

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 13 October 1998

Kosovo – The US Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke brokered an agreement with the FRY President Milosevic, shortly after an agreement in Brussels was reached, allowing a [NATO](#) military action against the FRY. Milosevic today addressed the nation in a nationally televised speech, saying that no further danger from military action toward FRY exists. Following the lead BiH-related story (on the inauguration of the Presidency), TV BiH carried the US President Clinton's strongly-worded reaction to Milosevic's verbal change of position: "Balkan graveyards are filled with President Milosevic's empty promises". More reactions followed (the most prominently featured the cautious one by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair). The Kosovo bloc ended with a report from Pristina, conveying the Albanian leadership's satisfaction due to the [NATO](#) decision and their scepticism over possible political manipulations. The reporter described the situation in the province as "still complex". The issue got a more Bosnian spin in the closing section of the domestic news bloc. A vox populi interviewing several ethnic Albanian refugees living in Zenica was aired (100 refugees were reported as having taken refuge in the city). Most expressed a wish to leave for the third countries. Lack of room and the international organisations' failure to offer continual support for these refugees was then highlighted as a problem by a city official.

8:30

Members to the new BH Presidency, Zivko Radisic, Ante Jelavic and Alija Izetbegovic took their offices today. The three signed a ceremonial statement, taking upon themselves an obligation to defend and comply with the BiH constitution, to fully implement the [DPA](#), improve human rights and defend the

interests and equality of all nations and residents in BiH. The ceremony was attended by the HR Deputies Klein and Schumacher, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia Robert Barry, as well as by other local and international officials and diplomats. Following the inauguration, the Presidency held its first session, chaired by Radisic. A working group was formed, tasked with the reorganisation of the CoM. Another working group should consider the improvements in the internal organisation of the BiH Presidency.

3:00

A balanced report on the BH Independent Trade Union requests received the third placing in the newscast. The union sent a letter to Premier Bicakcic, urging the Federal government to accept the Collective Agreement, and requesting that the average lowest salaries be immediately increased to 250 KM.

2:00

The following report opened on the premise that the world was undergoing a monetary crisis, leaving an impression that this might have reflections to BiH economy. Jadranko Prlic was quoted on the issue. The minister expressed his belief that this might indeed happen, "but not directly". Prlic also reiterated that the BiH relations with the Paris Club of Creditors might be solved soon, in a modified way.

1:30

The economic news bloc continued with a report on the Co-Chairman Haris Silajdzic's meeting with the Deputy HR for Economic Issues, Didier Fau. The two discussed the Bosnian obligations toward the Paris Club of Creditors. A press release from Silajdzic's office emphasised that there was a possibility for BiH to reach "more suitable" arrangements with the Club at its next meeting, which is scheduled to take place later this month.

1:00

Premier Bicakcic's open letter, insisting that the National

Bank liquidator has the legal right to freeze the assets of the Bank, but "not the deposits of the Federation Government with the NB" was carried next, followed by the Central Bank Governor Peter Nicholl and OHR reactions to it. Nicholl said that the National Bank was "insolvent" in the process of liquidation and that it "can no longer function as a legal bank". Nicholl added that there is "no legal difference between assets of the NB and its deposits, from whatever the source". According to Nicholl, Bicakcic's statement that the reason for the proposal to freeze the assets of the NB is that Dudley is leaving his position shortly was not true. He criticised Bicakcic for his failure to mention that it has been known since the establishment of the Central Bank that the NB was to immediately cease monetary operations. OHR, more precisely Simon Haselock, expressed full support for the liquidator of the NB, William Dudley, and his July order to freeze all deposit activities of the Bank.

2:00

The report on the international organisations' press briefing highlighted Simon Haselock's comment on Mirza Hajric's statement to the local press, claiming that 8,000 to 10,000 refugees have returned to Sarajevo up to date. To the OHR's knowledge, some 2,500 minority returns to the city were registered by the end of September (these being the data originating from the canton's Ministry). Haselock emphasised the IC's dissatisfaction with the implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration and also accented that under Dayton, the right to return is unconditional.

1:00

Haselock was further quoted on tax evasion problem, welcoming the actions recently undertaken by CAFAO, in conjunction with the customs authorities of both entities, which resulted in the seizure and confiscation of trucks importing goods illegally into BiH, without payment of the necessary duties and taxes. Showing the pictures from Orasje border crossing, TV

BiH quoted Haselock on CAFAO's estimation that over 900 such shipments had crossed the Bosnian borders over the last couple of months, resulting in the entity budgets losing some 40 million-KM.

1:00

Followed a perfunctory report on Izetbegovic's meeting with a RTV BiH delegation (Ante Domazet, Mirsad Purivatra and Tomaz Perovic). The report only mentioned that the issue of reorganisation of TV BiH featured on the agenda of the meeting.

0:30

Brief was also a report on the meeting between the SDA and the HDZ high officials, showing two delegations facing each other at a conference table. Both parties confirmed their support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of BiH, and for the process of the return of refugees.

0:50

Federation President Ejup Ganic visited Bukovaca, where 70 Serbs returned to their pre-war houses. Ganic was given actuality sound, standing next to a couple of returnees, encouraging all the refugees to exercise their right to return.

1:20

Prior to the international news bloc, a closing item on domestic issues reported on the ending of the reconstruction of the power supply system in Ravne-Brcko.