

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 15 Sept. 1997

15 September 97, 19:30

Sarajevo – OSCE spokesman Foley announced that more than 70 % of registered voters voted during the elections. Foley also said that most problems appeared in Brcko, where many unregistered people tried to vote. Foley added that those are the people who registered in the first registration process that was cancelled.

According to the OHR's opinion, the elections were more than successful. OHR spokesman Bullivant said that HR Westendorp has gone to Brussels, where he will inform the Contact Group members about this opinion. Bullivant pointed out that the real test would be the implementation of the election results, which would depend mainly on the local authorities.

SFOR spokesman Blakeley said that the elections were well planned and carried out, which was proven by the occurrence of only minor incidents. Blakeley added that SFOR would continue with its operations in order to secure the ballot count.

UN spokesman Ivanko announced that an incident occurred in Velika Kladusa during the voting. The incident happened when a man shot another man who was writing SDA graffiti on the wall of his house.

ICG director Balian said that the elections were not fair and democratic, since all three national parties were fighting for power. Balian said that there was a large number of election rights violations, especially in Brcko. He added that the campaign that represents Karadzic as the true leader of SDS is unacceptable.

EU representative Peck said that the EU observers were mainly satisfied with the elections, and that the priority now is their implementation

European Media Institute representatives said that the BiH media were still divided into three ethnic parts, with the usage of provocative language in the parts of BiH under Serb and Croat control.

OSCE chairman Petersen expressed his satisfaction with carrying out the most difficult elections so far.
8'00"

Sarajevo – BiH President Izetbegovic met with US Special Envoy Gelbard. The main issue of the conversation was the elections. Izetbegovic and Gelbard agreed that the elections were successful. Gelbard said that the election results will help the refugee return process, although no one can expect to resolve all problems immediately. Izetbegovic and Gelbard also discussed the refugee return project. Gelbard expressed his concern about the harassment and killing of Croats in the Central Bosnian Canton. Gelbard said that Izetbegovic promised to do everything he could in order to arrest those responsible for the incidents. Izetbegovic and Gelbard also discussed the issue of creating conditions for foreign investments in BiH. Presidency member Zubak also held a meeting with Gelbard, to discuss the elections, the current situation in the Central Bosnian Canton, and the formation of new municipalities. CoM Co-chairman Silajdzic also talked with Gelbard but no information has been released so far.
3'30"

Brcko – SFOR enabled Brcko Bosniaks to vote at the Entity borderline in Brcko, since they were not allowed to go into Brcko. (BiH TV news commentary) – Brcko. The streets unexpectedly deserted. It is noticeable that the city has changed into a rural dimension. Sombre. Is it because of the clouds only? Polling places crowded. After a long wait, an explanation that confuses even more. (the crowd yelling angry) Thousands of those who are not from Brcko came to vote. To a question asking whether they will let new authorities rule, a former Sarajevo citizen says: "Never! No matter what the election results are, we would never let 'em come over – even if they win!"

ICG demands that the OSCE make public the details of all agreements achieved just before the elections. This especially refers to Brcko and Mostar.
3'00"

Mostar – OSCE regional chief Joseph expressed his satisfaction with two successful days of elections in Cantons 6, 7 and 8. Joseph also said that OSCE was very glad about the adoption of the amendments on the Mostar constitution. Joseph also acclaimed Tudjman's support with regard to this matter.

UN Spokeswoman Moore said that the elections were the first significant test for the joint police functioning, and that the test has been well done.

2'00'

Washington Post reports on OSCE Ambassador Frowick's statement which said that it was an illusion to believe in the reconstruction of the pre-war BiH. WP says that Serbs and Croats have gained lot with their threats of boycotting the elections, since OSCE allowed Serbs to return their candidates in Brcko election lists, while Croats, eliminating the Mostar district, disabled the successful win of the Bosniaks. WP added that the Western countries succumbed to the blackmails of Belgrade and Zagreb.

2'00"

Sarajevo/Stolac – Stolac municipality authorities addressed a letter to the EASC informing them about the irregularities in the Stolac elections. Stolac authorities claimed that people who were not from Stolac were voting, and that some people voted twice, for they were registered in two municipalities. Stolac authorities also asked from EASC to punish the Croat authorities.

1'00"

Sarajevo – The joint military committee (JMC) held a session today. The main issues were the locations of forthcoming meetings, the announcement of military attaches, and the rotation of the JMC chairman. HR Principal Deputy Klein, Izetbegovic, Zubak and Krajisnik were also present at the meeting, as was the BiH Federation Army Gen. Delic, RS Army HQ Commander Gen. Colic, and SFOR commander Gen. Shinseki.

2'00"

Bihac – After 15 days of mass grave exhumation at "Bezdan", the identification of bodies should commence tomorrow.

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