

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 28 Dec. 1997

28 December 97, 19:30

Bijeljina - Under strong security measures, the RS Constituting National Assembly session began. It lasted for eight hours, not counting the two hour delay at the beginning. The political polarisation among those who accept democratisation and those who don't, was obvious. Iconography and Serb anthem were present at the session. The deputies from the Federation, but later also the IC representatives, left the session hall while the anthem was being sung.

Directly getting to the point and without formality Ambassador Hanns Schumacher, Senior Deputy High Representative, yesterday warned the deputies at the RS National Assembly of losing too much time. Schumacher called on them to face their responsibilities, reminding them that the DPA is not an instrument for exercising pressure on the Serbs, but the only way for a civilised, dignified and unified life. He also underlined that integration is the key to economic success.

Ambassador Schumacher handed out a list of points with which the National Assembly should deal at future sessions. This is a time-table for you on your way to Europe, don't be late! Westendorp's Deputy said. The list encompasses all outstanding laws and regulations which will enable RS to take steps towards the BiH state. The first one is arresting of the persons indicted for war crimes. The same importance was given to the request for establishing general conditions for refugee return. Municipalities which show their readiness for the return of pre-war citizens can expect IC assistance. Ambassador Schumacher demanded the opening of railway, telecommunication and bus lines with the Federation, acceptance of economic framework laws, including the Law on privatisation. He demanded establishment of the unified system of car licence plates by 31 January 1998, as well as harmonisation of the Constitution and other RS laws with the State Constitution. OHR further demanded that the orders of the Brcko Supervisor be respected. Also expected was the establishment of a system for automatic monthly money transfer from the RS budget into the BiH Budget to cover costs for administrative expenditure, as well as for servicing of the BiH foreign debt by 31 March 1998.

According to the OHR List the RS authorities should especially seriously deal with the refugee return, property issue and they should enable the rule of law and work on judiciary reform.

The session will continue on 12 January.
12:00

The RS National Assembly session has finished as it started - without any agreement, RFI informed. Biljana Plavsic, RS President suggested prof. Mladen Ivanic to be mandated to form the Government. Aleksa Buha commented that with her suggestion President Plavsic has closed all doors for compromises. Follows a humorous comment in which the CVs of Ivanic, who in his career has been a lecturer at many World's Universities, and Gojko Klickovic, Buha's candidate, who besides holding the position of RS Prime Minister, held the position of President of one of the units of the Bosanska Krupa Municipality.

2:30

The only completed item at the session was verification of the mandates of all 83 deputies and the establishment of the foreseen commissions .

Tuzla - The Mufti's Office in Tuzla issued a statement saying that some days ago a house belonging to the mosque in Modrica was completely destroyed. This barbarous act ended the process of complete extermination of the remaining traces of Islamic culture in this town.

1:00

Follows a report on the work and achievements of the Association of the BiH refugees. In the year 1997, around 101.000 refugees returned to BiH mostly from Germany.

2:30