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BiH State-related issues

RS Defense Ministry refuses to discuss the creation of a joint BiH Army and Defense Ministry

The Federation Defense Minister, Mijo Anic, said that in a letter he received yesterday, the RS Minister of Defense, Slobodan Bilic, had cancelled a meeting which was due to be held in Banja Luka on Wednesday about the proposal to include the topic "The state dimensions of defense and setting up a ministry of defense of the Bosnia-Hercegovina joint armed forces" on the agenda. In his reply to Bilic, Anic said that he "does not think that the topic is a provocative one, as Bilic insisted". "On the contrary, I think that if there are good intentions and there are no attempts to impose views and prejudice solutions, any topic can be talked about", Anic said in his reply to Bilic, and added that it is necessary that all sides discuss current and even controversial issues in a tolerant manner in order to reach solutions acceptable for all three constituent peoples in BiH.

BiH delegation meets with Kuwaiti KIA representatives in order

to overcome difficulties in BH Steel and discuss future investments

The governments at all state levels will meet in two weeks with representatives of the Kuwaiti Investment Agency (KIA), whose delegation discussed on Wednesday with Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers and Foreign Affairs Minister Zlatko Lagumdzija, in aim to overcome the current problems. The starting base of future talks will be mutual prepared action plans with concrete set obligations, the Information Service of the Council of Ministers said in a statement.

This way will open perspectives and create a favorable climate for long-term foreign investors in BiH, including KIA as one of the biggest investors in the world, the statement said. Executive director of KIA Adnan Al-Sultan, who headed the delegation, said that KIA is the most important investor in the country and highlighted the problems with which the company faced in former period, especially by investing in BH Steel Company from Zenica.

Zlatko Lagumdzija: Admission of BiH to the Council of Europe should not depend on the arrest of Karadzic and Mladic

After the meeting with The Hague Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte, Zlatko Lagumdzija, the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers and BiH Foreign Minister, stated that he expressed a full readiness of the BiH authorities to continue their co-operation with the Hague Tribunal in the way they co-operated earlier, reports Slobodna Dalmacija.

“We both expressed our concern and wish to solve the cases known to the public and to come up with mechanisms of bringing the fugitives such as Karadzic and Mladic before the Court as soon as possible,” stated Lagumdzija. He stressed, however, that the admission of BiH to the Council of Europe should in no way be contingent on the arrest of Karadzic and Mladic.

Federation

Croat National Assembly: BiH needs two Houses of Peoples – one in each entity

Following yesterday's session of the Croat National Assembly, its president Ante Jelavic said that Croat deputies in the BiH Parliament see the establishment of two Houses of Peoples, each with three national caucuses, as the only solution for BiH. He added that the parties gathered around the HNS believe that the OSCE should reinstate the old rules for the election of deputies for the Federation and BiH Parliament's House of peoples. "This would be the main precondition for the return of Croat representatives in these institutions," said Jelavic. He stressed at the end that the HNS considers the constitutional-legal commissions of entity parliaments illegal, and added that Croat parties will not accept most amendments proposed by the same.

Croat Co-ordination – Changes in entity constitutions must be identical

The Croat Co-ordination, which consists of the Croat member parties of the Alliance for Changes and Croat NGOs, held a session in Sarajevo on Wednesday and discussed constitutional reforms in BiH. Although all of the Croat representatives in the State and Federation Parliaments had been invited to the session, only two of them attended it. The present members said that changes to the entity constitutions must be identical. In other words, the same institutional forms of the organization of legislative, executive and judicial authorities must be ensured, as well as the same rights for all of the three peoples. The Croat Co-ordination also advocates the changing of the term "others" with the term "national minorities," and their rights should be regulated by a special law on the rights of minority peoples, in accordance with the European standards. Changes to the entity constitutions, in the view of the Croat Co-ordination, must be

in conformity with the BiH Constitutional Court Decision and must be implemented without any delay.

Colin Munro: Permit needed for the reconstruction of the mosque in Stolac

The head of the OHR Mostar, Colin Munro, said yesterday that, in order to start the reconstruction of the Careva mosque in Stolac, the Islamic Community needs to obtain a permit. Munro stressed that he had not even seen the plan of reconstruction, although he has been assured by the Reis Mustafa-efendija Ceric and the Mufti Seid Smajkic that it exists. He stressed, however, that the reconstruction of this mosque in Stolac will be a strong symbol of the establishment of equal rights of all peoples in this municipality.

