and Labour also participate in the forum, while international community agencies, including EUPM, are invited to each session as observers.

"The Forum has the advantage of receiving complaints that were never directly reported to the police," Ms. Londero goes on. "Complaints are then being itemized on a case-to-case basis and distributed to all members of the Forum. Police findings are then communicated back to the local community."

Since the creation of the Forum, the Zenica-Doboj police have not registered any cases of ethnically motivated assaults or crime cases against returnees: "We have noted only minor incidents, such as quarrels, small theft or threats," says Dragoljub Subotic, Police Inspector and Secretary of the Forum.

The Zenica Security Forum has proved to be a successful tool not only to assess and ensure the security of returnees, but also to improve the relationship between citizens and local authorities. It has been used as a model for various other citizens' forums and civil society platforms both in the Federation and the Republika Srpska. ■

*By Vedrana Dimitrijevic*



# EUPM's early warning system

There are 24 of them - both national and international staff - and they are spread throughout the country to take its pulse, relentlessly. They are our 'early warning system', working in the background to provide us with continuous political forecasts, starting with the PolAds Highlights sent to your mailbox every single morning by Vesna Willis.

"We need to be here, there and everywhere," says Ivana Jusufbegovic, who works at the Sarajevo Regional Office and mainly covers the Federation Ministry of Interior. "We cannot allow waiting for information to hit us - we need to go after it!"

Ivana perfectly summarizes our political advisers' daily work. They need to monitor and analyze, but also predict and anticipate.

As Boyd McKechnie, the Head of the Department states, "delays in the much expected police restructuring have not impeded our work through the last two years."

"Under the leadership of the Head of Mission, through what he calls 'police reform efforts', the Political Department has planted very important seeds which one day will result in important benefits for the BiH police," he goes on.

## Continuity and flair

Asked about the main criteria to which a good political adviser should respond most of the Political Department, including its Head, identified "flair", "instinct" and "intuition".

Of course, an extensive knowledge of political science and the political arena, as well as strong diplomatic, analytical and reporting skills is a must. "The Department's overall goal is to contribute to improve the functioning of the police in BiH at all levels and to assist the police to follow best practices," Boyd explains. "For this, the Political Advisers monitor the mechanisms of police accountability and of selection and removal of police managers," he continues. "They assess their work, identify deficiencies and contribute to the overall EUPM proposals for solutions."

So a "good nose" seems to be what makes the difference: "This is something you develop over time," says Ivana. "Let me tell you that our noses are pretty well trained to detect various attempts of inappropriate



■ First row, from left to right: Dijana Stevanovic, Ljerka Jeftic, Brankica Bujak, Bernan Divkovic, Ivana Jusufbegovic, Boyd McKechnie, OrhanTurkmenoglu, Alessandra Londero and Vesna Willis. Second row, from left to right: Sanja Kljajic, Zorana Goletic, Alma Ahmedbegovic, Elvira Ademovic (hiding), Daniel Lindvall, Dragan Pejic, Marko Pjevic (hiding), Marina Pjevalica, Amira Hadzimehmedovic, Sinica Dukic and Daniel Bronkhorst.

political interference in the work of the police."

Sinica Dukic, who works from the Field Office in Travnik and covers the Zenica-Doboj and the Central Bosnia Cantons tends to agree with her: "You need to recognize signals coming from various sources, whether from politicians, religious leaders, mayors, police officers or ordinary citizens."

These signals or "clues", as Maja Setic and Zorana Goletic call them, need to be put together with knowledge and intuition. These two passionate national political advisers compare their work to a detective's:

"You need to go on the hunt for clues, and then assemble them, take a step back, leave your emotions on the side and try to establish scenarios and patterns."

Knee-jerk reactions should be avoided. The key is to think with a clear head, gauge the situation and put it in the overall political context of the country. This is also to be added to the long list of qualities to

which political advisers should respond.

