

OHR Local News Issues, 16 July 1997

Mostar – The US Embassy representative Beecroft spoke to Governor of Mostar Leho, and Vice-Governor Markovic. Beecroft said that the agreement about police set in this canton has been signed, and that he expect the set to be done by Monday.

2'00"

Washington – The US President Clinton consulted with the US Congress about the eventual new actions of arrest of war criminals. US Senate is determined to extradite war criminals to Hague but do not accept wider American engagement than it is now. Yesterday, Clinton received a letter, from the International Justice Coalition with a message to arrest war criminals immediately. At the press conference, held on this occasion, it was said that there is a need to arrest war criminals, and to engage the French troops even more in control of the Pale area. The White-House spokesman Burns said that there will be no disagreement between French and US political opinions regarding this matter.

6'00"

Kladanj – An American SFOR soldier, was stubbed with a (harvest tool) this morning in the area controlled by Multinational Division North. Injured soldier was transferred to the Guardian base. The local Serb police and SFOR are investigating this case.

2'00"

Prijedor – A hand-grenade was thrown at the IPTF observance vehicle, as announced by IPTF officials on Pale today. The IPTF spokesman McDowell said that hand-grenade exploded nearby private vehicle of an IPTF official. No one was injured.

2'00"

Gornji Vakuf – An American soldier died, and the other was injured in a car accident that occurred yesterday, in the area controlled by the Multinational Division Southwest. Both of the soldiers are engaged in the Intelligence Service Battalion from Sarajevo. The accident happened on their way back from Banja Luka to Sarajevo. Investigation is in progress.

1'00"

Zenica – Before the Great Council of the Canton Court of Law, the French citizens Dumo and Bougelan were convicted to twenty years of prison, each. They were found guilty for several serious crimes including the death of two persons. The indicted were not found guilty in charge of two murders, and heavy body injuries. Those charges were put on Biniam who was killed for resisting the arrest. The convicted are about to serve their prison sentences in BiH.

4'00"

Sarajevo – Social-Democratic Party for BiH supports the SFOR action of arresting the war criminals, demanding it's continue, so that it could be done before the forthcoming elections. The actual situation in RS is considered as a fight for the govern, although it may indicate the RS resistance to the democracy process. Regarding Brcko, it was said that it is all about another election mischief, for there is about ten thousand people more on the registration lists than it was in the last year. Some pamphlets with a text like death to the invaders that were found in Brcko, suggest the revolt against the joint life between different nations.

4'00"

Maglaj – The return of about six thousand refugees is expected in Maglaj municipalities by this October. The Refugee Minister Kadic, and his deputy Garib visited the area in order to inform about conditions needed for return of refugees. Kadic said that this ministry in Co-operation with other ministries, and IC will try to do their best in enabling the proper conditions for refugees to return. Kadic is also assured that the IC and the UNHCR will support this attempts, for that project would encourage all, and prove that the return of the refugees on the Federation territory is possible.

4'30"

Travnik – The Memorandum of Understanding, between USAID and five municipalities of this canton was signed today. On this occasion it was said that the respect of the DPA, and the accept of the IC conditions is prior to invest

1.6 million dollars for infrastructure rebuilt in Gornji Vakuf, Donji Vakuf, Kiseljak, Fojnica and Novi Travnik. At the occasion the USAID director for BiH Buck, Canton President Saric and his deputy Terzic were also present. Buck said that the financial aid will be received only by those who respect the DPA, and that USAID will not invest where war criminals live, where is no freedom of movement, and no refugee return. Buck also said that the priority in this canton is the police foundation that has not been done yet.

4'00"

Summary SRT TV News

The RS President in BiH Presidency, Krajisnik congratulated Slobodan Milosevic on winning the FRY presidential elections. Krajisnik expressed his hope that there is better future for Serbs in the RS, because peace and stability in the region are the only pre-conditions for economic development. He also said that the RS is going through a very difficult period in its history at the cross-over to the 21st century.

