

OHR Bulletin 1 - May 6, 1996

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This is the first edition of the OHR Bulletin which aims to give an overview of what is happening on the ground in the civilian implementation of the Dayton Agreement. The publication will cover the work of all the principal implementing organisations involved in the process.

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OHR In Banja Luka

On Monday 6 May, the Office of the High Representative will open a permanent office in Banja Luka to cover this important part of Republika Srpska and of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The office will be headed by Tim Clifton, formerly of the European Community Monitoring Mission. His team will include Vassily Chernonosov, a Russian diplomat on secondment to the OHR.

To mark the occasion, there will be a "Banja Luka week", starting with the official opening at the office at 1600 hrs.

followed by a press conference at the hotel "Bosna" at 17:00 hrs. On the same day Carl Bildt will hold a number of meetings with the Prime Minister of the Republika Srpska, Rajko Kasagic; the UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur, Elisabeth Rehn, and Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti, Chairman in Office of the OSCE which will be supervising Bosnia's elections later this year.

There will also be calls by the visiting US Assistant Secretary John Kornblum, the Russian deputy Foreign Minister Ivanov, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs Ogata. Baroness Chalker, British Overseas Development Minister will call on Mr Bildt on 8 May, as will the Foreign Minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr Prlic.

Other events will include meetings with Banja Luka's religious leaders, with the Serb Intellectual Forum of Banja Luka, a political roundtable involving opposition politicians from the two Entities, and a media roundtable.

On Friday 10 May, a meeting of the North West Joint Civilian Commission will take place in Banja Luka, involving political figures from the entities and a number of the international organisations active on the ground in Bosnia.

Elections

The Provisional Election Commission (PEC) has called on the Parties to urgently appoint all Local Election Commissions in order to enable critically important preparations for the elections to proceed. A particular need has been identified for these Commissions to be trained in order that the voter registration process can begin on schedule in the middle of May. In the course of his meeting on 29 April with the Speaker of the RS Assembly, Mr. Krajisnik, the High Representative emphasised the need to accelerate the process of forming these Commissions.

Papers specifying the qualifications of the members of the Election Commissions, the responsibilities of these Commissions and their relationship with the PEC have already been adopted.

Freedom Of Movement

The recent Bajram festivities saw a marked increase in the number of cross-entity visits by refugees and displaced persons most of which were co-ordinated by UNHCR, with support from the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) and IFOR so as to minimise threats to public order during the Bajram period while upholding the right of freedom of movement.

Special efforts were made to ensure that local police forces fulfilled their responsibilities regarding maintenance of law and order.

Although a number of visits took place peacefully, there were some disturbing incidents, notably at the village of Kapetanovici near Dobo. At least two gunfire-related deaths and a number of injuries were reported.

Following these tragic events, the High Representative, Carl Bildt, accompanied by the Commissioner of the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF), convened a meeting on 1 May between Dr. Hasan Muratovic, Prime Minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Mr Momcilo Krajisnik, President of the Assembly of Republika Srpska.

Among other things, it was agreed that the Republika Srpska police authorities, in co-operation with Federation authorities, will undertake an urgent criminal investigation into the events at Kapetanovici. IPTF was meanwhile tasked with convening a meeting between the Chiefs of Police of Dobo and Tuzla on the issue.

Mine Clearance

Mine clearing has long been identified as one of the gravest problems facing the full implementation of the Peace Process. To this end, the OHR-led Working Group on mines, comprising delegates from the Entities, the UN and a

number of NGOs, World Bank, USG, IFOR and the EC has been developing a strategy for dealing with this problem.

This strategy is now to be put into effect through the UN-led Mines Action Centre (MAC), which became operational 1 May at a newly constructed albeit temporary facility in "Tito Barracks" in the centre of Sarajevo. The MAC's principal task is to provide technical advice and co-ordination for all mine related issues.

