

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 27 Jan. 1998

27 January 98, 19:30

The Municipal Council of Brcko appealed to the Brcko Tribunal for a fair arbitration decision, with full implementation of international rights and respect of Annex 2 of the General draft agreement. The Councilors also said that any delay of the arbitration decision was unacceptable, because it would preserve the current unacceptable situation, created by aggression and ethnic cleansing against Bosniaks and Croats. The Councilors added that very progressive steps had been achieved thanks only to Ambassador Farrand, the International Community, Federal Authorities and the refugees themselves. As opposed to this, the Serb authorities had not shown even a minimum of respect for human rights. The Council considers that any solution that would prevent Brcko remaining in the RS would lead to multi-ethnicity, refugee return, and a unified BiH with two equal multi-ethnic entities.

3:00

At yesterday's session of the European Council Parliamentary Assembly, one of the subjects under discussion was BiH's entry to the Council of Europe. A BiH delegation met with representatives of the Political Committee, who had recently visited Sarajevo in order to discuss with BH officials the conditions for BiH entry to the EC. The head of the BiH delegation, Bicakcic, informed Committee members that the privatisation laws had been passed in the Federation, and that they had been working on housing problems, along with OHR. A member of the delegation, Tosic, stressed that the RS and its new Government will propose and pass the same laws as the Federation.

3:00

The Federal Reserves Directorate (FRD) held a press conference, where the former Director, Kurtovic, and the current Acting Director, Kulovic, made statements regarding the CAFAO reports. Kurtovic said he was ready to answer for the faults in his jurisdiction during his engagement at the FRD. He also reiterated that he was appointed Minister of Foreign Trade at the CoM by the Presidency, which was approved by the Parliament. It was also stated that in the past year the FRD supplied 11,280,220 litres of naphtha to some budget users (Army, Ministry of Energy) at the request of the Federal Prime Minister and Ministers in charge, without any compensation. Since the beginning of the year the FRD had warned the Federation Prime Minister and ministers that the supply of naphtha should be regulated by decisions of the BiH Federal Government.

2:30

The draft Law on Foreign Investments, proposed by the Forum of Investment Advisory Service (FIAS) is absolutely unacceptable for BiH, as it was concluded after a meeting of CoM Co-Chairman Silajdzic with legal and economics experts. Silajdzic said that discussion of this law was necessary because BiH is de facto divided and efforts should be made to reassemble it. BiH entities insisted on passing this law which was also supported by the OHR. However it did not confuse today's experts, who presented numerous objections to the law. One of the objections is that the law is without sanctions, so that the federation only gets information on what is going on with investments in the entities, and this could produce competition between entities which would lead to chaos in BiH. Representative Muratovic proposed that the amendment on the law on enterprises be adopted, adding that it would be a real pity if the law was passed by Westendorp's office. Representative Stojanov said that Westendorp should be the one to pass this law because the FIAS proposal maintains the division of BiH. Silajdzic said he will oppose this law because it contains no state of BiH.

2:30

SDP President Lagumdžija addressed a letter to the OHR, BiH Parliament and the CoM, in which he pointed out the malfunctioning of the customs service. Lagumdžija proposed the draft of the new regulation book for the customs system in BiH in order to pass the new law on customs tariffs as soon as possible.

1:30

HR Westendorp presented the new BiH flag yesterday. All three designs presented had a light-blue background. The first solution contained a triangle and nine stars, the second proposal had three yellow and two white lines, and the third one depicted five yellow and five white alternating lines making a yellow-white triangle. Westendorp said that Krajisnik was reluctant to accept a common flag for the whole country. Westendorp added that Krajisnik proposed a flag with the federation symbols on one side and the RS symbols on the other. The Parliament of BiH will decide which solution will come into force.

3:00

OHR spokesman Bullivant announced a conference on refugee return scheduled for February 3. Bullivant said that the IC will seriously consider the suspension of aid to Sarajevo Canton in the event that the local authorities do not fulfill the demands that will be set at this forthcoming conference. Bullivant also stated that the PIC expressed its disappointment at the Sarajevo authorities' inability to enable the safe return of pre-war citizens. The conference will be chaired by the HR Westendorp, US Special Envoy Gelbard and EC representative Delange, with the support of the UNHCR.

2:30

Sarajevo Canton Government adopted their budget for this year. The planned income is 514,655,000 KM. As stated by the Canton Minister for Finance, Kozaric, this budget has no provision

for contingency measures, and every expense will be accounted for.

1:30

OSCE Head of Mission, Barry, stated that the OSCE and OHR will implement the right of final and obligatory arbitrage in the municipalities that did not implement the results of the local elections.

1:30

At a Prijedor Municipality Assembly members of the CDU were elected as the Co-president of the Assembly, and Co-president of the executive Board.

1:30

The Bugojno constitutive session was held in the absence of HDZ representatives, who did not want to attend the session because of unequal allocation of the municipality authorities.

1:00

HR Westendorp met with RS President Plavsic. At the meeting it was decided to hold the RS People's Assembly in Banja Luka instead of Teslic, for practical and security reasons.

1:00