OHR BiH TV News Summary, 21 Oct. 1997

21 October 97, 19:30

At its session today, the FBiH House of Peoples endorsed a package of five draft-laws on privatisation, thus initiating the process of transition into a different socio-economic system in the FBiH, underlined the report. Amongst the adopted drafts is the draft on purchase of socially- owned flats, which has caused much interest in the public. The Draft on Restitution has not been adopted today, because there was a dilemma as to whether the right on return of property should cover the period from 1919 or 1945.

The FBH House of Peoples is to continue its work tomorrow.
2:00

The British Secretary of Defence Minister George Robertson paid a visit to the Bosnian capital and met with Chairman of the BH Presidency Alija Izetbegovic and BH Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic. The talks focused on a number of issues: freedom of media, arrest of war criminals, positive aspects of the Train and Equip programme and the Permanent Military Commission. At a press conference in Sarajevo, Minister Robertson underlined the importance of the freedom of media in BH and reiterated that the international community would confront those who might attempt to obstruct the DPA.
1:50

Top BiH officials today received the delegation of the Saudi High Committee. The talks dwelt on humanitarian and financial assistance of the Saudi Committee to BiH.
0:50

The working group on reconstruction of BiH and Croatia as a

part of the Central European Initiative has begun a session in Sarajevo. The objective of this session is to exchange information and enhance the process of reconstruction in BH.
0:50

Chairman of the CoM Haris Silajdzic, currently in Washington, held informal talks with Robert Gelbard, Special Envoy for the implementation of the peace agreement and the US Under-Secretary for Economic Policy. Gelbard reportedly insisted that freedom of media was crucial for the further implementation of the peace process. As to return of refugees, Gelbard insisted on Sarajevo and central Bosnia. Silajdzic explained that in the process of return, the RS was the key problem since refugees could not return to their original homes.
1:50

Commenting on the dispute over the port Ploce, Vladimir Soljic, FBiH President said that the BiH side was the first to refer to the Washington Accords, thus implying that it was still valid. This probably prompted the Croatian side to refer to it, he added. Soljic also said that "an agreement cannot be one time valid and another time not". Lastly, he posed the question as to whether this issue was of an economic or political nature.

On the other hand, the report quoting Hasan Muratovic, BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and FBiH PM Bicakcic as confirming that the BiH side would insist on the lease of a free zone in Ploce for 99 years or perhaps for a shorter period.

The media conveyed a Reuters-based news item on corruption in BH. Customs, revenue and budget administration are thought to be those areas most subject to corruption, maintained Reuters.

The OHR office prepared a report on corruption, soon to be published.