1. The final touches are being put to a number of pilot demining projects around Sarajevo, notably clearing the Ilidza tramway and the Sarajevo airport runway.
2. Estimates from the World Bank suggest that demining tasks for the next 3 years will cost over \$ US 200 million and the continuous engagement of a force of 1000 men for the next 33 years.
3. Norwegian NGO NPA is implementing a number of Humanitarian demining training programs for the Bosnian refugees in Norway in line with attempts to develop an indigenous mine clearing capacity.
4. A second consignment of 150 mine detectors from the European Commission were delivered to IFOR last week for distribution to all sides to facilitate mine clearance process.

Economic Reconstruction

The World Bank and other leading international agencies are engaged in a large number of projects for the balance of 1996 that are contained in the \$1.8 billion emergency reconstruction package for which funds were pledged at the two donors' conferences in December 1995 and April 1996 in Brussels.

The World Bank has to date approved a number of projects to help Bosnia and Herzegovina address some of its most urgent priority needs, mainly in agriculture, transport, and water and sanitation, with total costs of more than US \$420 million.

These projects aim to:

- Support and jump-start production;
- Help repair infrastructure;
- Assist in institution building, and
- Finance small & medium-sized enterprises.

Particular emphasis is being placed on electric power generation, without which much of this work cannot take place.

Work is already underway on these projects.

Other projects being prepared by the World Bank for 1996 include:

- War Victims Rehabilitation;
- District Heating;
- Land mines Clearance, and
- Housing.

In the meantime, a number of civil projects are being driven by IFOR:

1. The 4th UK Brigade co-ordinated with Bosnian Serb Army engineers a road clearing project leading to a garbage management area in Sipovo.
2. The Nordic-Polish Brigade civil affairs and D-Rear civil areas teams met with the city council secretary for the city of Srpski Brod to plan the road ahead for the city's largest business, an oil refinery.
3. As part of its civic clean up activities, the 2nd Canadian Brigade in Kljuc helped de-chlorinate the Bosanski Petrovac swimming pool.

4. The IFOR Civil Military Co-operation Unit (CIMIC) co-ordinated the delivery of cash crop seeds through a number of aid programs.

The European Commission Office in Sarajevo was perhaps quickest off the mark of the main reconstruction agencies in Bosnia & Herzegovina and urgent work is underway to follow up on commitments made by the EU at the Brussels Donors Conference.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the European Commission and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management for the provision of seeds, crop protection inputs for the Federation in the amount of \$1.98 million.

Joint Bodies

The Office of the High Representative brings the Parties together in a number of joint bodies set up under the Peace Agreement to promote co-operation on political and other subjects. The highest such body, the Joint Interim Commission which includes the Prime Ministers of Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Federation and Republika Srpska, has met 5 times.

The Joint Civilian Commission brings together ministerial representatives of the Entities, and the international agencies active on the ground in Sarajevo while a similar structures exist at the regional level in Tuzla (JCC North East – last met on 12 April), Banja Luka (JCC North West to meet 10 May) and Bijeljina (end of May).

Refugee And Humanitarian Affairs

- Progress was reported following the meeting of the Sub-Groups on Pension Funds and on Social Security and Personal Documentation chaired by OHR on 2 May. The Sub-Groups are tasked with enabling BH citizens and administrative authorities to receive access to and use personal documentation records in the fields of pension funds, education, health care and employment records. This is a grave problem for a considerable part of the country's population who, through displacement and forced movements have been left without essential personal documents.
- Officials from the Republika Srpska, including the Mayor of Brcko, and federation delegates from the Tuzla and Zenica Cantons have agreed to address the problems of refugees and displaced persons through six working groups set up following the first meeting of the North East Regional JCC Working Group on Refugees and DPs, chaired by UNHCR in Tuzla on 3 May. These local working groups will convene weekly bringing together representatives of the affected communities in both Entities. The JCC Working Group is to meet again on 30 May in Zvornik in eastern Bosnia.

Human Rights

The BH authorities in Sarajevo have arrested two persons wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), setting a precedent for one of the Parties carrying out an arrest warrant. The two men – named as Hazim Delic and Esad Landzo – are wanted by the ICTY in connection with alleged abuses committed at the Celebici detention centre in Central Bosnia in 1992, including torture, rape and murder.

