

OHR Local News Issues, 18 June 1997

Sarajevo – The FBiH Chief inspector, who has acted under government's orders, instructed the public communication company PTT to revoke the decision on increased charges for telephone services. The increased telephone rates have caused a storm of protest in the public.

1'50"

Sarajevo – Upon his arrival to the Sarajevo airport, the newly appointed HR, Spanish diplomat Carlos Westendorp met with Chairman of the BiH Presidency and members of the Presidency Kresimir Zubak and Momcilo Krajisnik. Mr. Westendorp briefly met with members of the BiH CoM. Addressing the press, the newly appointed High Representative said that his appointment represented just a change of personalities, while the politics remains the same. Mr. Bildt, who was also present, expressed hope that a Donors Conference on BiH would be held as planned. He added that almost all conditions had been met, except agreement on customs tariffs to which Momcilo Krajisnik had some objections.

2'50"

The US has nominated a new SFOR Commander to replace Gen. William Crouch, informed the media quoting Reuters. A NATO Spokesman has informed that Gen. Eric Shinseki was nominated to take over.

1'00"

Pale – OSCE Spokesman David Foley announced that the registration of voters had started today. The registration of voters will be carried out in four registration centers in the Brcko municipality and controlled by international and local staff, he said. OSCE officials underlined that the process of registration would be carefully monitored in order to prevent irregularities which occurred before.

1'30"

Mostar – A consultative council of political parties from the FBiH and RS was held at the OSCE Regional center. Jerry Robinson, Deputy Chairman of the PEC told the participants that more than two million people had been registered thus far. He added that the number of registered voters abroad was much smaller than at the last year's registration.

2'00"

The media featured a lengthy report on the Commission for return of property, established under Annex 7 of the DPA. The report underlined that more than one million requests were expected this year. The Commission has opened offices in Sarajevo, Mostar, Lukavica and Brcko. A group of legal and data processing experts are involved in this work, said the report. In order to meet requirements, the Commission requested the budget of US\$ 6.3 million for the current year.

3'50"

Sarajevo – Italian Deputy Foreign Minister Pierro Fassino has paid an official visit to the Bosnian capital and held a press conference. Minister Fassino reiterated his government's commitment to the DPA and all other relevant agreements. He urged the international community to hold a Donors Conference on BiH and provide funds for reconstruction of the country.

1'30"

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic and Vice-president Mirjanic talked with the Czech Ambassador to BiH and Croatia about the implementation of the DPA and re-establishment of the traditional ties between the universities of RS and Czech Republic.

2:00

Banja Luka – Plavsic also received the current and the newly appointed High Representative to BiH, Bildt and

Westendorp, respectively. Bildt officially handed over his duty to Westendorp in Sarajevo today. With Plavsic they discussed the very important issues with regard to the donors' conference. 'Mr. Bildt helped a lot regarding the holding of the donors' conference. But it seems that in the last several days things are not going so smoothly, but I think that Mr. Westendorp will calm the situation down. Even though I am not a member of the joint institutions, I must say as the representative of Serbs that the RS desperately needs the donors' conference for the purpose of economic revitalisation of the RS.' Thanking President Plavsic, Bildt said that there are many issues still to be solved and the forthcoming donors' conference should solve them.. Underlining once again the importance of the donors' conference for the RS and its economic recovery, Bildt said that the RS received a small financial aid so far because of certain problems. The newly appointed HR, Westendorp said that the RS and OHR must intensify their mutual relations, especially during the next several months. He said that he is hoping that the RS leadership will help him to solve certain problems. Plavsic gave a painting to Carl Bildt as a farewell present.

5:00

Pale – RS President in the BiH Presidency Krajisnik met the Spanish Ambassador to Sarajevo and discussed the implementation of the DPA and improvement of co-operation between the RS and the Federation. Krajisnik thanked the Ambassador for Spanish SFOR's fair treatment of the RS and Serbs. The Spanish Ambassador also met the CoM Co-chair, Botic and talked about the implementation of the DPA and the QSP laws.

3:00

Sarajevo – Krajisnik attended the ceremony of hand-over of duties between Bildt and Westendorp. Other two BiH Presidency members were also present. It can be said for the former Swedish prime minister that he hardly passed the test. As for HR Westendorp, his abilities will already be put to test at the donors' conference on Tuesday. 'This is only a change of personnel, the policy will stay the same. The Sintra document is our map for the future, and we hope, and this was also approved by Mr. Westendorp, that the donors' conference will be held on Tuesday, and that other problems will be solved as well,' Carl Bildt said. Westendorp said that he 'thinks that Bildt had to deal with the most difficult part of the job. A very difficult task is ahead of me too, but I think it will be much easier than Bildt's. We have to work very hard because the time is short.'

At the BiH Presidency and the CoM sessions held today, the members of the Presidency and the ministers discussed disputable issues with regard to the Central Bank. Solving of these issues is the main condition for holding of the donors' conference.

4:00

Pale – The RS Foreign Minister Buha held a meeting with the Russian Foreign Ministry special representative, Aksentov. The meeting is still under way.

Pale – the RS Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, Stjepanovic met the delegation of the ECMM. They talked about the forthcoming donors' conference, the RS co-operation with other countries, and the Agreement on Special Parallel Ties between the RS and FRY. The ECMM delegation was especially interested in economic relations, if any, between the RS and Federation.

2:00