

## **OHR BiH TV News Summary, 23 march 1998**

Mostar/Balinovac – The exhumation of Bosniak bodies from the mass grave in Mostarsko Blato in Medjine near the Mostar- Siroki Brijeg road started today. Some of them were civilians killed in battles between HVO and the BiH Army, and some allegedly arrested Bosniaks who were killed whilst being used as live shields in Mostar. At least 40 bodies are believed will be exhumed from this mass grave called Treskote on the first day, Amor Masovic, the President of the State Commission for Missing Persons told the news. The process will continue for several days, said Munevera Rahimic, investigating judge at the Superior Court in Mostar.

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Sarajevo – In the reconstruction of BiH, the Netherlands has a significant role among the EU countries, Alija Izetbegovic, Presidency President accentuated in the talks which he held with Wim Kok, Netherland's Prime Minister today.

1:00

Several Bosnian high level Officials received representatives of the American firm Bechtel headed by the Director, Charles Redman. In the talks with Redman, Alija Izetbegovic underlined the importance of constructing the road which would connect the most important industrial regions and the most populated parts of the country: Ploce – Sarajevo – Zenica – Rijeka Sava – Budapest.

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The importance of the road to connect North – South and Sarajevo – Bihac was pointed out in talks which the Bechtel Company held separately with Haris Silajdzic, CoM Co-Chair Jadranko Prlic, BiH Foreign Minister and Ejup Ganic, Federation President. These talks were attended by US Ambassador Kauzlarich. The talks with Prlic also tackled the harbor Ploce which should have been the topic of the new round of bilateral talks in Sarajevo. But this round has been postponed. BiH TV learned that last year's active participation of a US team in the talks on Ploce, has been replaced with a new arrangement. The USA will in future offer only technical assistance in the negotiations over Ploce, Hasan Muratovic, BiH Ambassador to Croatia, said. Insistence of the Croat side to rent to the Federation a free zone in Ploce exclusively on a commercial basis, is also in the past. The Croatian and BiH negotiating teams will not meet tomorrow but, on Croatia's request, the day after tomorrow.

2:30

Sarajevo – The Kuwait economic delegation visited the Zenica Steelworks. The visit resulted from an agreement between Sejh Sead Abdulah El Sabah, Kuwaiti Prime Minister and CoM Co-Chair, Haris Silajdzic. The aim is to provide investment assistance to enable production to begin at the Plant. Today's talks focused on the gathering of information. We are here to hold talks on the technical details, Ahmed Al Rifai, Head of the Delegation told news. We also want to help Tuzla, Velika Kladusa, etc. he added.

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There follows reports from Kosovo and other foreign countries. Sarajevo – Members of two military units of the Federation Army have gone to Turkey to practice their training. These are the members of the armored and cannon units who will spend three month practicing according to NATO standards, Zivko Budimir, Deputy Commander of the Joint Federation Army Command told the media.

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A group of around 30 Serbs, ex-residents of Bugojno, visited their town for the first time in six years. The visit was agreed at the first meeting between representatives of the municipality Sipovo, where the Serbs temporarily live, and the Bugojno municipality. The return is no more a question of political wish, but depends on financial assistance, Dzevad Mlaco, Municipality Commissioner told the news. The group visited the cemeteries and homes.

1:00

30' There follows a report on Saudi Arabian financial assistance for the reconstruction of the houses in Brod and Omerbegovaca.

1:00

At last night's meeting of the expelled Bugojno residents which took place in Livno, the President of the HDZ

Bugojno, Ante Mustafic, called on the international Community to more vigorously assist the Croats in returning to their town, informs HABENA. He also called on the expelled Croats from Bugojno to register for return as soon as possible, regardless of the situation of their homes. It is time to refute the assessments by the international and local media that Bugojno residents do not wish to return to their town, Mustafic said.

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Travnik – Tomislav Rajic, Travnik Municipal Council President sent a letter to the high level representatives of the International Community, to the Federation and BiH in which he demanded measures for safeguarding the Croats in Travnik.

1:00

There follows a detailed report on the reasons for the arrests in SAB bank. In the framework of realizing the project A Return of All to Their Own, Kemal Gunic, President of Expelled Banja Luka residents based in Sanski Most announced that over 24.000 Bosniaks and Croats registered to return to Banja Luka. Some of them have already returned but they are still not living in their own houses. Around 2.000 Serb families from RS registered their wish to return to Bosanski Petrovac.

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Brcko -The Bosnian and Croat representatives of the multi-ethnic authorities in Brcko returned to their work places, Brcko Acting Supervisor McLeod, announced this afternoon. .

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PEC verified the election results for the municipality Bosanski Petrovac today at the conference in Sarajevo. Final confirmation of the election results was also made for the municipalities Gornji Vakuf and Novi Travnik.

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Exercise of the Strategic SFOR Reserve Powers named Dynamic Answer 98 is starting today in BiH. Soldiers from six countries will take part in this Practice.

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