

OHR Bulletin 8 - June 23, 1996

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Elections

The Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti, announced on 25 June that elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) will take place on 14 September. Cotti said the decision was based on wide consultations and on the position taken by the Peace Implementation Conference on BH in Florence earlier this month. Cotti also stressed that the most important prerequisite for the elections to be effective was the removal from political office of indicted war criminals, such as Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

In a statement in Sarajevo, the High Representative (HR) Carl Bildt welcomed Cotti's decision to certify national elections in BH on 14 September saying that "*elections will pave the way for setting up the common institutions of the country foreseen in the Peace Agreement, thus making it possible to start the long process of overcoming the partition of the country*".

Fifty-one applications were received by the Provisional Election Commission (PEC) for Party Registration, together with applications from thirty - three independent candidates, to participate in the forthcoming elections. The PEC reviewed these applications and registered forty-nine political parties and all of the independent candidates who had applied. Two applications from political parties were rejected.

The members of most of the Local Election Commissions (LECs) have been approved by the PEC. An OSCE database search revealed that the nominees to the LECs do not include any individuals who have been indicted by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The majority of the LECs are now functioning and are engaged in the voter registration process. When submitted, the various lists of candidates will be subject to a similar database search.

Joint Bodies

The scheduled Joint Interim Commission (JIC) meeting of 25 June was cancelled due to the fact that the RS delegation, to have been led by Prime Minister Gojko Kljickovic, failed to attend. The High Representative Carl Bildt issued a statement saying that *“this refusal to attend agreed meetings is against the undertakings in the Peace Agreement to work together within the framework of the JIC and the JCC, and calls into question the sincerity of RS statements that they intend to co-operate fully with the implementation of the Peace Agreement”*.

The first session of the Joint Civilian Commission South (JCC South) was held in West Mostar on 19 June under the chairmanship of the Principal Deputy HR Michael Steiner. Representatives of Cantons 7 and 8, the municipalities of Konjic, Stolac, Capljina, West and East Mostar and a number of international organisations were present. Republika Srpska representatives (the mayors of Kalinovik, Trebinje, Nevesinje, Ljubinje and Bileca) failed to attend.

The agenda included economic reconstruction, freedom of movement, refugees and displaced persons, Mostar elections, the general elections and the media.

Two Regional Working Groups (WG), for economic reconstruction and refugees and displaced persons (DPs) were established. The first meeting of the WG on Economic Reconstruction is tentatively scheduled for 4 July with OHR in the chair. The UNHCR will chair the WG on Refugees and DP which will hold its first session within two weeks. The next meeting of the JCC South is tentatively set for 17 July at a place to be determined.

Federation

The reanimation of the “Government” of the “Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosna” with seat in West Mostar has been widely condemned. It has also increased the tensions between the Bosniacs and Croats in the country. While Bosniacs have seen this reanimation as a breach of binding obligations by the Bosnian Croats and as a further proof that the Croats are intent on splitting the country, the Bosnian Croat political leadership maintains that this step is consistent with the concept of the Federation. They present the “Herceg-Bosna Government” as a transitional institution functioning only in areas where the Federation authorities do not yet perform their duties and point to the reduction in the number of “Herceg-Bosna Ministries” from 14 to 6. This event has dominated all other developments in the Federation, including the session of the Federation parliament on 19 June, and overshadowed progress in other areas.

Human Rights

At the invitation of the Principal Deputy HR Ambassador Steiner, representatives of the RS, the Federation and BH, the Associations of Banja Luka and Bugojno Families and the Women of Srebrenica met in Banja Luka on 25 June to discuss concrete measures to alleviate the suffering of the families of unaccounted for persons. The authorities affirmed their commitment to fulfil the obligations that they have undertaken in the Peace Agreement and their will to co-operate. Among others, the following measures were agreed:

- The OHR will convene a meeting in Sarajevo on 27 June involving all the Parties to further pursue their commitment to resolve the issue of releasing all prisoners detained in relation to the conflict.
- The Parties will also set a list of priority sites and a preliminary timetable for the clearing of unburied mortal remains at this meeting. Priority sites and a preliminary timetable for the exhumation of mass graves for the purpose of identification will also be produced.
- The Parties will nominate two forensic pathologists to a joint expert commission that will be tasked with finalizing the sites and timetables of inter-Entity exhumations, and with implementing the agreed-upon exhumations. The commission will be convened on 2 July under the chairmanship of an international forensic expert.
- The UN International Police Force (IPTF) will form IPTF detention investigation committees within

two weeks to respond promptly to allegations of hidden detention. Family associations will designate representatives to work with IPTF committees.

