

OHR Local News Issues, 06 July 1997

Sarajevo – The 3rd Friends Forum of the peace process for BiH will start tomorrow. Alija Izetbegovic, Presidency Chairman, received members of the Forum consisting of prominent politicians. Some of them are well known to the people of BiH: James Pardew, Swanee Hunt, Kai Eide, Robert Frowick, Jacques Klein, Rory O'Sullivan, etc. The topic of tomorrow's meeting which will be attended by the BiH officials, will be implementation of the DPA.
2'00"

Tuzla – Part of the above Forum – members of the European Parliament delegation to BiH headed by Doris Pack, visited Tuzla. According to their talks with the representatives of SDA, BiH might soon be included in the European Association of the peoples parties, first as a visitor, and later as its full member. After being introduced to SDA party activities for strengthening its civic orientation and preserving BiH as a unified country, which will be especially accentuated at this years meeting, the delegation agreed that this is very important for further BiH acceptance in the European fold.
3'30"

Banja Luka – A meeting between RS President Biljana Plavsic, and Momcilo Krajisnik, member of the BiH Presidency, was not held today. An undefined announcement answering Krajisnik's invitation to settle the current dispute, came from the Plavsic's cabinet. It said that the President had had an usual working day, – meaning that she did not have time for Krajisnik.
1'30"

According to the Washington Post, N.Y. Times and L.A. Times, time is expiring for the war crime indicted Radovan Karadzic. The special forces in the US army, but not SFOR, are preparing a secret plan to arrest Karadzic, L.A. Times quotes American intelligence sources. Clinton has still not approved the plan, officials say. He is still hoping that economic pressure will force the RS Government to extradite Karadzic. The current situation in RS is in favor of the plan, but it will only start when Clinton, Chirac and Blair agree upon the time and acceptable risks, a high ranking western diplomat said.
2'00"

Maglaj – The process of return of refugees and DPs to their homes in the region of Maglaj and Zepce has begun very well, in accordance with the Inter-party Agreement between SDA Maglaj and HDZ Zepce signed on 30 June. Around 6.500 people should return home and the main problem for returnees now is not having enough food, building materials etc. Follows a lengthy report showing Bosniaks expressing their happiness in being able to return home and the friendly reception from their Croat neighbours.
3'30"

Drvenusa – An incident in which two Croats tried to threaten Bosniaks returning home to a village near Maglaj by throwing 2 grenades did not change the good will of the majority of Croats, nor the political agreement for Bosniaks return to their homes. Speedy action of the Zepce police resulted in the successful arrest of two culprits.
2'00"

Washington – The OSCE Parliament started its meeting, attended also by BiH Foreign Minister, Jadranko Prlic. It is expected that in the framework of discussions related to: security questions, co-operation in economic terms, science, technology, protection of the environment, and status of democracy, the DPA implementation will also be discussed. The role of the OSCE in successfully carrying out last years general and this year's local elections in BiH will also be discussed.
1'30"

Summary SRT News

From the circles close to the RS President's cabinet, SRT learns that VRS Commander Colic sent a classified letter to RS President Plavsic. SRT quoted the letter in whole because of the current

situation in the RS and the necessity to inform the general public about it:

'Mrs. President, After your decision with regard to dissolution of the National Assembly, the political and security situation in our Republic has become extremely complicated, with a tendency towards further complication that seriously undermines the security and successful defense of the RS. We are monitoring the current situation and we hereby inform [you] on the following:

1. The Muslim-Croat Federation has not discharged its soldiers;
2. Almost all units in the Federation [Army] increased the state of combat readiness and we have also noted relocation and movements of units up to the level of brigades. There are also preparations for mobilisation of soldiers in the Federation territory;
3. SFOR units are at the highest level of combat readiness, which causes anxiety among the population. There were also cases of severe harassment of VRS soldiers, especially high ranking officers, and on the other hand SFOR has shown readiness to protect you and they have been doing that in practice. There is an SFOR officer in your cabinet, who is in contact with the Multi-National Division HQ. At the same time, the MND HQ refuses to have any contacts with the Commander of the VRS 1st corps;
4. Citizens, organised by the out-of-parliament opposition parties, started gathering to support you and your decisions, which makes the situation even more complicated;
5. Members of our army, same as the majority of people in the RS, are seriously concerned because of the situation that occurred in the RS as a result of your decisions. We find your decision to dissolve the National Assembly premature and harmful in multiple ways, [because it] brought the country on the edge of disaster. It has a direct impact on the further implementation of the DPA and international community's attitude towards the RS. With the aim of fully implementing the constitution, as is required of the Army, and carrying out [our] obligations, we demand that:
 1. Before you make any further decisions, you need to inform the VRS HQ about them and ask for an opinion;
 2. [You] hold a joint meeting in the VRS HQ [with] the RS President in BiH Presidency, President of the RS Government, Defence Minister, and the high-ranking officers, members of the VRS Collegium;
 3. [You] comply with the agreement from July 2 1997 and remove all SFOR representatives from Banski Dvori [Presidential Palace] and its surrounding. You should send an appeal to the public through the media that all the gatherings stop because of possible abuse and carrying out of terrorist attacks and all other methods of extremism against the RS, especially in Banja Luka and Prijedor. We would like you to understand the importance of the current situation and the Army's moral responsibility for future destiny of the country and people. The VRS HQ thinks that the Army also has the moral obligation, besides the constitutional one, to defend the integrity of the RS, and the constitutional order in case of its violation by any institution in the country, especially from abuse of constitutional and legal authority by such institutions.'

