OHR Bulletin 14 – August 13, 1996

No. 14, issued August 13, 1996

Table of Contents

1. **Republica Srpska**
   RS Army finally agrees on inspection military site
2. **Brussels**
   Post Election framework discussed
3. **Brcko Arbitration**
   Federation & RS agree on binding arbitration in IEBL dispute
4. **Elections**
   Rules for political parties and candidates
5. **Economic Assistance**
   Goods delivered through several aid projects
6. **Mine Issues**
   MAC training continues
7. **Human Rights**
   Human Rights update
8. **Refugee & Humanitarian Affairs**
   Sarajevo Bus routes resumed

Please consult our Bulletin Category List for related information

Republica Srpska

Following a meeting in Pale between NATO Secretary – General, Javier Solana, NATO European Commander, General George Joulwan, and acting Bosnian Serb President, Biljana Plavsic, on 12 August, the Republika Srpska (RS) Army finally agreed to an IFOR inspection of a military site near Han Pijesak. Earlier that day, IFOR Ground Forces Commander, Lieutenant-

General Sir Michael Walker, had announced that he was withdrawing his liaison team from Pale and cancelling a meeting in Banja Luka scheduled for 13 August with General Ninkovic, Head of the RS Army Air Force, as an indication of the gravity of the incident, which Lt. Gen. Walker denounced as a "*serious and unambiguous violation of the Dayton [Peace] Agreement*".

In conjunction with the military action, IFOR imposed a flight ban on all RS Army flights until further notice, and all NGOs and international civilian organisations were recommended to withdraw their foreign staff from the RS as soon as possible.

Brussels

Representatives of the Contact Group member-states met in Brussels on 12 August where issues on the post election framework were discussed. At the meeting the High Representative, Carl Bildt, made the point that "everything up to now had been easy compared with what will happen after the elections", in reference to the planned process of setting up joint and democratic institutions after the elections.

Since the establishment of the Office of the High Representative to oversee and advise on all aspects of the civilian implementation of the Peace Agreement, work in this regard has been ongoing in the form of Joint Civilian Commissions and Working Groups.

The executive committee of the Contact Group will hold a Steering Board meeting in Brussels on 5 September.

Brcko Arbitration

In the General Framework Agreement for Peace in BH, the Federation and the Republika Srpska agreed to binding arbitration of the disputed portion of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) in the Brcko area. In accordance with

this, the Federation appointed Professor Sadikovic and the RS appointed Dr. Popovic as arbitrators. Roberts Owen was appointed by the President of the International Court of Justice as third arbitrator and will serve as the presiding arbitrator of the Brcko Arbitration Tribunal. The Tribunal's work will be based upon provisions of Annex 2, Ariticle V, of the General Framework Agreement.

On 7 August, the Arbitration Tribunal undertook an orientation tour in the Brcko area and held its first organisational and scheduling meeting. Dr. Popovic, the arbitrator named by the Republika Srpska, declined to attend, asserting that an additional technical step was necessary before the first meeting.

As is usual in international arbitrations, all of the arbitral proceedings have been, and will be, conducted in camera, and the discussions during such proceedings will not be publicly disclosed. As the Tribunal's proceedings continue, the Office of the High Representative will make such announcements on behalf of the Tribunal as may be appropriate.

Elections

The Provisional Election Committee issued rules for political parties and candidates concerning the campaign period. The guidelines are consistent with work done by the Human Rights Coordination Centre – led working group on elections, and cover issues including display of campaign posters and other materials, and party rallies/meetings.

The OSCE expressed concern about statements from the RS which claim their right to assert sovereignty as an independent state and called for all sides to adhere to the spirit and letter of the General Framework Agreement in order that the highest level governing bodies may achieve legitimacy and acceptance by the International Community.

Economic Assistance

Three truckloads of IBM computers have arrived in Sarajevo, bought by the European Commission as part of its Essential Aid Programme (EPA) to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The computers, part of an ECU 4.5 million grant to assist government institutions, will be distributed to ministries at State, Federation and Republika Srpska level. The European Commission is also paying for the computer training of three hundred people through a local company, Bosnian Business Systems. IBM will train the local network managers.

In MND (N) (Multi-National Division North) Danish troops delivered food, clothing and medical supplies to the hospital and social centre in Doboj, as well as the refugee camp and Red Cross Centre in Maglaj.

