

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 19 November 1998

The Federation HoP was inaugurated today for the mandatory period of 1998 to 2000, and the mandates for its 71 deputies were verified. Mato Zovko of the HDZ was elected the Speaker of the House, Alija Behmen of the SDP his deputy. Hilmo Pasic was re-appointed secretary. TV BiH highlighted the OHR's labelling the appointment of five HDZ deputies (despite strong opposition, none of the NHI candidates were elected) to the delegation for the HoP of the BH Parliamentary Assembly from the Croat peoples as 'undemocratic'. This was contrasted to the fact that the Coalition for United and Democratic Bosnia (KCD) reached a compromise with the SDP – one candidate of the latter was elected to the delegation from the Bosniak peoples.

1:50

Followed a bloc assigned to reactions to the delay in the signing of the Agreement on special relations between the Federation and Croatia. Klein's optimism was carried first. The Ambassador based his optimism on the expectations that the Agreement would finally be signed on Saturday afternoon in Zagreb. However, the Bosniak leadership, lead by Ejup Ganic, insists that Croatian Minister Granic must present the explanation of his statement that the Agreement represented a way for the 'legalisation of financing the Croat Militia (HVO) by Croatia' prior to the signing. TV BiH's subsequent report from Zagreb said that the problems regarding the delay in the signing of the Agreement received marginal attention in Croatian media, since Ganic failed to confirm his possible arrival to Zagreb. The BH Ambassador to Croatia, Hasan Muratovic, was then quoted as saying that the ceremony of signing will most probably follow a meeting between the two delegations. However, Muratovic does not believe that the meeting in question may take place this week.

2:00

The reactions of the SDA and the Republican Party concerning the Agreement followed. SDA's spokesperson emphasised that the prolongation in the signing did neither damage the Federation, nor result from the non-cooperation of the Bosniak leadership. The Republicans called the signing of the Agreement "the next to the last phase in the partition of Bosnia", and anticipated imminent signing of a similar agreement between the RS and the FRY.

1:00

IC representatives started their preparations for the Madrid Conference. The OHR presented the basics of the programme which should be realised in the upcoming year. The priority will be given to the return of a greater number of refugees and DPs. TV BiH used this announcement as an introduction for the report on 12 deputies of the KCD, who decided not to participate in the work of the Bijeljina Municipal Assembly until further notice. Faik Muhic, the leader of the Bosniak deputies, depicted the decision that 2,000 building lands in Bijeljina be allotted to Serb refugees as the reason for this act. Muhic emphasised that none of the 36,000 Bosniak and Croat refugees have yet systematically returned to their homes in Semberija since the signing of the [DPA](#).

2:10

A somewhat positive aspect of refugee return issue was then portrayed through a report on the return of Bosniak refugees to the village of Biokovine near Jajce. The donations of the EU Humanitarian Office helped repair 57 houses and the infrastructure in the village. The project was labelled as "one of the best" refugee return projects in the canton of Central Bosnia.

1:00

The Islamic Community re-elected Mustafa Ceric to the post of the Reis-ul-Ulema. Ismet Spahic was elected Ceric's deputy.

Both will perform their duties for the upcoming seven years.

0:50

Kosovo – TV BiH's report from the troubled province said that the presence of the Serb police forces had increased, and highlighted another aspect of the US peace plan, which anticipates the presence of the Kosovo Albanians in the FRY Supreme Defence Council.

1:20

TV BiH investigated the present situation following the Federal Government's decision to decrease the value of a minimum salary to 150 KM. The reporter said that it was the adequate price of work that was problematic, not the value of the minimum salary. The insistence of the Federal Ministry that the fees were also decreased was contrasted to this. Simultaneously, the Trade Union, according to its Sarajevo branch, has already sent out the questionnaires on whether the workers should strike or not. "All the workers are in favour", TV BiH quoted a representative of the Trade Union.

1:50

A two-day conference on the media in a democratic society began in Neum. Krister Thelin of the IMC, Simon Haselock, and Zoran Udovicic of Media Plan addressed the seminar. The protection of the freedom of media was discussed, with an emphasis to the Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (which guarantees the freedom of speech).

1:00