Colin Munro: Solution for Aluminij is a responsibility of BiH authorities

Head of the OHR Mostar Colin Munro told reporters on Wednesday that "after the audit carried out in Aluminum company, the responsibility rests with the BiH authorities. "This was a legal audit, and its main task was to determine the facts. I read the report and the situation is more clear to me now than it was before," Munro said in response to a question about the result of the audit in Mostar-based company.

The management of Aluminum yesterday made public that the final audit report in this company came to the conclusion that not a single decision or act of Aluminum is in contravention of the regulations in force, and that the ownership structure was determined in accordance with the valid regulations. "What needs to be done further is not a matter for the auditors", Munro said, adding that it is up to the BiH authorities what to do next. Munro stressed, however, that it was fundamental for this country that a successful company should not be destroyed.

Miroslav Prce: This is a political process

Leaving the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo, Miroslav Prce stated that he "feels sorry for the people who were ordered to conduct political processes." He said that he raised the issue of the jurisdiction of the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo over the hearing scheduled for himself and other six HNS (Croat National Assembly) officials . Prce said that he learnt from the press about being charged for ordering the disbanding of the HVO troops. "I cannot understand such neglect of the Court, which did not even read the decision. Had it read it, it would have seen that this is not about the decision on the HVO self-disbanding but about the decision on the temporary HVO functioning under aggravated circumstances. It is the crucial mistake of the Court and as such it has a different meaning," said Prce.

Five Croat political parties sent a letter to Peace Implementation Council chairman asking for new parliamentary election

Leaders of five political parties with a Croat prefix (the HDZ, HSP, CCD, Croat Christian Union and Croat Christian Homeland Revival) sent a letter to the Chairman of the Peace Implementation Council in which they demanded new elections for the election of the representatives in the House of Peoples of the BiH Federation Parliament and the House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament Assembly according to the OSCE PEC Rules and Provisions for the general elections from 1998.

Federation House of Representatives holds first session after long summer recess

After a summer recess of more than forty days, a session of the BiH Federation Parliamentary House of Representatives resumed on Wednesday. Deputies in the House discussed the live radio-television broadcasting of the House's sessions, and the report about the work of the administrative commission of the House. Ismet Briga of the Party for BiH assumed the post of the new chairman, after Enver Kreso resigned in early Summer.

Republika Srpska

Federation Refugee Ministry opens a Regional Return Center in Srebrenica

The BiH Federation Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons opened on Wednesday a Regional Return Center in Srebrenica. High Representative for BiH Wolfgang Petritsch yesterday this move which represents "a support for the implementation of the property legislation and the coordination of the activities of the Federation authorities and the international community".

The Center will have multiethnic staff and will provide necessary advice and information regarding the citizens' property rights. (All Federation media carried the OHR press release – mostly on back pages)

Current RS Government Gets High Marks from RS High-Level Leadership

Nezavisne Novine carries a short interview with RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, today in which he says that the meeting held Tuesday in Mrakovica on Kozara Mountain near Prijedor by high level RS politicians and functionaries was in no way a secret meeting. Ivanic said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss what has happened up to now and which activities should follow. As well there was discussion on how to ensure the on-going stability in the RS. Ivanic says that the RS leadership concluded that the RS government has had positive progress and gave it the highest possible marks. "We did not speak about the reconstruction of the government at the meeting. We spoke about future activities for next month and the priorities are DP's & refugees, privatization which must be speeded up, judicial reform and the battle against corruption." When asked to comment on Radisic's statement that the RS government lacked the necessary courage to take more decisive action, Ivanic said that given the impossible situation his government inherited, it has nonetheless managed

to return legality, order and make public the budget to the National Assembly.

Plavsic Arrives in Belgrade Today

Nezavisne Novine report that former RS President, Biljana Plavsic, will fly into Belgrade from The Hague today at 13:30.

