

OHR Local News Issues, 04 February 1997

Main conclusions of today's 14th BiH Presidency session: a decision on establishing offices for the Presidency members, temporary financing of the Presidency and temporary accommodation of the Presidency members and their offices. The Presidency has once more confirmed its acknowledgment of the London Conference conclusions and charged a Working Group to make its analyses including the dynamics stated in the document.

2'30"

During his visit to BiH, Saed Hamid El Barr, Malaysian Defense Minister, talked with Haris Silajdzic, B&H CoM Co-Chair. They discussed the co-operation possibilities between the two countries, especially joint ventures. This visit was a good opportunity to remind everybody of the help which this friendly country provided for BiH in the most difficult days of its survival. Mentioned was a courageous, strongly critical speech of Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahatir, against English politics toward BiH which shocked John Major, and was reported by the world media. The same happened to Ghali, Akashi, the UN and the US, who were criticized for not being able to carry out the responsibilities they had taken concerning the implementation of durable peace in BiH.

3'30"

A few days before giving the public an Arbitrage Tribunal decision on the destiny of Brcko, discussions were held at two separate meetings in Tuzla: a meeting of the State Commission for Brcko Arbitrage and a special Assembly meeting of the Tuzla-Podrinje Canton.

3'30"

Radovan Karadzic's public statement concerning a Brcko solution, provoked negative reactions also today. Colum Murphy the HR's Spokesman, criticized the International Community's attitude toward the arresting of war crime indicted persons. He said that the statements of political dinosaurs like Karadzic presented a danger for peace and threatened the Peace Accord. Threats to that peace underline the poverty of any policy that leaves free those persons indicted for war crimes, he added.

1'30"

The loudest reactions towards Karadzic's statement from abroad came from the US. Nicholas Burns said that the war crime indicted violated an agreement which Richard Holbrooke had brokered with the Pale leadership 1996. Journalists have tried, without results, to find out what Clinton's second administration intends to do now. (Follows a lengthy piece of foreign media very ironic reactions in this matter compiled by BiH TV correspondent from US).

2'30"

Colum Murphy also informed today's Press Conference about problems related to the existence of the entities different stand points toward a BiH Central Bank, as well as currency. The law drafts on Central Bank should have been carried out by the end of January, but one of the larger problems in achieving this was the RS demand to have its own currency.

1'30"

The Serb police with IPTF help entered Jusici, Alex Ivanko, U.N. Spokesman told a Press Conference today, stressing that there were no incidents and that the Serb police behaved very professionally. Mahala and Gajevi are peaceful also. But IPTF Acting Commissioner Robert Wasserman is worried because of non-compliance of the Federal Police in Stolac, where illegal check points have been set up. In W.Mostar police also failed to give IPTF documents which were needed for investigations.

1'30"

Two explosions of cumulative mines coming from a Franciscan monastery on the Croatian controlled territory were registered in Mostar last night. 1'00

Summary SRT News

Lukavica – Presidency session – the three members of the BiH Presidency discussed a number of issues, pointing out the implementation of joint institutions and relations between RS and the Federation. It was agreed that presidents Krajisnik and Zubak should make consultations with RS and Federation Governments before Feb. 7 when the BiH reconstruction agreement should be signed. They also agreed on the interim location for presidency staff offices, as well as on the full implementation of agreements signed at the London Conference. The Presidency appointed a working group which will analyse the agreements. Another working group (Albjanic, Bilandzija, and Hurtic) is tasked with preparing the proposal for allocation of financial resources of the Memorandum of Understanding. Foreign Ministry is tasked with preparing proposals for nomination of ambassadors.

3:00

Washington – the RS delegation and its lawyers are convinced that the US Arbiter will seriously take the RS arguments into consideration.

1:00

Jusici – the RS police took control over the village today. They entered the village escorted by SFOR and IPTF, without any incidents. The RS police will check the 1991 census like in Mahala yesterday. They will also control the way the RS law is being respected and will establish peace and order for the Muslims. Muslims, who entered the village by force in September last year, trying to rejecting the RS law, although they settled down in the RS territory. The RS police promised to work professionally if Muslims comply with two main conditions: respect the RS law and restrain from bringing arms into the village.

3:00

Bijeljina – The survival of Serbs from Baranja-Srem is called into question more than ever, particularly after the UN Security Council's announcement which totally ignored their requests. What the Croats are offering is below any civic and political minimum. The RS Peoples Assembly Vice-president Poplasen was informed about the situation in that region by a group of Serb refugees from east Slavonia. Poplasen said that it is very hard to find a solution which could meet the needs of people there. He again expressed the RS position that Serbs are not treated equally as other nations in the Balkans. According to an informal survey, 96% of citizens said they do not intend to live under the Croat regime and will leave the region by March 16, when the elections should be held.

3:00

Bijeljina – the VRS HQ commander gen. Colic said that the RS Army's combat readiness is on the highest level – 'the army is a stronghold of the RS people and the only guarantee of peace'. He met the 3rd corps Command, Ministry of Interior, MPs, and representatives of Semberija, Majevisa, and Posavina municipalities, and talked about the current military and political situation in RS.

2:00