Maja and Zorana have been with EUPM since its very beginning. Like most of their colleagues, their field experience is extensive. For some of them, like Ljerka Ljeftic, who covers the Trebinje area, their professional experience even goes back to

wartimes.

Continuity and institutional memory are an asset and Boyd, the Head of the Department, epitomizes this perfectly. He first came to BiH as an Elections Observer for the OSCE in 1996, and has stayed in the country every since. His three children were raised in the country.

"Continuity is one of our main strengths," he says proudly.

"Thanks to our institutional memory, we manage to put every single incident, as small as it may seem, into the wider picture. We are the glue putting it all together."

Brankica Bujak, who works as a National Political Adviser at the Regional Office in Banja Luka, also stresses institutional memory as the key asset of the department. She praises the level of mutual respect that the members of the department have built over time.

"The national staff of our department is a reflection of BiH as a whole, and we do have conflicting opinions on various political issues," she says. "Sometimes our views denote our origin but we insist on issues that we have in common. We have managed to break the taboo on certain subjects and to speak about everything freely. That is a

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Continuity is not only essential for the cohesion of the team itself, but also to 'cement' strong relationships with national police officers and politicians. Alessandra Londero, the Deputy Head of the Department, has been in the country for a long time, posted in various areas.

"When there is a critical situation, some of my counterparts call me to discuss these issues over a coffee," she explains. "It takes time to get the recognition and trust of your national counterparts. We have great conversations, often about EU membership - about the rights, but also about the obligations that this implies."

### Slowly, but surely

Their main motivation is to help police forces throughout BiH become fully independent of any kind of inappropriate political influence, and to balance it with the necessary political oversight over the police that exists in all democratic countries. This is what keeps them going.

"I feel very passionate about anything that endangers police work and political interference is our top target in that regard," Zorana says, adding obstructionism, war rhetoric and the inactivity of the civil society in BiH to the 'list of her sorrows'.

A mentality change is needed and Zorana and Maja try to contribute to it in their everyday lives, prompting their friends to vote and express their opinions - to "practise democracy". It is a long process, as "habits do not change overnight".

"I hope that people will slowly get over their post-war relativism, thinking that everything is fine as long as nobody is shooting, and start to actively participate in democracy," says Maja.

Since they love their country and their mission is to observe each of its political flaws - "it is a bit like working in a hospital" - they admit that it is sometimes difficult to stay optimistic and keep the momentum. Sometimes it even looks as if certain things were going backwards.

Their international colleagues then lend them some strength: "It is probably easier for us to keep some distance because it is not our own country," Boyd says. "I then sometimes transform into an agony aunt."

Daniel Lindvall, a Swedish Political Adviser who works at the Banja Luka Regional Office together with Brankica, expressed a similar idea: "It may sometimes be easier for the international members of the team to deal with some sensitive topics and lobby on certain issues."

Lobbying is another part of the political department's work. Daniel calls it the "diplomatic" part of his job.

In close cooperation with the Legal Department, EUPM's political advisers have contributed to the development and the implementation of the Law on Police Officials

(LoPO), Books of Rules etc.

Police reform is an area in which the Political Department has little say. But the slow progress in this domain has created some form of disenchantment and the general economic situation in the country deprives citizens from the empowerment to do anything. This is something the Political Department monitors closely.

"Sometimes people tend to believe that the only way out is either to belong to a political party or a criminal group," Boyd says.

But then, again, mentalities do not change overnight and the Political Department is confident that citizens will soon start to realize that they need to move forward because the European Union can offer much more

than visa-free travelling.

"As frustrating as it may sometimes seem, we are initiating first steps, which may not be visible in our time," Boyd says. "But through the reforms, we hope that at least the future generation will reap the benefit."