A meeting with Entity officials, at the ministerial level, to review proposed draft legislation on property law will take place on 5 July in Sarajevo. The goal of this effort is to ensure that the property law changes undertaken by both Entities are consistent with international standards and that uniform laws are applied throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The property law will also be raised at the JCC on 9 July.

Economic Reconstruction

Since the signing of the Dayton-Paris Accords, two donors' conferences have raised \$ 1.8 billion in pledges from over forty countries and ten institutions for reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While this represents a significant commitment by the international community, the fact that a number of donors have not yet committed these pledges to specific programs remains of concern. Further, the programs of some donors may fall outside the agreed reconstruction framework.

Of the \$ 1.8 billion mobilised, some \$ 1.4 billion have already been committed for the financing of specific reconstruction and related activities. Of these:

- around \$ 860 million has been channelled through multilateral and \$ 390 million through bilateral projects, both within and outside the priority reconstruction program. These include some humanitarian support.
- within multilaterally implemented programs, around \$ 160 million in macro-economic assistance committed to date is an essential part of the priority reconstruction program, helping the government to pay the recurrent costs associated with the donor-financed investments – such as salaries and social costs for the poor, demobilised soldiers and refugees.
- \$ 170 million has been available for activities which support the implementation of the Peace Agreement, such as funding of elections, media and police.

This leaves approximately \$ 440 million in uncommitted funds. Nearly \$ 240 of this is expected to be committed very shortly on the basis of policy decisions pending.

During the week 10-16 June the European Commission delivered a variety of urgently needed goods, as part of the PHARE Essential Aid programme:

- The delivery of locally produced school furniture continued to primary schools in Mostar, Sarajevo and Tuzla. The total quantity of desks and chairs delivered was around 4.000, worth an approximate DM 250.000.
- The final deliveries of crop protection chemicals were made to the regional centres in Tuzla, Zenica and Travnik, where distribution to local farmers will now take place. The total cost of these products is DM 410.000.

IFOR's Civilian Military Co-operation Units (CIMIC) last week co-ordinated the delivery of large trash containers for the city of Tuzla while a CIMIC technical support team assisted the Dutch Brigade with mine awareness classes at a primary school in Jajce.

Refugee And Humanitarian Affairs

- A Working Group on Refugees and Displaced Persons for the JCC South region was established at the inaugural session of the Commission in Mostar on 19 June.
- A Humanitarian Day was held at OHR Banja Luka on 21 June. The Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs Department spoke to representatives of family associations of missing Serbs from Drvar,

Western Slavonia and the Croatian Krajina.

- The Expert Group on Exhumation and Missing persons met, under OHR Chairmanship in Sarajevo on 19 June. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, the UN Special Expert on Tracing Missing Persons, UNTAES, ICRC, ICTY, Physicians for Human Rights and IFOR attended as members of the Expert Group. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Finnish expert team that will begin exhumation work on a site in the Srebrenica area this week.

Legal Affairs

The OHR's Department of Legal Affairs will chair a JCC Working Group on travel documents on 26 June. Attempts will be made to have the Parties agree on a standard temporary travel document to be available to all those in the Federation and the Republika Srpska who presently encounter difficulties in obtaining or using identification papers. Such temporary travel documents are now urgently required in order to ensure freedom of movement in the period leading up to the elections.

Looking Ahead

- **27 June:** Federation Forum, Sarajevo.
- **28 June:** G8 summit in Lyon, France. Mr. Carl Bildt will attend.
- **3-4 July:** US Defence Secretary, William Perry to visit Bosnia and Herzegovina

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. Callers from outside BH dial via Brussels switchboard: Tel. (32-2) 737 7000 & Fax (32-2) 737 7901