

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 02 Sep 1997

02 September 97, 19:30

Bihac – Excavations of the mass grave “Bezdan” continued today in the presence of ICTY representatives. It is supposed that there are about 200 Bosniak bodies at the bottom of the 55m deep pit. Local authorities say this grave was discovered through the testimony of a Serb citizen.

1'00”

Sarajevo – BiH President Izetbegovic received Russian Foreign Affairs Deputy Afanasievski. Regarding the DPA, identical trends were confirmed by both sides. Afanasievski supported the election process as the only way to resolve the RS crisis. Presidency member Zubak also received Afanasievski. The importance of persistent DPA implementation was pointed out, as well as the effectiveness of the work of joint state institutions.

Izetbegovic also received UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur Rehn. The importance of the Ombudsmen's work was pointed out, with regrets that this institution does not exist in the RS. Zubak also received Rehn who informed him of her observations in Central Bosnia. Rehn expressed regret for the crimes in Nula, saying that this should not stop refugee return. Federation President Soljic also received Rehn's visit. Rehn pointed out the importance of the establishment of the joint institutions.

Presidency member Zubak received Greek Foreign Affairs Deputy Papandreu. The current situation in the RS and the joint institutions of state were discussed.

4'00”

Sarajevo – CoM session that was scheduled for today was cancelled due to the absence of RS representatives. The absence remained unexplained, and the CoM Co-chairman Silajdzic questioned long the IC would have the patience to stand the obstructions from RS.

2'00"

Travnik – The bodies of two murdered Croat citizens from Nula village were buried today. Hope was expressed that the perpetrators of the violent act would be arrested soon.

Due to increasing pressure on Croat citizens, Zubak addressed a letter to the Contact Group members, HR Westendorp, his deputies Wagner and Klein, UNHCR, and SFOR Commander Shinseki. The letter says that Zubak's frequent warnings to IC representatives, about the difficult position of Croats in BiH, were not enough for the IC to see that this is all about a very cunning strategy of disabling the return of Croats to BiH. Zubak asked IC representatives to provide a balanced approach to the matters of guilt, obligations and responsibility, as well as the matters of legal rights, treatment [of minorities], [financial] aid and support.

2'30"

Sarajevo – Federal President Soljic held a press conference today. Soljic said that the recent events in the Travnik area represent an outrageous violation of the DPA, and that urgent action is needed, Soljic said that "he would not like to believe that there is a connection between those events and the Bosniak leadership, but the organisation of opposition to the DPA is such that it demands a thorough analysis". Soljic also commented on the participation in the elections of the HDZ party in the Mostar region, saying that this is still being discussed but it is expected that HDZ will boycott the elections.

2'30'

Mostar – HR for Mostar, Sir Garrod, said that the OHR in

Sarajevo recommended the introduction of austere economic measures if the amendments on the Canton Constitution are not adopted on Sep. 5. Sir Garrod pointed out that the amendments contain nothing that has not been previously in meetings between HDZ and SDA and in the context of the DPA. OSCE head for Mostar expressed his regrets concerning the murder in Nula, but also said that he was satisfied with the joint work being carried out by Croats and Bosniaks in the investigation. UNHCR representative for Mostar reported on new incidents in Stolac, where buses with Bosniak workers were stoned. SFOR vehicles who were evacuating Bosniak workers were also attacked, as was a police vehicle.

3'30"

Associated Press – reports that the supporters of Karadzic signed an agreement with SFOR on a ceasing of the conflict. SFOR agreed to return the TV transmitter Udrigovo on condition that the fanatical anti-SFOR and anti-UN campaign in Serb media halts, and that HR Westendorp is allowed to explain all the latest events in the RS on SRT, without editorial interventions.

SFOR spokesman Riley said that SFOR will take actions against the Serb Special Police if it found them wearing uniforms or carrying weapons outside of their precincts. Reacting to the events in Udrigovo, Riley said that the SFOR Commander had ordered the use of tear-gas, which dispersed the mob. Riley also refuted the claims of SRT that SFOR used rubber bullets and poisonous gas.

IPTF spokeswoman in Brcko Ladun said that damage done to the IC representatives was assessed to be US\$ 1 million.

Belgrade "Dnevni Telegraph"(DT) reported that Pale are using Chetniks from Serbia to help them fight against Plavsic. DT reported that the extremist Seselj's Chetniks and Arkan's "Tigers" are guarding the police station in Bijeljina.

BiH press reports that RS President Plavsic refused to meet Krajisnik in Bijeljina tomorrow, for reasons of safety.

4'00"

Sarajevo – Sarajevo University and the United Methodist for Aid Committee organised a three -day international Conference for Peace and the Solution of Conflicts. Silajdzic and HR deputy Wagner were also present. Silajdzic said that there was no conflict in BiH, it was aggression. He also said that there was no national hatred within BiH, but that it came from the outside. Wagner said that BiH needs global reform so that it can join a 21st century Europe.

2'00"