The morale of his staff is precious to Boyd and he seems to be an efficient 'agony aunt', because every single member of his staff praises the team spirit. Ivana even told us that "it is the best team she has ever worked in, from head to toe!" ■

By Ann Vaessen

## Some Political advisers' wishes for the future of BiH

● I hope that my kids will grow up in a country where nationality no longer plays a particular role when you look for a job, a spouse or anything else. Therefore, EU membership is my final aim. It would benefit us all, but we should not forget the responsibilities that come with it. (Sinisa Dukic)

● Bearing in mind that from a geographical, historic and cultural point of view BiH is in Europe, I hope citizens get all the benefits of it in their daily life some day." (Ljerka Ljeftic)

● My wishes? That somebody really intelligent, brave, non-corrupt and well-intended gets a magic stick (laughs). On a more serious note: I wish that we become an organized country with a well-functioning public administration and judiciary, with a good education system, good social welfare etc. I cannot bear the sight of citizens being discriminated against all the time and all around!" (Ivana Jusufbegovic)

● I wish for sustainable economic and political systems, for no more war rhetoric and a more active civil society. I wish for BiH to become part of the EU. It would force our politicians to be more coherent. It would also force us to aim towards EU standards with regard to ecology, for instance, which is a matter that is particularly close to my heart." (Zorana Goletic)

● If we join the EU, our borders will open to the outside world, and this would swallow up the three main ethnic groups of our country in a big multi-ethnic and multi-cultural group." (Maja Setic)

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## CIVCOM approves EUPM III Concept for Operations

On 3 October, the Committee for Civilian aspects of Crisis Management of the Council of the EU (CIVCOM) approved the Concept for Operations (CONOPS) for EUPM for 2008 and 2009. It is anticipated that it will be ratified by the Council in mid October.

The CONOPS does not foresee to change the mandate of the mission. The mission will keep its current co-locations and personnel.

EUPM shall also in the future focus on supporting the fight against organised crime, enhance the accountability of local police, support police reform efforts and monitor the implementation of police restructuring once a political agreement has been reached. ■



# I have never been to a busier office in my life

Sanja Knezevic is Brigadier General Vincenzo Coppola's new personal assistant. She joined the mission on 1 October. We wish her a warm welcome!

*We would like to get to know you a bit better. Could you introduce yourself to the Mission in a few words?*

Thank you! Well, my name is Sanja Knezevic. I was born on 01 January 1975 (double Capricorn, what a tragedy), in a car, on the way to the hospital. That's when I started giving unconventional answers to introductory questions.

I am originally from Miska Glava, which is a small place close to Ljubija, which is a small place close to Prijedor, which - again - is a small place close to Banja Luka, etc. I am hyperactive and happy, and I love chocolate. My favourite film is *Schindler's List*, I love basketball and my favourite perfume is *Angel* by Thierry Mugler.

*What were you doing before? Could you give us an overview of your career?*

Was there a 'before'? I'm kidding... Before this I was at the International Commission on Missing Persons here in Sarajevo - before that at the OSCE in Banja Luka - before that with NATO and SFOR all over the country - before that with the RS Ministry of Finance - preceded by DRC/UNHCR, OXFAM and UN Military Observers, back in the war times.

*You have been with us for almost two weeks now. What are your first impressions?*

My first, second and third impressions are still quite chaotic because I'm still trying to add the faces to the names that keep sending me emails - I think I'm doing alright. I can definitely say that I have never been to a busier office in my life and that this fast interactive environment requires fast adaptations - so I'm working on all that.



*What do you consider the biggest challenge in your current position?*

The biggest challenge would be making it through the first two weeks and looking back from the second part of the month, thinking: this was good.

*What was your first assignment? How did this go?*

Nothing as exotic as a press conference, I'm afraid. I have been doing the regular Personal Assistant stuff around the office, and have my first meeting in half an hour. So far, so good.