1:00

Pale - The CoM Co-chair Botic met the HR Deputy Wagner and discussed the issues related to the work of the CoM and current political situation in the RS and Federation. Botic said that the process of implementation will not succeed if the situation is tense and has a tendency towards development of new conflicts. All the problems can be solved only through political agreements and compromise. Wagner also agreed that present tensions are not in the interest of any party, adding that he and the OHR wish to solve the current situation as soon as possible. As for the CoM, they discussed the most important issues such as urgent adoption of the laws on citizenship and passports, which will be the priority at tomorrow's CoM session. Botic also noted that the CoM hasn't interfered with the political situation in the RS, which was not the case at the BiH Presidency's last session.

3:00

Commentary on the Venetian Commission analysis - SRT reported that the RS leadership had asked for an expert opinion of the Commission only once, while drawing up the RS Constitution. The RS Senator Cavoski said that this is an ad hoc body that doesn't have any authority. The Commission was wrong when it claimed that the RS institutions accepted the authority of the Commission, and there is also no any written document to prove that. Besides, the Commission had not established a collegium for the purpose of discussing the situation, but had left it up to only two of its representatives to do the analysis, 'who met in a hotel in Geneva, probably at a bar, and discussed the RS situation while drinking whiskey,' Cavoski said, underlining that the RS Constitutional Court is the only institution that can make any decision with regard to the present crisis.

4:00

Vlasenica - About 1:35 am last night, an unknown person attacked with a scythe a US SFOR soldier in the course of his routine tour of barracks. The SFOR soldier fired three rounds after the attack but did not succeed to hit the attacker. The RS MUP is conducting an intensive investigation of the incident.

2:00

Prijedor - Last night, an unknown person or persons set off two hand-grenades near the IPTF HQ. There were no casualties. The first grenade destroyed an IPTF vehicle, whereas the other one exploded near the Oskar restaurant and broke the windows on a nearby house. Prijedor MUP communicated the IPTF message released at today's press conference, that IPTF had not been involved in Kovacevic's arrest or Drljaca's murder and that it is appealing to RS citizens to restrain from causing such incidents because they can seriously jeopardise the relations between the RS police and IPTF.

3:00

New York Times and CNN reported that France refused to join the multi-national forces in future arrests of the alleged war criminals in the RS because of a huge risk involved.

Pale - Report of the SRT Main Editorial Board and SRT General Manager on Plavsic's statements against the SRT - After she returned from Belgrade and declared war against everybody in the RS, Plavsic's main target were the media, that is, SRT, although the Serb TV had sent her several letters, asking her to address the people in the RS

and explain her meetings with all those international representatives, as well as her non-attendance of the Parliament, Government, and SDS sessions. She stated that the SRT [and not herself] should be ashamed because it broadcast only lies, and then she called SFOR to protect the Presidential Palace and block the SRT studio in Banja Luka. Her men broke into Banja Luka studio armed several times on July 3 and demanded from SRT to broadcast all information coming from her Cabinet. SFOR of course joined them by blocking the TV transmitter at Kozara and requesting from the Banja Luka studio to secede from Pale and establish Plavsic's private TV station. That is why SRT decided to suspend the broadcast of programme from Banja Luka, which lasted for 12 hours. At the Parliament session, the SRT General Manager said that although she had used Stalinist methods of rule, SRT did allow Plavsic to set up the date and time for addressing the people. Regardless of that, on July 5, after she met the US Special Envoy Gelbard, he demanded from Krajisnik to allow Plavsic the access to the state media. Plavsic obviously wants to put the blame on SRT as a perfect alibi for her behaviour. On July 10, Plavsic appeared on SRT and totally ruined her reputation that she had enjoyed among the SRT employees. After the SRT broadcast Drljaca's funeral live because of a large public demand throughout the RS, on July 14 Plavsic threatened with IC protectorate over the SRT, finally revealing her true intentions with this regard. Right after her speech, 'the army of foreign media, orchestrated by the local scum from Muslim Sarajevo, quoted her so that the RS people feared that SRT will fall into the hands of Arabs, blacks, Mongolians, and other experts of the international community who possess spiritual beauty and marvellous education such as Alex Ivanko, Duncan Bullivant, David Foley and Simon Haselock.' It is very important to add, the report said, that the RS Government had established the SRT, which respects the RS Constitution and is ready to resist any kind of protectorate.

10:00