

OHR Local News Issues, 23 June 1997

Sarajevo - Assigning of Ambassadors' appointments in BiH diplomatic-consular posts in the world, which according to the Sintra conclusions has to be finished by 1 August, was a topic of the Presidency meeting today. As an agreement on this issue has not been reached, the BiH Presidency will convene on Friday discussing the same theme. There are still differences between the sides, Jadranko Prlic, BiH Foreign Minister said. The Croatian side hopes for parity on this issue and the Serbs wish for more than one third of the appointments to come from their side. Also, the participation of so called others has not been solved.
2'00"

After having met with the BiH State Presidency as well as the members of the CoM, Solana held a Press Conference. We came here to support the opening of three airports in BiH, Solana said and added that the talks relating to this project have been taking place since April, now it is time that something will be done. We are ready. Follows a presentation of the whole of Solana's visit.
2'30"

The Serb side, i.e. Boro Botic, CoM Co-Chair was not ready to sign a Protocol on the opening of airports, today. Haris Silajdzic, CoM Co-Chair, explained the difference between Federation and RS standpoints on this issue. Boro Botic also addressed journalists. I think that they did not understand well that Banja Luka airport was a civil one and we shall instruct a civil authority in Banja Luka to demand from SFOR to hand them back this airport as soon as possible. Sarajevo and Tuzla were always military airports which belonged to the Yugoslav Army.
2'00"

Javier Solana met the HR Carlos Westendorp in a short visit to OHR. Westendorp informed him of the current situation on the Donors Conference for BiH. We hope that the conference will take place in July, given that a few more conditions related to the refugee, and police will be fulfilled. Talking on the opening of airports, Solana said that small unimportant politics is being mixed with important issues. Most problems are in Banja Luka, he added.
1'30"

Adoption of the key economic laws by the BiH Assembly on Friday and the start of concrete, professional talks on the program documents, give us confidence that we shall in the coming weeks achieve an agreement on the economic program which can be supported by the IMF standby arrangement, Scott Brown, IMF Chief of Mission told a Press Conference in Sarajevo today.
1'30"

Bob Dole, a former American Congressman who is visiting BiH on the invitation of Haris Silajdzic was made an honorary citizen of Sarajevo today. We appreciate what Bob Dole has done for our country, Silajdzic said at Dole's Press Conference in the Presidency building, but we shall ask him to tell our friends in the US that the work has not been finished in BiH. The winds blow in a good direction, but they are not strong enough, Silajdzic quoted Alija Izetbegovic as having said at his meeting with Dole.
2'00"

Stolac - Escorted by members of SFOR, IPTF and UNHCR, five Bosniak families returned without any problems, back to Stolac, today. So, 19 months after being signed, a project on the realization of refugees returning to their homes to this town in RS has begun.
1'00"

Zepce - OSCE carried out investigations into alleged irregularities by voters registration centres. They found that a large number of DP's cards and confirmations on living places were false and that the registered people were in fact citizens from other towns.
1'30"

Kopaci - Before the war only 674 Serbs lived in this little town. Some 9.000 have been registered for the forthcoming elections.
0'30"

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka - RS President Plavsic and Vice-president Mirjanic met separately the Swiss and Italian Ambassadors to Sarajevo. They talked about the forthcoming donors' conference, adoption of the QSP Laws, implementation of the DPA, refugee return problems, and co-operation between the RS and Swiss and Italian universities and the student exchange. Plavsic communicated the RS position with regard to the donors' conference, saying that the financial aid that should have been given to the RS so far must be made up for at the next donors' conference.

4:00

Banja Luka - Plavsic also met Bianca Jagger and talked about the humanitarian situation in the RS and distribution of aid to the Serbs. Jagger said that she will inform the US humanitarian organisations on the situation in the RS for the purpose of seeking help for the refugees and socially handicapped.

2:00

Sarajevo - Three Presidents in BiH Presidency held a meeting with the NATO Secretary General, Solana, discussing the Standing Committee on Military Matters, freedom of movement, and the opening of three airports for civilian traffic in Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla. The RS President in the BiH Presidency, Krajisnik said that SFOR shouldn't condition the opening of the Banja Luka airport since it was the only one of the three that had been civilian property before the war. On the other hand, Krajisnik doesn't approve of the Memorandum of Understanding at the level of SFOR and CoM, because the Banja Luka airport fulfils all conditions to be opened right away for commercial airlines, whereas the Tuzla and Mostar ones were built by the former JNA primarily for military purposes. The RS has its state and professional bodies that can directly negotiate an agreement with SFOR. The same statement was issued by the RS Ministry for Air Traffic, where it was added that first IFOR, and then SFOR already inspected the Banja Luka airport and concluded that it meets all the conditions for civilian air traffic.

5:00

Sarajevo - After the meeting with Solana, the Presidents held a regular session of the Presidency and discussed the distribution of diplomatic posts and the Memorandum of Understanding with The Hague Tribunal. Krajisnik said that the RS cannot be represented by the Muslim lawyer Vasvija Vidovic because the Hague did not put the Bosnians on trial, but the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims individually, therefore there are conflicting views within BiH itself with regard to the defence at the Tribunal. However, he expressed his hope that this issue will be solved soon.

3:00

Sarajevo - The CoM Co-chairs, Botic and Silajdzic also met the NATO Secretary General Solana, and discussed the opening of the three airports above.

2:00

The RS Army HQ Commander, General Colic wished the RS soldiers all the best for Vidovdan, the RS Army Day, reminding them that it took a long time for the Serbs to return to their sacred roots which they must defend with all their strength and patriotism.

3:00

Denver - At the press conference held after the Summit of the Eight, the US President Clinton announced that SFOR will definitely withdraw from BiH by summer 1998, and that he will not give up the full implementation of the DPA. US Foreign Minister Albright added that in mid-1998 SFOR troops will be replaced by an international diplomatic and economic mission. SRT sources said that the German Foreign Minister Kinkel insisted on the appointment of Jacques Klein as one of the two Deputy HR's to BiH, but it is still not known whether the US Administration agreed with this proposal. Upon Ambassador Steiner's own request, it has been already decided that he will be replaced by the German diplomat Wagner because he will assume a new post at the Foreign Ministry in Bonn.

3:00

Five days before the closing down of voters' registration centres in the RS and Federation, the SRT was proud to announce that this very important task has been almost completed since more than 90% of Serbs already

registered [Bijeljina 74%, Trebinje 89%, Lopare 95%, Serb Sarajevo 88%].

3:00

World News:

Kiseljak - Muslim radio reported that the Croat political and military municipal authorities did not allow the Muslim refugees to hold their traditional religious gathering at Visnjevaca. The Muslims retaliated by blocking the road towards Visoko.

2:00