The Centre for Social Work opened on Telceva Street in East Mostar. Total investment in the European Union Administration project (EUAM) was 403,000 DM. The EUAM also financed 605,000 DM for repairs to the exterior of the Clinical Hospital Centre in West Mostar.

The Save the Children Fund (UK) has secured ODA (Overseas Development Agency) funding for six months in the Banja Luka region for the following areas: family support; assistance to social care and health institutions; and social welfare.

Mine Issues

A regional Mine Action Centre (MAC) office has now been established in Mostar and four dog handlers from Mostar are currently undergoing instruction at the Brus Training Centre. The international staffing of the Mine Action Centre (MAC) should be complete by the end of August.

The MAC database is now fully operational and capable of producing up to date records of all known minefields in BH.

To date, MAC Mine Awareness Training Officers have conducted training for over 550 people, including international personnel from eighteen organisations as well as local children.

Progress has been made on various projects funded by the World Bank, the European Commission and the U.S. Government. The World Bank let a contract to two local companies to check 400 reconstruction project sites to ensure that the presence of mines will not impede reconstruction work. Work has already begun and several project sites have been certified clear.

The next Mine Clearance Policy Group will meet on 14 August at the Office of the High Representative.

ICRC has started the second phase of its mine awareness campaign which includes posters, radio and TV spots, and training of local Red Cross Mine Awareness Officers who will work with the local communities informing the population of mine dangers.

Human Rights

IPTF met with the forensic pathologist who conducted an autopsy on the body of a Bosniak man who died in police custody in Banja Luka on 1 August. The pathologist cited the cause of death as massive internal injuries and bleeding sustained from beatings with a blunt instrument. This information clearly contradicts assertions by the local RS police that the man had died after jumping from the first floor window.

On 6 August, the Commission for Real Property Claims of Displaced Persons and Refugees officially opened its Sarajevo Office. Created under Annex 7 of the Peace Agreement, the commission intends to open additional offices in Mostar and Republika Srpska.

The Human Rights Coordination Centre (HRCC) led a session on 7 August with representatives of OSCE, IPTF, UNHCR, UN Civil Affairs and IFOR to discuss the increasing number of "spontaneous" demonstrations which have taken place, some of which have turned violent. Underlying causes and potential sources of the protests were reviewed and suggestions for enhanced response mechanisms and intervention with local groups at the grass-roots level were discussed. HRCC will be following up with the international organisations present to implement some of the proposals.

In its statement of 9 August, the UN Security Council (SC) noted its concern that the Parties are not implementing their commitments in respect of human rights and that these failures are impeding the return of refugees in BH. Among other steps, the statement calls on the parties to take the measures highlighted in the High Representative's June Human Rights Report to reverse the trend of ethnic separation, and urges the development of new independent media as well as the preservation of property rights. The SC also reaffirmed its demand for full cooperation with the Tribunal, including the transfer of all indicted persons to the Hague.

Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs

The Commission for Real Property Claims of Displaced Persons and Refugees met from 5 – 7 August. Decisions were made on finalising questionnaires and organising a testing period. Principal decisions were made concerning the timing of the campaign launch, which will be immediately after the elections, and the utilisation of existing infrastructure for launching the campaign both nationwide and abroad. The Commission will meet again in one month.

The Expert Group on Exhumations and Missing Persons met on 12 August. Issues discussed included the Joint Expert Commission on Exhumations (Banja Luka), the antemortem database, the

International Commission on the Missing, and fund raising possibilities.

Freedom of Movement

The UNHCR decided to resume its Sarajevo area bus routes on 9 August after a day long suspension of services. IPTF and IFOR recommended the suspension because of heightened ethnic tension following a shooting incident in Dobrinja on 7 August, in which a Serb police officer was seriously injured when shots were fired from the Federation side.

Looking Ahead

- **13 August:** JCC West, Banja Luka
- **14 August:** US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher meets in Geneva with Presidents of Croatia, BH and Serbia. Carl Bildt will participate in the discussions.
- **20 August:** JCC South meeting to be held in Siroki Brijeg.

See our Calendar for a full list of activities
The OHR Bulletin is produced by the Public Affairs Department of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo and aims to give an overview of what is happening on the ground in the civilian implementation of the Dayton Agreement. 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, Fax (387-71) 447 420. Callers from outside BH dial via Brussels switchboard: Tel. (32-2) 737 7500 & Fax (32-2) 737 7501