

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 17 April 1998

Brutal murder of Vojin and Lela Trninic in Drvar on April 15 was the last drop in the full cup of patience of the International Community in BiH. HR Westendorp held a press conference and announced his decision to discharge Vice Mayor of Drvar, Tokmadzija. The IC is decisive to take urgent actions of protection of the Serb returnees to Drvar. Westendorp said that the hard liners will not stop return process and that IC will not tolerate any obstructions or violence and will hold the authorities of this country responsible at all levels. UN Special Envoy, Rehn said that even after the severe warning, burning of Serb houses continued last night and last morning. Rehn gave a 48 hours deadline to the Federation President Ganic and Co-president Soljic to include 15 Serb returnees in local police forces, and if opposite, the HR will name the supervisor for Drvar police. Bodies of killed Serbs were transferred to SFOR hospital in Rajlovac for autopsy. The bodies were transferred to Sarajevo after the UN Commission refused demand of Croat police to transfer the bodies for autopsy in Split.

5:00

Tokmadzija addressed a letter to HR Westendorp in which he says: " I would not like to negate your authority in this matter, I have to say that the reasons you claim for such decision are unacceptable for me. Separating the responsibilities of two leading men in the municipality, and especially transferring it to the lower level of authority, leads me into conclusion that this decision was not mainly aimed against the Vice Mayor and his role in all, but it was brought with purpose; to implement uncertainty and fear among Croat people in Drvar, and even worse, to create the feeling of responsibility for everything that happens in the town."

2:00

BiH President Izetbegovic met with UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Ogata and UNHCR representatives. Izetbegovic thanked UNHCR and Ogata for assistance in refugee return process and efforts to implement the Sarajevo declaration.

1:30

Federal Ministry for Refugees organised in Sarajevo the public promotion of the plan for return to the RS, made upon applications of more than 300.000 Bosniaks and Croats. The plan covers return to 37 municipalities of the RS, which proves that there is no alternative to Annex 7 of DPA. CoM Co-chairman Silajdzic severely condemned the murders in Drvar calling it crimes against humanity and asked the IC to punish the culprits. Silajdzic also said that if there is no other way, the people must be returned by force; they were expelled by force, they should be returned by force.

3:00

Federation President Ganic met with US Special envoy for Balkans deputy, Daily. Ganic informed Daily about yesterday's meeting in Mostar and return process in the Federation. The matter of Kosovo was also discussed. Ganic also talked to Ogata and informed her about refugee return and situation in Brcko.

1:30

BiH Federation delegation, led by Prime Minister Bicakcic finished its visit to Zagreb. Bicakcic assessed the visit as very successful and useful for strengthening the relations between Croatia and Federation and Croatia and BiH. Tudjman also received the Federation delegation and said that for creation of a quality life of Bosniaks and Croats in the Federation, it is necessary to seek for solutions acceptable for both sides. Tudjman also said that it is necessary to sign the agreement on special relations between BiH Federation and Croatia as soon as possible.

3:00

The European Council Secretary General said that BiH will have to wait until November to be received in the European Council.

1:30

Serb Citizen Council (SGV) visited Una/Sana Canton led by SGV President, Pejanovic and Berberovic. `Federal Minister of Internal Affairs, Zilic was also present at the meeting in Bosanski Brod as well as representatives of the Una/Sana Canton Government. The main subject of the meeting was return to the Canton.

2:00