5:00

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic met the Russian Foreign Ministry Special Envoy Gerasimov. There was no press statement after the meeting.

RS President in the BiH Presidency Krajisnik and RS President Plavsic should have met in Bijeljina today to discuss the current situation in the RS. However, The RS President's Cabinet cancelled the meeting due to a security risk for the RS President. President Krajisnik accepted to meet Plavsic, hoping to convey the position of the National Assembly and other state bodies and suggestions for overcoming the crisis that followed Plavsic's withdrawal from the rest of the institutions and her violation of the RS Constitution and laws. Unfortunately, the general opinion is that President Plavsic took a road of no return by giving statements to the media in the beginning and organising

rallies together with the out-of-parliament opposition and political opponents who had been defeated at the national elections. She used the methods of out-of-institutional struggle that make her an un-parliamentary and irresponsible opponent. Isn't the RS President objectively in support of destabilisation of the country and driving it towards chaos that would have probably ensued if the country and its institutions had supported her? Such behaviour is not only unusual, but illegal and wholly irresponsible. The stability of the country was preserved only by people's clear judgements. Each enemy of the Serbs and political opponent of the RS is happy because of Plavsic's unusual behaviour and is supporting her. Each individual and institution should take responsibility for their own acts now. This is not only a historical responsibility, but the responsibility of all of us, because of our children who should be now sent to schools and not combat units, and because of our farmers who need to reap their harvest and not worry if there will be another war. If Mrs. Plavsic is not aware of her dangerous and unconstitutional acts, then it must be publicly said that she is acting irresponsibly and that the country and people must be defended from her and her mistakes so that we do not have to defend ourselves from foreign forces which could soon turn against us, taking advantage of this chaos.

5:00

Interior Minister Kijac met the ministers of interior of Banja Luka, Mrkonjic Grad, Prijedor and Doboj, and discussed the holding of an urgent meeting with IPTF, as agreed by Krajisnik and the US Special Envoy Gelbard at their meeting yesterday. Kijac also talked with the heads of MUP of Gradiska and Laktasi about the arrest of the person who committed double murder in this region and wounded a policeman two days ago. Kijac used this opportunity to visit the wounded policeman in the hospital.

3:00

Bijeljina – The Orthodox Bishop Jevrosim held a holy mass of reconciliation in relation to the current situation in the RS, saying that there is a dark stormy cloud over the RS now, which is not coming from the outside, but the enemy from within. He also said that Serbs want peace, not divisions among their leaders.

3:00

Flash news:

Commenting on the current situation in the RS, on behalf of the Contact group, the German Foreign Minister Kinkel called on the RS leadership to calm down their emotions and respect the constitution and the DPA. The Greek media, who are certified best friends of the Serbs, are baffled by the situation in the RS and expressed their wish that the crisis in the country will be resolved soon.

3:00

Brcko – Although the registration of voters is going on almost without any problems, there are more and more complaints by the citizens on the work of OSCE and its local staff that is carrying out the registration. Therefore, the Brcko authorities sent a letter of protest to the OSCE HQ and Ambassador Frowick, requesting from them to respect the rules and regulations of registration they had imposed themselves because their actions are outside of their mandate. SRT complained against SFOR's threats to remove one of the voters' registration centres because of, as they said, destruction of public property, as someone had written graffiti over it, e.g. 'SDS', 'Republika Srpska', 'Serbia', which had been done [in SRT's opinion] merely to show in which country the registration centre is. On the other hand, SFOR made no mention of the damage they made by their vehicles on the RS roads and by blocking the traffic.

4:00