

OHR SRT News Summaries, 17 September 1997

Pale – the RS Government session – the Government agreed to extend a deadline for allocation shares and changing the police school location from Banja Luka to Doboj because of the current situation in Banja Luka, and SFOR, IPTF, and para-police breaking in into the school. The Government adopted a number of legal issues, such as a scholarship to children of soldiers killed in the war, solving legal issues for certain private companies, etc. They also appointed Momcilo Mandic for the Deputy Ministry of Interior.

3:00

The CoM Minister of Communication, Albijanic, assessed that the CoE decision on banning Serb members of the CoM to travel throughout Europe represents a continuation of the IC pressure against the Serb bodies forcing them to adopt the Law on Passports and Citizenship.

At today's meeting, the RS PEC announced unofficial election results in the RS. According to the RS PEC President, Cancar, the official results will be announced by the end of the week after counting of absentee votes. In 61 RS municipalities, SDS received 37,35% of votes, SRS received 21,30%, RS Socialist Party 15,84%, Coalition for BiH 1,63%, Serb Party of Krajina and Posavina received 4,54%. There were 1.067,088 voters registered at polling stations throughout the RS, whereas 729,485 of them voted, which is equal to 89,84%. According to Cancar, elections should be held in Skelani, Serb Kostajnica, Milici, (the RS municipalities which were established after 1991) next week.

3:00

Lukavica – At the Republic centre for counting located at the building of Electric and Technical Faculty, sorting and counting of absentee votes abroad (western countries, Croatia and FRY) started this morning. The counting is organised by OSCE. Representative of all political parties which are interested in monitoring can come to the centre. Both, party representatives and OSCE are more than satisfied with counting. Ballots will be guarded by OSCE security overnight.

3:00

After announcement of the unofficial election results, SRS President Poplasen said that SDS and SRS will establish the authorities. He expressed his hope that the same results will be repeated on the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. SDS FRY President Kojicic said that the people proved that they trust national policy and SDS.

Banja Luka – Plavsic and the Head of the OSCE mission, Frowick talked about elections and the implementation of the results, and preparation for pre-term parliamentary elections in the RS. After the meeting Frowick announced an important meeting of the Provisional Commission, to be held in Vienna tomorrow, and a meeting of the Contact Group at the UN level, to be held in New York next week, after which the IC will have a clear picture regarding further steps in the RS and Federation. Plavsic also talked to the German Ambassador to Sarajevo about German economic aid to the RS.

2:00

Flash news:

The Contact Group threatened with economic sanctions against parties which do not implement the election results. Russian media said that NATO will not attempt to arrest people from the list of indicted war criminals anymore. Such attack could be very dangerous and have casualties among NATO troops. Therefore, the US will keep on splitting the RS apart by causing internal conflicts.

German Tages Spiegel said that SDS won in the majority of RS municipalities. One of a few towns in which SDS did not win is Banja Luka, where Social party, the branch of Milosevic's party in Serbia, took the majority of votes. US Envoy Holbrooke said that a fact that majority of the people voted is a good sign for the local elections. He underlined that the refugee return is the key issue, adding that if people don't return to their homes the IC would have to accept the ethnic cleansing.

Le Figaro reported that the White House is even more in favour of the extension of deadline for NATO troops withdrawal. The papers quoted HR Principle Deputy Klein and Frowick saying that the withdrawal would be a

catastrophe for the west.

3:00

UN representatives in Sarajevo confirmed the Pentagon information that, there were 11 people killed and 5 injured when the UN helicopter crashed near Bugojno today. Deutsche Welle reported that HR Senior Deputy Wagner was also among of the killed. Identity of other people is still unknown. The IC lost one of a good expert for the situation in the RS and Federation, who contributed implementation of the DPA through his experience. UN confirmed that there were 16 persons on board the helicopter which took off this morning at 09:15 towards Brcko.

Pale – Deputy RS Defence Minister, Kapetina talked to the Bulgarian Ambassador about military co-operation of the two countries, and implementation of the DPA, that is reorganisation of the army in the country that goes through the transition period. They also talked about the forthcoming conference at the Ministerial level of the South Europe region in Sofia next month. The RS Defence Ministry will also attend the conference.

2:00

Summary SRT TV News Banja Luka

Headlines

The President of the RS Biljana Plavsic talked with Robert Frowick about the elections and the future parliamentary elections in Banja Luka. Biljana Plavsic and Robert Frowick talked in Banja Luka today about the local elections and the implementation of the results. Plavsic said:

“Since we have parliamentary elections waiting for us, we talked about some technical solutions concerning those elections. I was very glad to hear, and I always knew this, that the elections were held in a very correct way in the territory of the RS and I hope that we will reach a complete democratisation of society in the RS after several election processes.”