*Is there anything else you would like to say to your new colleagues?*

Oh, I will - individually, in person. (smiles) ■

By Ann Vaessen

## Media

# Third season of *Nerijesen Slucaj* hits the screens

The third season of the *Nerijesen Slucaj* programme hit the screens on BHTV on 9 October 2007. The programme, which has been sponsored by the EUPM and the UK embassy for the past two years, is now running on its own steam, and the results to date certainly indicate a success in the fight against crime.

However, there are still a lot of improvements which can be made to make this a respected and lucrative programme, initially by enhancing the image and professionalism of the presenters and the SIPA staff answering the calls, but more importantly, by encouraging community ownership of the problem in providing valuable criminal intelligence and information.

Since *Nerijesen Slucaj* first started back on 5 October 2005, there have been a total of 20 shows, during which 66 serious unsolved cases have been presented to the BiH public, together with 28 photographs



of wanted or missing people. In addition, the presenters have publicised 20 short thematic documentaries on the work of the police and the prosecutors.

This month's cases included the four-year-old boy, Ratko Makaric, currently still missing from Banja Luka since June this year, and the suspected murder of Milutin Mikerevic, from Doboje, on 19 July, whose body is yet to be found. A special feature was also shown highlighting the first suspected cases in the use of "Rohypnol", otherwise known as the "Date Rape" drug.

Approximately 38 calls were received to the Crime Hotline during the show, which will now be assessed and recorded by the SIPA intelligence office, before the relevant information is forwarded to specific police areas for follow-up enquiries at a local level.

"Some of the calls certainly appear to be promising and mainly focus on drug supply and car thefts," said Frederick Kalek, EUPM SIPA Intelligence Officer.

EUPM officers are reminded and encouraged that they can play their part as well, in identifying suitable material for the show, through their day-to-day work with their local counterparts in the field.

"The problem is that there is still a reluctance to use such a media source during the early stages of an investigation," says Mark Wise, EUPM Police Advisor. "However the early apprehension of offenders is vital in preventing further offences being committed and the use of the show must always be considered as a first option."

"Even the UK version had serious problems in the early days, as the police were extremely distrustful of the media, but it has become quite clear that results can be achieved when other methods of investigation have failed, and now detectives are queuing to get their cases onto the programme," he concludes.

The promotion of the Crime Hotline will be a main feature of EUPM's forthcoming Autumn Media Campaign on Organised Crime. ■

By Mark Wise

# Prevention is the best measure against domestic violence

What are the reasons for domestic violence? How can we recognize victims? What should the police do?

These were some of the questions asked by the students who attended the roundtable on domestic violence jointly organized by the Brcko District Police, Centres for Mental Care and Social Protection and youth associations, including *Proni*, under the auspices of the EU Police Mission.

## A Security Forum for the Brcko District

"Our goal is to act preventively," explains Niko Salatovic, Deputy Chief of the Community Policing Department of the Brcko District Police. "We plan to assign police officers to rural areas so that they can be in constant contact with citizens."

In order to improve the overall security situation in the area, the Brcko District Police will establish Security Forums, gath-



ering local communities and police representatives, as well as NGOs and other relevant organizations.

"Citizens now trust their police more, and they become aware that they can talk openly about any kind of violence," says Salatovic.

## Children are the most frequent victims

While the Brcko District police have recorded a decrease of cases of domestic violence in the last six months, domestic violence is on the increase in the rest of the country. According to the Centre for Mental Health, children are the most frequent victims.

"Kids who are growing up in violent families become either victims or violent persons themselves," explains M.D. Zlata Papis, from the Centre for Mental Health in Brcko.

"The adoption in June this year of a nation-wide strategy to combat violence against children was a great step in the good direction," says Inspector Svjetlana Savic, Inspector of the Brcko District Police and former member of the working group that created the strategy. "Violence must always be reported and nobody should hide evidence about a criminal offence, even it involves their family members." ■

By Sladjana Lizdek

# Newcomers



**Kirsii-Marja Alaspaa** has recently joined the **Criminal Justice Interface Unit (CJIU)** in Sarajevo. Back in Finland she worked as a Criminal Chief Detective in the Police Department of Turku. Last year she specialised in economic and environmental crimes. Before that she has worked as an Inspector in the Provincial Police

Command.

