

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 20 Jan. 1998

20 January 98, 19:30

HR Westendorp decided about the image of the new BiH currency. The currency will not contain national symbols, the inscriptions will be in Latin and Cyrillic, and will be the same in color and size in both entities.

1:00

BiH Federation Parliament HoP held a session. Although it was scheduled to make a standpoint on the declaration of the Serb Citizen Council, about the changes of the entities constitution, this was delayed for the next session. Representative, Bender mentioned the car-bomb explosion in Mostar, and asked for repayment of the material damage and an official apology from Bosniak officials, who claimed that it was done by Croat extremists. As said by Bender, this caused great damage to Croat people. HoP also adopted the decision on privatization of banks, as well as the Law on Adoption of the Law on Housing Relations. 3'00" The CoM did not have the quorum to hold the scheduled session. As said by Silajdzic, some of the representatives are away, while others did not come because of religious holidays. CoM vice-chairman Tomic said that the canceling of the session represents the violation of the deadlines for the implementation of laws adopted before the New Year.

2:00

The new RS Government held its first session in Banja Luka last night. The US praised the election of Dodik for the RS Prime-minister. State Department spokesman Rubin said that the US will support Dodik and the RS President Plavsic. HR Westendorp said that Karadzic is in a difficult situation now, because he does not control the centers of power. Westendorp

said he is convinced that Karadzic will face the Tribunal, and that there is a possibility he could be extradited by the new authorities if he decides not to surrender. The OHR Head for Mostar, Sir Martin Garrod said he was delighted with the positive development of the situation in the RS.

2:30

Sir Martin Garrod held a press conference in the building of the joint administration. One of the key subjects was also the return of refugees to the Herzegovina/Neretva Canton. UNHCR spokesman Wright said that the document on the refugee return, adopted at the last session of the Canton Government will be the first step for the return of all the people to the HN Canton. UN spokesman Moore mentioned last Saturday's incident in Stolac, when two Bosniak women were beaten by unknown persons. Moore said that UN condemns such attacks at innocent women.

3:00

OHR spokesman Byrne said that OHR considers yesterday's conviction against Veselin Cancar illegitimate, and totally opposite the Rome agreement. According to this agreement, the local courts in BiH do not have the right to press charges for war crimes, unless approved by the Hague Tribunal. Byrne said that although the ICTY did not find enough evidence for this charge, it was raised anyway. UN spokesman Ivanko reminded that Cancar was arrested by Sarajevo police in June 1996, when he arrived for private matters. Ivanko said the UN considers that Cancar's defence was not active enough, and that there were numerous question raised in the court, which created an impression that Cancar is responsible for the crimes. OSCE spokesman Verheyden also sharply protested against the decision of the Canton court in Sarajevo, and said that OHR and UNHCR will consider the measures to be taken against this flagrant violation of the Peace Agreement.

2:30

OSCE Regional Head Foley attended a meeting of the highest

Middle Bosnian Canton officials. The result of the meeting is adoption of the joint statement on the election results implementation in this canton.

1:00

BiH Presidency member Zubak signed two contracts on loan from the World Bank. The first one, for the amount of \$65 million, meant for the RS reconstruction, and the other one, \$44 million, for the reconstruction of the gas system in Sarajevo Canton.

1:30