

# OBN News Review, 19 February 2000

## Headlines

- Stipe Mesic: "Croatian leadership will start with a new policy towards BiH, a policy full of understanding and sincerity"
- Sarajevo – Sabor of the Croatian People's Council (HNV) held its session
- Russian attacks against Chechnya twice as strong
- First results of the parliamentary elections in Iran – reformers lead over conservatives
- Topics of TV INFO: the law on the Council of Ministers and the law on strike
- Refugee stories from Tuzla, Prijedor and Mostar

## Zagreb

The session of the Council for cooperation between Croatia and BiH is planned next month in Sarajevo. This will be the first concrete opportunity for the new Croatian authorities to show a different policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatian President, Stipe Mesic, said that his talk yesterday with the President of the BiH Presidency, Alija Izetbegovic, was in the course of improving the relations between the two countries. The US State Secretary, Madeleine Albright, invited the new Croatian President and the Prime Minister, Ivica Racan, to visit the USA by June. The report from Zagreb was produced by Gordana Simonovic.

## World

The US State Secretary arrived in Albania and warned that the International Community would not tolerate any attempts to change present borders in the Balkans. According to the first results of the parliamentary elections in Iran, left-wing

reformers lead over conservatives. The final results will be announced only in ten days time. Russia increased their attacks in the mountains in the South of Chechnya. Russian military planes had performed some 150 flights in only one day. This was followed by an item on mass demonstrations in Austria against Jörg Haider's party. OBN journalist, Zeljka Lekic, produced the piece on current events in the world.

## **Sarajevo**

A piece on the new law on the BiH Council of Ministers followed.

**Since** Tuesday, a commission for institutional and legal issues has been discussing whether the law was adopted by the BiH Parliament Representative House, OBN reporter, Sanjin Beciragic, confirmed.

Cantonisation of entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, through a build-up of the Dayton Peace Agreement is an old idea reiterated by the Croatian People's Council (HNV). According to the HNV, the current establishment of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not natural. Cantonisation would make that right, without neglecting BiH multi-national structure. OBN reporter Amarildo Gutic, produced the report.

## **Banja Luka**

A statement made by the Director of the International Crisis Group, James Lyon, that the RS was a superficial and short-term entity, and that an ideal solution for BiH would be cantonisation but it was not supported by OHR. Lyons think that Bosnia and Herzegovina can be prosperous only if people forget nationalism and start to think as BiH citizens. Biljana Arsic produced the report for TV INFO.

## **Sarajevo**

An item on the annual assembly of the PEN Center in Bosnia and

Herzegovina. The assembly discussed organisation of the regional conference of the International PEN Association in October this year in Sarajevo, OBN reporter, Anes Alic, confirmed. Some 100,000 DEM will be required for the organisation of the conference. However, the BiH PEN Center does not have the funds.

## **Sarajevo**

After the Representative House of the BiH Federation Parliament adopt the law on strikes, the law should be also confirmed by the House of Peoples. The BiH Federation Government prepared the law with cooperation from the International Organisation of Labour, trade unions, OHR and other similar organisations. The Government claim that rights of both employers and employees were protected. The report was produced by OBN reporter, Adis Saranovic.

This was followed by an item on the meeting between the Inter-religious Council and the representatives of the authorities who deal with the refugee return issue. Journalists were not allowed to attend the meeting, OBN reporter, Sefko Bajic, confirmed.

## **Tuzla**

Some 40,000 refugees have been located in the Tuzla area. The biggest number are situated in Serb houses in the East part of the municipality. They hope to return to their houses this year, OBN reporter from the area, Muhamed Berbic, confirmed. The refugees live in a very difficult conditions.

## **Prijedor**

A piece on a refugee Zahida Gredelj who lives as a refugee in her own town. Zahida lives in cold and wet premises of the Prijedor Muslim charity "Merhamet". In her apartment currently lives a refugee from Sanski Most, Milena Letic-Joves confirmed.

## **Mostar**

Two years after their return, Bosniaks in the Capljina area do not have electricity. Although the electricity supply system was installed, the authorities did not allow it to be switched on, OBN reporter from the area, Sinisa Jokic, confirmed.

## **Sarajevo**

A piece on the promotion of "Pismo bez adrese" (A Letter Without Address) by non-governmental organisation "Protektor". This is a collection of stories of young people from BiH. This is a part of the project with an aim to establish reconciliation in BiH, OBN reporter, Mirna Sadikovic, confirmed.

## **Sport**

Reports on the local football matches, international skiing, tennis and NBA were presented.