Kirsi also has a Master's degree in Law from University of Turku. After her graduation she worked one year in court to get her Judge Diploma. This is Kirsi's first mission. She has two sons, who are in Finland, but she hopes that they will visit her soon.



**Jose Costa Barreto** has recently joined the **Inspection Team** in Sarajevo. He is a Major with 18 years of service in the Portuguese *Guarda Nacional Republicana*, a police corps with military status. Before coming to BiH he was the Commander of a Riot Police Battalion in Lisbon. This Unit has full responsibility with regard to public order on the Portuguese territory and includes the Special Operations Company (which includes VIP protection and special operations in the event of kidnappings, hijacking, terrorism, heavy crime etc). Jose is not a newcomer to mission life. This is his fifth mission! He has served twice in Angola, respectively for UNAVEM III MONUA. In 2003 he was sent to Iraq to manage a Special Riot Police Company. He is currently attending a journalism course at the Lisbon University. He is in his last year and plans to graduate as soon as he returns to Portugal.



**António Almeida** is 51 years old and has recently joined the **Regional Office in Tuzla** as a Crime Adviser. This is his first mission. He is a Major in the Portuguese *Guarda Nacional Republicana*, which he joined in 1979. He started with the Traffic Unit and has since then carried out several tasks such as Territorial Detachment Commander, Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, District Deputy Commander and District Commander. His curriculum also includes two degrees from the Polytechnic Institute of the *Guarda*: one in Communications and Public Relations and another one in Secretariat and Administration. Antonio is married, with two sons (who are respectively 24 and 25 years old). He spends his free time playing football, talking with friends and sometimes making magic tricks for them.



## UNITED KINGDOM



**John Budgen** is a new Field Officer in **Bijeljina**, having arrived in BiH on 1st October. It is his first Mission. He has worked in Suffolk Police in the UK for 23 years. He is a Detective Sergeant and for the last few years has been working on a series of Major Investigations, mainly murders, but also serious rapes, robberies

frauds etc. John lives in a seaside town called Lowestoft, which is the most easterly point in the British Isles. He is married, with two children, Holly aged 19, at university in London, studying philosophy and Oliver, 17, who dreams of fame and fortune as an actor. My wife, Carole, is a writer, currently working on the screenplay of the next Hollywood blockbuster (he wishes!). He loves sailing, walking, keeping fit and is an avid reader of anything worth reading, especially history. ■

## Newsbrief

### Slovak Republic to continue supporting EUPM

An official delegation of the Police Presidium of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, led by Colonel Jan Biz, visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from 08 to 12 October.

"This is an opportunity to pay a visit to the six members of our contingent and their line managers," said Colonel Jan Biz. "Our meeting with Ari Sarjanen, EUPM's Deputy Head of Mission, was very positive. He gave us very good feedback about our contingent's work and our preliminary decision is to extend our contribution to the EUPM."

The three Slovak officials traveled to BiH with a new member of the contingent, Elena Benkova, who will join the Regional Office in Sarajevo, and are looking forward to sending new staff members to the mission as of January.



■ From left to right: EUPM Banja Luka Chief Adviser Juraj Smolek, Deputy Head of EUPM Ari Sarjanen, Colonel Jan Biz, Chief of the International Police Cooperation Office of the Police Presidium, Ivan Bacik and Igor Vozary, Senior Police Officers.

Juraj Smolek, EUPM's Chief Adviser for the Banja Luka Region and Chief of the Slovak contingent was also very happy about the visit: "Back in 2002, I was actually the first Slovak police officer to be sent to this mission. I am happy to hear that our country will most probably continue to contribute staff to the mission."

