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Joint Institutions

- The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) held its eleventh meeting on 30 December in Lukavica. Attending the session were two of the three Presidents, Alija Izetbegovic and Momcilo Krajisnik, as well as Mariofil Ljubic representing Kresimir Zubak, who was unable to attend. The Presidency welcomed the agreement of the nominated Co-Chairs of the Council of Ministers to the Protocol on the Modalities of the Meetings of the Council of Ministers of BiH, which was signed on the same day in the presence of the Presidency. Following its decisions of November 30 and December 12, 1996 the Presidency called on the House of Representatives of BiH to convene in Sarajevo on 3 January and to approve the nominations of the Co-Chairs and the Council of Ministers, and, upon nomination of the latter, the Vice Chair, the Ministers and their Deputies. The Presidency also called on the House of Peoples of BiH to hold its inaugural session in Lukavica on the same day.
- The Presidency requested the Council of Ministers, after their approval by the House of Representatives, to consider with urgency the question of a permanent arrangement on the premises, location and functioning of the common institutions of BiH.

The Presidency also decided to adopt the Agreement on Cooperation with UNICEF. According to the Procedure agreed at the eighth session of the Presidency, Mr. Krajisnik was authorised to sign the Agreement.

The Presidency received a letter from SFOR announcing the visit of the Secretary General of NATO Solana and SACEUR General Joulwan to Sarajevo. The Presidency will meet the visitors in the National Museum before their next session, which will be held on 3 January.

On 30 December Dr. Haris Silajdzic and Mr. Boro Bosic, nominated by the Presidency at its 10th session as Co-Chairs of the Council of Ministers of BiH, held consultations on the modalities of the meetings of the Council of

Ministers.

The following was agreed:

1. The formula for the venue of meetings of the Council of Ministers would be the same as that agreed by the Presidency on 22 October for Presidency meeting venues. Furthermore, as decided by the Presidency on 30 November, sessions of the Council would be held every Friday at 1400 hours.
2. In accordance with the Presidency statement of 22 October, *"a permanent arrangement on the premises, location and functioning of ... the Council of Ministers ... shall be agreed by consensus within six months"* (i.e. from 22 October 1996 to 22 April 1997).
3. The Co-Chairs would take turns as Chair, rotating weekly. The first weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers would be held in Lukavica, chaired by Mr. Boro Bosic.
4. The Co-Chairs would work jointly, convening sessions in turn and defining the session agendas, until the Laws and the Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers were adopted.
5. The Co-Chairs would take office upon the approval of the House of Representatives of BiH and nominate by consensus the following persons as Members of the Council of Ministers:

Vice Chair	Neven Tomic (Croat)
Minister of Foreign Trade & Economy	Hasan Muratovic (Bosniac)
Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade & Economy	Nikola Grabovac (Croat)
Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade & Economy	Gavro Bogic (Serb)
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Jadranko Prlic (Croat)
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs	Husein Zivalj (Bosniac)
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs	Dragan Bozanic (Serb)
Minister of Civil Affairs & Communications	Spasoje Albijanac (Serb)
Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs & Communications	Nudzeim Recica (Bosniac)
Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs & Communications	Milan Krizanovic (Croat)

6. The Vice-Chair, Ministers and Deputy Ministers would take office upon approval by the House of Representatives of BiH on 4 January 1997

At a press conference following the meetings Principal Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Michael Steiner, briefed journalists and expressed his satisfaction with the agreement. *"I think this is good news for the end of the year. From Friday we will have a Council of Ministers. We are working step-by-step closer to the aim of a fully functioning Government. This will provide the preconditions necessary for BiH representation at the forthcoming Donor's Meetings"*, he said. Preparations for the Donor's Conference were especially important for the revitalisation of the BiH infrastructure, particularly at the level of energy, rail and road links. Ambassador Steiner stressed the need for a speedy start to the work of the Council of Ministers and urged the Council to forward a proposal for the location of common offices. Asked how the impasse had finally been broken, Ambassador Steiner said that the several day "time out" from negotiations had helped give the Parties time to reflect on their positions. *"This reflection time has worked well. They realised that the only approach that would work was the one that had been proposed to them"*, he said.