Minister of Justice of Serbia, Vladan Batic said that he will be at the airport to greet her and that the press was allowed to cover her arrival but that Plavsic will not be able to speak with the press or give any statements related to the Hague or her eventual trial. Serb National Alliance acting president Svetozar Mihajlovic said that an SNS delegation will be on hand to meet Plavsic at the airport but that the Hague Tribunal have not given official confirmation of her arrival. He also said that it was suggested that no major publicity be given to her arrival in Belgrade.

International Community

Carla Del Ponte in Sarajevo: Bosnian Serbs and Croats do not cooperate with The Hague

During her Wednesday visit to the BiH capital, the chief Prosecutor of the ICTY, Carla Del Ponte, said that Serbs and Croats in BiH are not sufficiently cooperating with The Hague Tribunal and asked the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to help foster that cooperation. During her brief visit to Sarajevo, Del Ponte also met with the members of the BiH Presidency, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdzija, the SFOR Commander, Micheal Dodson, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Jacques Paul Klein. After her meeting with the High Representative, Del Ponte also stressed that she is not satisfied only with the arrest of Slobodan Milosevic. "We still have 38 indicted war criminals at large and they need to be arrested and

transferred to The Hague," she said.

US Envoy for War Crime Issues Visits Banja Luka

The US sent a message to the RS authorities that there will be no economic prosperity until Radovan Karadzic is arrested or he surrenders to The Hague Tribunal, which charges him with crimes committed during the BiH war. This was stated in Banja Luka yesterday by the US Envoy for War Crime Issues, Pierre Prosper. After separate meetings with the RS National Assembly Speaker, Dragan Kalinic, and the Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, Prosper said that he told the two to convey a message to Karadzic's associates that the best thing would be if he surrendered himself to the Tribunal.

Hercegovacka Banka: Results of the investigation in two months

At yesterday's press conference, spokesperson for the Provisional Administrator in Hercegovacka Banka, Johan Verheyden, said that international officials will reveal the initial results of the investigation in this bank before the end of the month. "We are still preparing evidence as we do not want to find ourselves in a situation to say something for which someone could sue us," said Verheyden, and stressed that final results of the investigation will be announced in a few months. He added that even after the results are published, it will be hard to tell what will be the ultimate fate of the bank, which ranked third in size in BiH.

Veissmann boiler producer opens a sale center in Sarajevo

Viessmann, a leading European producer of boilers and central heating equipment, opened on Wednesday an information, sale and service center at Sarajevo's GTI firm.

The center was opened by Croatian Ambassador to BiH Josip Vrbosic, who said that economic links should be a starting point in approaching other ways of cooperation.

“The center’s opening, Viessmann will be more present at the BiH market, and potential buyers satisfied because our offer makes the highest point in technological achievement in Europe,” Tin Grizelj of GTI said.

Viessmann Holding made 1.85 billion German marks turnover in 2000, and employs about 6,800.

[ONASA: Interview with HANSJOERG KRETSCHMER, Head of the EC Delegation to BiH](#)

Editorials

Vecernji List: What sort of constitution do we need (provided by OHR Mostar)

Written by Prof. Dr. Slavo Kukic

Discussions on the constitutional reforms are going ahead. The approaches to it are, naturally, radically adverse. One side is willing to do anything to keep the existing constitutional solutions. The other side insists on changes at any price, says Slavo Kukic in the Vecernji List commentary.

“The differences, of course, are irreconcilable among those who demand changes. Whether we like it or not, this is a conflict between the two totally opposed concepts. One side prefers the civil state model and minimizes all the characteristics of the situation in BiH. The other side refers to the experience of the last ten years and serves the argument that BiH is only possible as a state where it is known, in the most literal sense, what belongs to whom. Translated to the language of our everyday life, it means that the national is above all other values in the process of devising its constitutional and legal structure.

I am, naturally, one of those who believe that neither of the approaches can secure the prerequisites for a prosperous

state. (...)

In a long-term view, the only optimal solution for BiH is a cantonization, and the sort of cantonization that would be based on economic, communicational, historic and other principles, rather than national ones.

Besides, the securing of the institutional rights for ethnic communities implies the institution of House of Peoples as a guarantee of identity and equality. Of course, it only makes sense if its representatives are elected by members of the three constituent peoples. To avoid any confusion, that is to say each of the peoples should elect their own representatives."