Media Development

Following the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board in Sarajevo on 24 April, The High Representative, Carl Bildt outlined the position of the international community with regard to the media in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

1. The Parties are required to *“urgently create the necessary conditions for the conduct of free and fair elections with respect to equitable access to the media for all political parties and candidates on all aspects of news and current affairs programming”*.
2. *“As to the proposal to facilitate the setting up of an independent TV network, the Parties are expected to allow all interested journalists, programme producers and broadcasters to take part in the work of this network and to ensure that the full transmission of its programming is permitted throughout Bosnia & Herzegovina, in both Entities”*.

A team of technical broadcast experts and consultants from some of the world’s leading broadcast agencies and equipment producers (among others CNN, USIA, Harris Corporation) visited Bosnia-Herzegovina at the request of OHR/OSCE and has produced a cost and feasibility study regarding the proposal for an open broadcasting network. This document is now being examined urgently with a view to expanding media access for independent TV producers from both Entities.

The Media Experts Commission (MEC) held its inaugural session on 3 May in Sarajevo with Ambassador Frowick in the chair. The MEC’s two main roles are to investigate and adjudicate complaints on the basis of the OHR/OSCE agreed Media Rules and Journalistic Standards, and to launch its own investigations on the basis of the MEC’s own media monitoring and evaluation.

Federation

As a follow up to the meeting on the Strengthening of the Federation, which took place in Bonn-Petersberg on 25 April with German Foreign Minister Kinkel in the chair, and in the preparation of which the OHR had been extensively involved, work continued on furthering the creation of structures for the Federation. The establishment of the remaining canton and municipal structures and the development of the Federation’s joint economic system, especially on customs, payments and banking matters remains the top priority. These and other activities and results will be reviewed at the next high-level gathering, the Federation Forum which is to take place on 14 May in Washington D.C. at the invitation of the U.S. Government.

Mostar

The new EU Administrator for Mostar, Ricardo Perez Casado, has called elections for the city Council and the six municipal Councils in Mostar for 31 May 1996. This decision was taken following consultations with the Bosniac and the Croat side and with their agreement. The move is based on the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of the EU of 22 April, as well as with the Petersberg Declaration on the Federation of 25 April. The voter registers will be published by 10 May.

ICRC

The German Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross opened last week a new public kitchen for 400 beneficiaries in Ilidza.

This is the 7th kitchen opened in the Sarajevo area by the German Red Cross and the ICRC since the beginning of the year. Public kitchens provide one hot meal per day for the most vulnerable population. A new public kitchen is expected to be open in the Dobrinja municipality during next week.

The joint Belgium Red Cross and ICRC program for reconstruction of the Centre for Women and Pregnancy in Sarajevo started last week. This is the first part of a reconstruction program of two health centres in Sarajevo.

Brussels

The OHR office in Brussels is headed by Dame Pauline Neville-Jones and deals with the international aspect of the Peace Agreement.

- Dame Neville-Jones addressed the North Atlantic Council of NATO in Brussels on 2 May.
- Martin Lutz, Ambassador in charge of regional issues conducted a small tour of the former Yugoslavia, during the course of which he met with FRY Deputy Foreign Minister Cicanovic in Belgrade 30 April and Dr Rugova, head of the Kosovo LDK party, in Pristina the following day. Ambassador Lutz also held talks with officials of the FYROM Government on 2 May.

Looking Ahead

- **6 May:** Opening OHR Office in Banja Luka
- **7-10 May:** 2nd session of Human Rights Chamber
- **10 May:** JCC Banja Luka
- **14 May:** Federation Forum in Washington
- **22 May:** General Affairs Council, Brussels
EU Foreign Ministers to discuss Bosnia.

Produced by the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo. Suggestions and contributions are welcome and should be addressed to the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo (387-71) 447 275 ext. 562. Callers from outside BH dial via Brussels switchboard: Tel. (32-2) 737 7000 & Fax (32-2) 737 7901