Besides visiting the Main Headquarters in Sarajevo, the Slovak delegation has also paid a visit to their contingent members in Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla. ■



## Turkish contingent hosts *Iftar* party

EUPM's Turkish contingent invited their colleagues to break the daily fast with them on 28 September. Over 100 guests, including Head of Mission Brigadier General Coppola and Deputy Head of Mission Ari Sarjanen, gathered at sunset to share wonderful *baklava*, *sarma*, *sis kebab*, traditional tea and many other delicacies that had been brought in straight from Istanbul.

"*Iftar is about sharing*," says Anti-Organised Crime Officer Celal Bodur. "We wanted to share this tradition with our colleagues and thus celebrate multiculturalism."

The dinner took place at the Turkish-Bosnian International College in Ilidza and the students surprised their guests with a multi-cultural concert combining Turkish, Bosnian and other types of music.

"We have never been safer than today with all these EUPM police officers in our school," joked Fatih Gürsoy, the Director of the College, upon offering a plaque to Head of Mission Coppola and Deputy Head of Mission Sarjanen.

The party was a success in celebrating multiculturalism and EUPM's team spirit. ■

By Ann Vaessen

## Bajram, the holiday of family and charity

Bosnian Muslims have just celebrated *Ramadan Bajram*, a three-day holiday that marks the ending of the holy month of Ramadan during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset.

For Bosnian Muslims it means family gatherings, exchanging gifts, eating a lot of food (especially *baklava*). It also means visiting the graves of dear ones and giving charity to poor people.

On a more spiritual level, *Bajram* is the holiday of forgiveness, moral victory and peace, of congregation, fellowship, brotherhood and unity. Muslims are not only celebrating the end of fasting, but thanking God (Arabic: *Allah*) for giving them strength and helping them practise self-control throughout the previous month.



■ Baklava

### Ramadan Bajram and Kurban Bajram

Two Bajrams are celebrated each year - *Ramadan Bajram* and *Kurban Bajram*. *Kurban Bajram* comes two months and ten days after *Ramadan Bajram* and marks the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail for God.

As Ibrahim prepared to sacrifice his son, God stopped him and gave him a sheep to sacrifice instead (this story is also a part of the Old Testament and Jewish Tanakh).

Muslims around the world thus sacrifice sheep for this holiday, giving the meat out to their family, friends and to the poor. This meat is called *kurban* in Bosnia, thus the holiday is called *Kurban Bajram*.

Muslims also celebrate *Kurban Bajram* as it marks the end of the *Hajj* for the millions of Muslims who make the pilgrimage to Mecca each year.

As the Muslim calendar is lunar, Bajrams move up by ten days each year. *Kurban Bajram* falls on 20 December this year. ■

By Sanela Osmanovic



### Gudmundur's travel tips

## Zeljjava Air base in Bihac

The Zeljava air base in Bihac was the largest underground airport and military airbase in former Yugoslavia. The construction began in 1957 as a project with codename Object 505 and it was finished in 1965. The cost of construction was six billion US dollars. It was designed to sustain the direct impact of a 20 kiloton nuclear bomb,



■ Thomas Riegler, Mustafa Sadi Torun, Manfred Pinneger, Jean Luc Gobin, Jean Leon Leenders, Gudmundur Fylkisson and two Border Police officer.

equivalent to the Nagasaki bomb. The base was used intensively during the recent conflict, but the JNA destroyed it with 56 tons of explosive in 1992 to prevent further use of it. Underground facilities were 3.5 km and had four entrances. Three of them were intended to be used by fixed-wing aircraft. Today, one of the four entrances is in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the other in Croatia. ■

### Fun

## Join the EUPM PARTY!

To celebrate the 9<sup>th</sup> Medal Parade, EUPM will host a party at the Holiday Inn, in Sarajevo, on 19 October.

Tickets are available at the Personnel Office, Room A313. **Join us!**



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