The third session of the RS National Assembly took place in Jahorina on 27 December. All parties were represented with 65 of the 83 deputies in attendance. The adoption of the Legal Commission's recommendation that the SDA, the Joint List and the Party for BiH be able to assume all rights and duties without taking the oath permitted their full participation for the first time. The Government invoked the "urgent procedure" to pass a Draft Law on the Military which is expected to come into force on 31 December. Also discussed at the session were the Draft Law on the RS Government and the Draft Law on Ministries. No conclusions were reached on these issues and these, as well as all other agenda items, were referred to the next session, expected to be held in late January.

Belgrade

- The High Representative, Mr. Carl Bildt, issued a statement on 28 December urging President Slobodan Milosevic to recognize the findings of the OSCE Mission led by Mr. Felipe Gonzalez. Mr. Bildt called upon the authorities in Belgrade to exercise the greatest restraint in connection with the demonstrations *"which continue in peace and dignity day by day"*. Mr. Bildt said he was *"deeply disturbed"* by the reports of violence in reaction to the demonstrations in recent days. *"The development of democracy in Serbia is of crucial importance for peace and stability throughout the region"*, he said.
- Mr. Felipe Gonzalez, head of the OSCE Monitoring Mission which was sent to Serbia to examine the disputed results from the 17 November elections concluded on 27 December that the Opposition coalition *"Zajedno"* (Together) had won local elections in 13 Serbian municipalities and nine municipalities. Mr. Gonzalez issued a statement to the OSCE leadership in Europe calling for an *"urgent appeal"* to authorities and political forces in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) *"to comply with the will expressed at the polls by the citizens"*. – *"the authorities as well as all political forces in the FRY should accept the results of the local elections of 17 November"* he said.

Human Rights

- The High Representative, Carl Bildt, wrote to the Ombudsmen of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 22 December to congratulate them on the prestigious Human Rights Watch monitoring award they received last month and to praise their office for its important contribution to the protection and promotion of human rights. In his letter, the High Representative said that the *"effectiveness with which ... you have worked together is a convincing refutation for those who see ethnic segregation as the only viable solution for Bosnia and Herzegovina."* Mr. Bildt also pledged the OHR's commitment to finding expanded ways of supporting the Ombudsmen's work in the coming year.
- UN IPTF received a complaint from a Bosniac man who said that he was evicted from his house in Teslic on 20 December on the orders of a local official. Two other Bosniac men complained to UN IPTF that they were under pressure from the local authorities to leave their homes. International monitors report that harassment and intimidation of Bosniacs in Teslic is again on the rise, with an increase in haystack and barn-burnings, thefts of property, grenade attacks, telephone threats, and physical assaults. International monitors also report that the Teslic authorities have imposed special bureaucratic requirements for minority residents and visitors that appear to be designed to inhibit returns.

In a recent meeting with RS President Plavsic, the High Representative, Carl Bildt, expressed his concern about the deteriorating human rights situation in Teslic. Also, UN IPTF intervened with the Chief of Police and the Mayor of Teslic on 17 December to request information about the *"Teslic Civil Protection Unit"* which is believed to be responsible for a number of the incidents.

- International organisations reported that the general manager and the editor-in-chief of the independent radio station *"ISV"* in Sarajevo suffered severe injuries after they were beaten up outside the station's offices on 20 December by two men wielding planks of wood. The incident occurred after the station broadcast the findings of a poll about the continuing popularity of Santa Claus. International officials strongly condemned the attack as an affront on freedom of expression and to the values of tolerance openness and goodwill for which Sarajevo was well known.
- UN IPTF reported that four Serb men arrested on 17 December in Odzak were released on 20

December after a decision by the court. Three HVO soldiers being held in Doboj, who had been arrested earlier this month, were released the same day.

