

OHR Local News Issues, 29 April 1997

Sarajevo: The Federation House of Representatives held their fourth session. On the agenda were 45 items. Problems occurred while adopting the agenda and with regard to the Federation Government's proposal to discuss changes of municipalities in a condensed manner. PM Bicakcic reiterated that a mistake occurred in Item 10 of the Law on Municipal Changes by which the villages of Balzevci and Loncarevci become part of the Usora municipality. Min. of Justice Tadic, disagreed claiming there was no mistake. Croat representatives asked for a pause to break the deadlock. No success. After the pause, the agenda was again disputed. Bosniac reps. insisted on the adoption of the whole agenda, Croats wanted only the first six items and to continue work on 8 May. At one point, Bicakcic, obviously provoked by the atmosphere, pulled out a plastic bag full of papers saying " I had to come here with this bag. This is a result of the inactivity of the HoP. These are the laws submitted to us by our Govt. and waiting adoption. No-one should get angry, but at the next session of Govt. I will make a proposal to withdraw the limp sum to the HoP until it works seriously".

7min

Co-President of the Constitutional Commission of the Federation HoR, Enver Kreso, announced a session of the Constitution Commission for Friday 2 May. The agenda will include the HoR view of the proposal for amendments to 25 and 26 of the Fed. Constitution concerning Mostar and Sarajevo.

Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Alija Izetbegovic met with Principal Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Michael Steiner, and they discussed tomorrow's sitting of the Parliament. They also talked about the letter which AI recently sent to Contact Group members and the various different reactions which it had caused.

1min

British Ambassador Crawford put forward the stand of the British Government towards Izetbegovic's recent letter. Crawford emphasised that his Govt. agreed with the remarks that some points of the civilian implementation of the DPA had not been implemented quickly enough but the situation as described in Izetbegovic's letter presented a worse picture than the reality. Crawford underlined that his Govt. agreed with the point that the non-arrest of war criminals was an obstruction to the peace process.

2min

The High Representative, Carl Bildt, will be in New York today and tomorrow where he will meet with the UN Security Council (SC) where he will discuss the ongoing implementation of the peace plan. As our reporter discovered from a meeting with Secretary General Kofi Annan, Bildt is critical of the Federation for not fulfilling its obligations, along with the RS. Bildt and US Envoy, Claude Ganz wrote about this in a letter to Izetbegovic blaming the Federation for hampering the peace process. Ambassador Sacirbegovic responded in a letter to the SC saying that he had "noticed some criticism about Mr. Silajdzic, but that, regarding the economic assistance to RS, he did not notice any conditioning". In Sacirbey's view, Mr. Silajdzic does not deserve to be called uncooperative. Instead, he goes on, you should clarify two things: "You want the RS to receive assistance. Does that mean that RS has respected all commitments, or, perhaps, you have reached the conclusion that this is not influencing the behaviour towards the RS? We expect that you explain the issue of political preconditions"

4min

The newly appointed German Ambassador to BiH Graf von Bassewitz who began his diplomatic mission in BiH today stressed Germany's willingness to assist with carrying out the DPA, particularly with respect to refugee return. 2min

In the Cuban Embassy in Vienna the protocol was signed for establishment of diplomatic ties with BiH. It is the 115th country to do so.

1min

The Kuwait Committee for Bosnian Assistance received a gold medal for helping BiH from Federation Vice President Ganic.

1min

Federation Prime minister Bicakcic said that the decision on full membership into the Council of Europe is expected in the course of this year.

2min

Also:

- Detailed report on the UN press conference – at which UN Spokesman Liam spoke of the visit of UN officials to prisoners in Bijeljina.
- Press conference in Mostar regarding pilot project Stolac
- Press Conference in Tuzla re: the Kacavenda affair. Read out part of the TPK Governor's statement.

Summary SRT News

Pale – Government session – the Government adopted the Draft Law on the Loan for RS Reconstruction, the PTT Law, the Agriculture Law, etc. The Government also agreed on the construction of a 110 kV transmission line from Osjecani to Loncari, and from Vlasenica to Konjevic Polje, as well as the construction of a 110 kV power plant in Bijeljina. The Government accepted the RS Working Group's report from the Geneva Conference on Human Rights held on April 23.

3:00

Vienna – The RS delegation, headed by People's Assembly Speaker Kalinic, participated in the round table discussion on the issue of 'Establishment of a Civic Society in the RS and the Federation', which was organised by the Austrian MP's and the US Embassy. There were three main themes that were covered by the discussion: independent media, women's role in creation of politics, and importance of pluralist political life. While discussing the question of pluralism, Kalinic said that there are 36 political parties in the RS which must find their place in the media. Kalinic also said that several conditions have to be met for a proper functioning of the society, primarily completion of the process of national consolidation. This process was not finished before the war in the former Yugoslav territories, which was the main reason for dissolution of the country. Kalinic stressed the importance of equal treatment of both the RS and Federation with regard to economic aid.

3:00

Pale – CoM Minister of Civilian Affairs and Communications, Albijanic, met the Dutch Deputy Minister of Justice, Elizabeth Smith, the Dutch Ambassador to the RS and Federation, and other officials from the Netherlands. They discussed the process of repatriation of refugees from Holland, which will be carried out on a voluntary basis and in co-operation with UNHCR.

2:00

Associated Press reports that Muslims are still considering to drop out of the DPA in the aim of creating their own state. There is more and more talk of a new partition of territory, according to which they would demand 60% of the whole of BiH. The Serbs have their half already, whereas the Muslims and Croats, although they hate each other, are forced to share the second half of BiH.

International Community still believes that the union of BiH is possible. However, the poll carried out in the BiH Federation proved that the number of Muslims who want their separate state is growing daily. At the moment, 22% think that they should immediately start with creation of an Islamic state. In Luxembourg, the Foreign Ministers of the EU should make a decision on HR Bildt's successor. According to Italian media, Bildt will probably be replaced by the former Prime Minister of Finland, Renh, or the former Prime Minister of UK, Thatcher.

3:00

Ugljevik – The biggest thermal power plant in the RS stopped with its production today, due to routine annual reparations and replacement of equipment. This will take three months and will be financed from the RS budget.

2:00

World News:

Sarajevo – Federation HoP session – MP's did not accept Government's proposal to urgently consider the Law on

Establishment of New Municipalities. Mostar – Mostar SDA leaders didn't accept the HDZ request for changing the status of Mostar so that three Croat and three Muslim municipalities would be established. OHR South Chief, Sir Garrod was informed of the Muslim's position.

3:00