On behalf of the OSCE, Frowick expressed gratitude to the citizens of the RS because of, as he said, the way they took part in the elections. Also, we talked about the way of approaching the parliamentary elections in the RS, stated Frowick..

The Standing OSCE Commission has a session tomorrow in Vienna, said Frowick. He also said that OSCE will try to move this process (parliamentary elections) forward as far as possible at tomorrow's session.

1 min. 57 sec.

The Ambassador of Germany in BiH talked today about economic co-operation and about the meaning of creating a democratic society. Plavsic received the Ambassador of Germany in BiH in Banja Luka today. Germany is very interested in helping in the development of the economy in the RS. Expressing satisfaction with the Cabinet of Plavsic providing him with the list of the firms with whom, as he said, German businessmen will co-operate, the Ambassador opened up the possibility of an accelerated co-operation in this way.

The President of the RS assessed this meeting as very useful and she stressed that, besides economic co-operation, they talked about perspectives for holding the parliamentary elections. Parliamentary elections are the only way for calming down the situation in the RS and creating conditions for a pluralistic society, said the Ambassador.

1 min. 20 sec.

The counting of votes given by absentee voters began. The counting of the votes of the people who were choosing municipal authority institutions in absentia, by voting in FRY and FBiH, began today.

Gordan Milinic, press representative for Republic Electoral Commission speaking:

“The Republic Electoral Commission finished the job in regards to information received from the polling stations in the RS. It was confirmed that out of 844,467 voters, who were registered to vote personally in the RS, 754,877

voted, which is 89.39%. The municipality with the greatest participation of voters was Trnovo, 99.41%. A municipality with a very small participation of voters was Srpski Petrovac with 44.77 %.

In this part of the elections the best results were achieved by SDS, who won the largest number of votes in most municipalities. SDS won 37.35 % of votes in the RS.

SRS won 21.30 % of votes.

Third place belongs to SPS, with 15.84 % of votes. All this information will change when the votes from abroad arrive, that is from Vienna, FRY, Croatia and FBiH.

The counting of votes from Vienna started this morning in Lukavica. In order to have a true picture of how these votes can change the election results, I will tell you that 143,332 voters have been registered by the Center in Vienna, 23,325 in FRY, 39,035 in Croatia and 115,948 in FBiH. But in all these figures there is a very small percentage of Serb voters, except from FRY, so it is very realistic to expect a significant change of the election results."

3 min. 42 sec.

With regard to the elections and concerning last night's report on the press conference of the international organisations given by our journalist, the spokesman for OHR gave the following statement: "Since, unfortunately, it has been alleged that I had stated, actually warned of, alleged mistakes of the people from Drvar in regards to what had happened in Drvar over the weekend, I want to say that it wasn't correct. I will repeat now exactly what I said. I said that the only thing we can say on behalf of OHR is that both sides were stopping those poor people, which is not only inhuman but also cruel. That means, from the Croatian side, and also from the Serbian side and even the Banja Luka side, they were given false incorrect documents and ballots for registration. Both sides used this. And of course, if documents were wrong, then the Croatian side had the right to say so. So this was prolonging that big process, and it means that both sides used those poor people"

Can you tell me if someone is going to be responsible for this, if OHR has informed Carlos Westendorp about what was going on in Drvar? "Of course he was informed. But we still don't have the whole picture. We don't know who issued the incorrect ballots, for example. That has to be found out, who wrote those ballots with incomplete documentation, but that is for OSCE to deal with, to find out where the mistake is."

1 min. 25 sec.

Almost all of the reporters of the world's agencies, analysts and observers agree that nationalistic parties won the elections in the Union of BiH.

SDS won in the RS and HDZ and SDA in FBiH. For the IC, who expected such an outcome, the main question now is which way will Dayton BiH choose to go.

Russian media assess that almost all of the main participants of the election are satisfied with the results.

1 min. 20 sec.

With 11 people killed in a UN helicopter crash near Bugojno, the Deputy of the High Representative of the IC for BiH, Gerd Wagner, lost his life

Deputy of the High Representative, Gerd Wagner, it was officially confirmed tonight, lost his life in a helicopter crash near Bugojno. As a Deputy of the High Representative, he was one of the key people in the realisation of the efforts of the IC in the civil reconstruction of BiH.

50 sec.