Freedom of Movement

- On 20 December, a Bosniac man in Grbavica threatened to bomb the UNHCR bus if it continued to transport Serbs to the city. The local police were informed. UN IPTF also reported several more stoning incidents on the Sarajevo – Gorazde road in the past few days, including an incident on 19 December in which a Bosniac man was injured in the head after the bus he was travelling in was hit by rocks. UN IPTF met with the chief of public security in Rogatica concerning vehicle stonings on this route. The Chief suggested that Federation-registered vehicles only use the road at specified times, or use an alternate route. UN IPTF told the official that the local police are responsible for ensuring freedom of movement and that increased patrols and presence are required.
- Federation police in Sanski Most complained to UN IPTF that RS police have been preventing movement across the IEBL and that three RS policemen turned away a Bosniac family attempting to cross at Stari Rijeka on 21 December.
- On 22 December, 30 Bosniac displaced persons were able to successfully visit their former homes in four villages in the Prijedor area, although some villagers near Ljubija threw eggs at their bus.
- A Croat man complained to UN IPTF that he was arrested by local police in Doboj on 21 December because he did not have ownership or registration documents for his car. The man was later released, but RS police confiscated the car and fined him 380 dinars for the violation.

Economic Issues

- The World Bank has approved a loan worth 2 million DEM for construction of a water supply facility in the Kladanj municipality. The company Bosna-Sarajevo has already started work on construction of the plant.
- The US Red Cross is providing 800,000 DEM for the construction of a central heating system in Kladanj. The Overseas Development Administration has also provided 250,000 DEM for reconstruction of the town's power plant, situated in Sokolina.
- The US Agency for International Development (USAID) have given a 600,000 DEM loan for the repair and refurbishment of the Sarajevo factory, Kljuc. The loan will fund equipment for the factory which will employ up to 90 new workers, the majority of whom will be demobilised soldiers.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) issued a statement on Thursday announcing the delivery of one metric tonne of protein biscuits to the Stabilisation Force in BiH in support of its humanitarian activities. The distribution to public kitchens, hospitals and elderly persons will be carried out by various NGOs throughout BiH.
- Norwegian People's Aid has assisted with the reconstruction of an elementary school in Moscanica in the Sarajevo area. The total cost of the project was 650,000 DEM.

Media Issues

- International monitors report that the editor of a Bijeljina-based independent magazine recently resigned after being summoned to Pale for questioning about the publication's owner. The

editor's wife had also been questioned by police on at least two occasions in recent months and a local bank, reportedly run by a prominent SDS member, has demanded that a loan it made to the magazine be repaid immediately. The case is being reviewed by the Media Experts Commission (MEC).

- A local journalist in Zenica complained to international monitors last week that she was threatened and insulted by a high-ranking official of the Zenica-Doboj Ministry of the Interior in the presence of other cantonal officials following publication of an article she wrote about an assault committed by one of the Minister's staff.
- In a positive development, local media reported that teenagers involved in producing the "underground" publications Usput (east and west Mostar), Grafit (Tuzla), Bom (Banja Luka) and Trash (Sarajevo) have banded together to start a new monthly magazine called Nepitani (Those Not Asked). The new publication, like similar e-mail and comic book initiatives currently underway, will include submissions from youth in all parts of BiH.

Looking Ahead

03 January

House of Representatives of BiH Meeting, National Museum, Sarajevo

03 January

Presidency meeting, National Museum, Sarajevo

03 January

Presidency meets with Secretary General of NATO Javier Solana and SACEUR General Joulwan

03 January

Inaugural Meeting of the Council of Ministers, Lukavica

09-10 January

Donor's Information Meeting, Brussels

12 January

Economic Policy Forum, Sarajevo

21 January

Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, Brussels

See our [Chronology](#) for a full list of activities

The OHR Bulletin is produced by the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo and aims to give an overview of what is happening on the ground in the civilian implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Suggestions and contributions are welcome and should be addressed to the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo (387-71) 447 275 ext. 562, Fax (387-71) 447 420. Callers from outside BiH dial via Brussels switchboard: Tel. (32-2) 737 7500 & Fax (32-2) 737 7501