

OHR Local News Issues, 11 February 1997

The unprecedented crime committed yesterday in Mostar, when policemen of so called Herceg-Bosna and armed Croatian civilians attacked Bosniaks on their way to the cemetery, was again today the focus of the public interest. Franjo Tudjman, the Croatian President talked late in the afternoon with Alija Izetbegovic about yesterday's incident by phone. They agreed that the culprits for this tragic incident must face consequences.

1'30"

The authentic pictures of the incident in Mostar, filmed by the local Mostar TV team were shown in order to draw attention to viewers to some details proving who started the clashes. It was by no means a spontaneous gathering of people, but a well planned attack with a tragic end.

The situation in Mostar throughout last night bordered on the edge of clashes, notably with no further conflicts. One explosion was heard, but all discussions held with the representatives of IPTF and SFOR in Sarajevo and Mostar could not help - 11 families i.e. 26 persons, were evicted from their apartments in the western part of the town. (Follow names of the ejected people). A daily police information report said that many individuals were disturbed by knocking at their doors during the night by unidentified persons, and that the local police were throwing people out of the apartment blocks. UNHCR confirmed that 2 Bosniaks were taken off the bus, which stopped near a department store, and took them away in an unknown direction. According to unconfirmed information, some Bosniaks were grabbed on the road M 17 and taken away.

2'30"

Robert Wasserman, IPTF Commander, met with Mehmed Zilic, Federal Minister for Interior Affairs to discuss the procedure of finding and investigating the persons who took part in the incident in Mostar. The investigating team will be set up today and will start working at once.

1'30"

OHR, IFOR and SFOR representatives condemned the violence which happened in Mostar and demanded that the criminals responsible for the incidents must be identified, arrested and brought at the court.

0'30"

The HR, Carl Bildt, and his Principal Deputy, Ambassador Steiner, talked with officials in Sarajevo and Mostar: Haris Silajdzic, Fatima Leho and Safet Orucevic. Michael Steiner met with Ivan Prskalo, Mayor of Mostar and Valentin Coric, cantonal Minister for interior.

0'30"

HR Carl Bildt met with Bicakcic and Zubak. Zubak told in this occasion that he is helpless in trying to make situation in Mostar better.

0'30"

Alex Ivanko, UN Spokesman told Press Conference today that UN believes that all evictions from Mostar were organized by the gangs of criminals in this part of the town and that UN will demand that all those who are found in apartments which do not belong to them, are thrown out and accused of crime. SFOR powers have stepped up their presence in Mostar, he said, and soldiers have been put on alert wearing armored helmets and jackets. He rejected all assertions that a large number of Croats was injured in the Mostar incident.

2'30"

A Statement from Kresimir Zubak's Office, containing extra details of the incident in Mostar describes a drama which, during the Mostar incident, was going on at the road M 17. "This proves that incident in Mostar was not without a reason - 24 Croats were injured, and money and cars were taken them off. (An integral text was read).

1'00"

According to confirmed information, the para-military units under the direct command of Slobodan Milosevic are coming from Serbia in Brcko. The situation is very tense.

1'30"

A Municipality of Stolac Statement states that the families designated to return back to their homes cannot do so

for many reasons. Support by Kresimir Zubak doesn't give them any guarantee for safety. During the carnival, in deciding whether to burn a doll representing Zubak or Izetbegovic, the Croats burned Izetbegovic's doll since he is more dangerous.

1'00"

The representatives of SDA party told a Press Conference in Mostar today that they came to call on citizens to stay calm and not to take revenge. They called on all political structures of the Croatian people and leadership to finally, declare themselves against political terrorism and violence committed in Mostar.

1'30"

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS President Biljana Plavsic met HR Bildt and talked about the situation in the ZOS and the Brcko arbitration decision. After the meeting Plavsic said that she expected fair and reasonable solution of the Brcko problem which is also in the international community and Mr. Owen's interest. The situation regarding ZOS is satisfactory, but it will not last long, i.e. it depends on Brcko, Plavsic said. HR Bildt expressed his satisfaction regarding the ZOS situation. All that was agreed was implemented in all segments which is a good sign, Bildt said and add that the results of the Brcko arbitration are expected to be announced next week. 'That's in hand of arbiter and everyone is committed himself or herself to fully implement and respect the decision of the arbitration tribunal.' Commenting the Mostar new situation, Bildt expressed his regret and said that Mostar is in IPTF and Federal police hands.

3:00

Ilidza – RS and Federation military commissions met today to discuss ways of preventing of mobilisation in RS and the Federation. According to SFOR commander Peter Clark, it was agreed that the full demobilisation must be completed by Feb. 13. Military training inside military barracks and flights approved in advance will be allowed.

Pale – RS Defence minister Ninkovic and Col. Pandurevic met the US embassy Military Attaché and talked behind closed doors. Discussion was about RS defence ministry and US military high ranking officials co-operation. Ninkovic and Pandurevic informed Attaché on RS defence concept and RS army reorganisation process. They took into consideration US assistance for the further professionalism and training of the RS army. They also talked about the Sub-regional arms control Agreement and other important issues related to the DPA implementation.

2:00

Belgrade – Serbs from east Slavonia still do not trust Croats who offered them only 'crumbs' of security. This was the main topic of discussion held between FRY President Milosevic and UNTAES president Jacques Clain.

2:00

Commentary on the Oslobodjenje article 'Hawthorne Stick' by Hamza Baskic which caused even reaction of Sarajevo intellectuals – SRT journalist ironically concluded that Oslobodjenje papers are not independent, although they strive for that title. They are not 'different than carrion' (both the author and the paper itself), SRT said, because they write about late Nikola Koljevic with 'pathological hatred'. The article said (quoted) that 'if he (Koljevic) ever came back here, perhaps someone would had cut off his neck in the dark... may the earth scatter his bones.' SRT does not want to condemn the journalist, instead it quoted Shiller – even Gods fight in vain against stupidity.

3:00

Official Paris, Rome, Brussels and other European and world centres warned that yesterday's incident in Mostar is probably the end of illusion about establishing of the joint Muslim and Croat state. Attention is especially focused on the European administration, which could not move the reconciliation process from the deadlock it is in.

2:00

World News and different media opinion: Mostar – two bombs exploded in Croat part of Mostar, whereas 26 Muslim families were expelled from west part of the city, SFOR and UN IPTF report. The new incidents happened only few

hours after the blood shedding incident happened yesterday. Mostar mayor Prskalo and his deputy Orucevic have different opinions on the cause of incidents. Prskalo thinks that the Muslim leadership from the east part is guilty because they organised the visit to the graveyard without previous agreement, whereas Orucevic thinks that Croat fascists and extremists should be blamed for the incident. 24 Croats were injured in the road Mostar-Ploce last night, attacked by Muslim civilians and police, Croat TV reported. The international community should remember Mostar because it spend 4 years in vain trying to persuade itself and three confronted nations that BiH should never be unified, Holland analysts concluded. Italian media reports that Croat-Muslim war started again with the conflicts yesterday. Those incidents can easily spread on Sarajevo and other parts of the fragile Federation, Italian media report.

3:00