

OHR Bulletin 5 - June 4, 1996

No. 5, issued June 4, 1996

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Contact Group

The presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia and representatives of the International Contact Group met in Geneva on 2 June. The meeting, chaired by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, covered a number of issues relating to the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In an agreed statement, the participants emphasized that "the most important next step in the peace process would be to hold free and fair elections within the time period established by the Agreement". The participants also reiterated their full respect for the provisions and obligations of the Peace Agreement, notably the obligation to co-operate with the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague, as well as the prohibition against persons indicted for war crimes running for office or performing public functions.

In this connection, the High Representative, Carl Bildt, described Radovan Karadzic's attempt to hang on to public office as polluting the atmosphere in Bosnian Serb politics and as a provocation to the international community.

Foreign Ministers of the Contact Group met in Berlin on 4 June in the margins of the North Atlantic Council meeting. The High Representative, Carl Bildt, was present. In an agreed statement, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel stated that the Contact Group agreed that everything should be done to create the necessary conditions for the conduct of the elections. He stressed that the Contact Group was "determined to bring the implementation of the Dayton process to a successful conclusion".

Human Rights

Reports from UNHCR and a number of other sources continued to arrive throughout last week suggesting that the remaining Bosniac population in the Teslic municipality in North Bosnia was being subjected to acts of harassment and intimidation. As a result, a number of people have had to leave the area.

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Michael Steiner, addressed this issue in a letter to the Prime Minister Republika Srpska, Gojko Klickovic, expressing the OHR's deep concern about the expulsions and violent intimidation reported. Steiner demanded, among other things, that the RS authorities order an investigation into these reports, take strong corrective action to ensure the safety of those remaining minority residents and concrete steps to ensure the property of those who have fled is protected and kept available for those wishing to return.

A fact finding mission led by OHR and including representatives of OSCE, IPTF, ECMM and the UN Centre for Human Rights, visited the Teslic municipality 3 June to verify these reports in greater detail. A report will be produced during the course of this week.

Freedom of Movement

The UNHCR-established cross-entity bus service along the Banja Luka - Zenica route, blocked last week by the RS authorities, will resume on 5 June with a bus leaving Banja Luka. UNHCR is co-ordinating this activity with both IFOR and the UN International Police Force.

Economic Reconstruction

The European Commission, through its Humanitarian Office ECHO, has decided to allocate a further DM 191.76 million in humanitarian aid for the former Yugoslavia. This support will enable ongoing essential emergency programmes to continue during the next five months. These funds are earmarked for humanitarian aid and are not included in the reconstruction plans of the European Commission. With this grant ECHO has channelled DM 2.22 billion in humanitarian assistance in support of the victims of the conflict in former Yugoslavia.

In the words of Commissioner Emma Bonino *"This unprecedented effort will have to continue during the months to come, and in all likelihood well beyond 1996 to help people return to a normal life."*

ECHO will also provide a further DM 145.6 million for humanitarian assistance in BH. The assistance is directed exclusively on the basis of need. The assistance will be provided through the following ECHO partner organisations:

- DM 52.64 million in support of the UNHCR programme and implementing partners.
- DM 30.97 million for provision of food and hygiene items through a number of implementing NGOs.
- DM 28.1 million in support of health care services through ICRC, MSF, PSF and others.
- DM 20.68 million for emergency rehabilitation through the International Management Group.
- DM 7.47 million for local capacity building programmes.
- DM 5.73 million for psycho-social assistance.

More than 2,500 tones of crop protection chemicals and fertilisers have started to arrive in Bosnia & Herzegovina, as part of the European Commission PHARE Essential Aid Program, on Monday 27th May. The arrival of hundreds of trucks carrying essential agricultural supplies, which will be distributed to farmers in the areas of Tuzla, Zenica and Travnik, will continue throughout the week.

The total value of this donation is US \$ 1 million and is part of the aid package on crop protection agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the European Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry, concerning agricultural supplies to Bosnian farmers.

The total European Commission assistance to the agricultural sector, which is currently under procurement, amounts to date to \$10 million, which is being provided on a grant basis.

A number of World Bank/Dutch Government-supported reconstruction projects moved forward:

Housing: On 27 May, contracts were signed to carry out repairs to 11 apartment buildings located in downtown Sarajevo. Works will include re-roofing and repairs to electric, heating and water systems. Contracts for repairs to almost a 1000 additional flats will be signed in the first week of June. Also, on May 31, contracts were signed for repair to 212 private houses in the municipalities of Olovo, Vitez and Gornji Vakuf.

Enterprise Development: 63 loan requests for grants from the Line of Credit component of the Emergency

Reconstruction Project are being processed. The total value of these projects is approximately DM 14.445.000 and the average value per project is about DM 230.000. To date, eight projects have been approved.

Employment creation: Contracts were signed on 30 May to implement a Public works project in the Gorazde municipality. The total value of the project is around DM 78.000 and it is expected that 170 jobs will be created for a period of one month. The project will include a massive clean-up and removal of the war ruins in the area of Gorazde municipality.

Education and water: Bidding documents are under preparation for reconstruction of 82 schools, and reconstruction of water supplying system in 20 Municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The JCC Northwest Economic Reconstruction Working Group will meet for the first time in Banja Luka on 4 June. The meeting will establish its working methods and decide on priority issues on the regional level of common interest for the participants both from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska to be addressed by the group.

Elections

The provisional Election Commission (PEC) has decided that voter registration for the upcoming elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina will start on 3 June 1996 in those municipalities where the Local Election Commissions (LECs) are now in place and trained. The provisional voters list will be available for the voters, who presently live in these municipalities, to check whether their names are on the list and whether changes are needed.

The total number of municipalities where voter registration can begin on 3 June 1996 is 77, covering a number of regions, including Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Banja Luka, and Sokolac. In the remaining municipalities, the LECs should be appointed and trained not later than 8 June 1996, and voter registration will start shortly afterwards. Responsibility for appointing the commissions lies with the local authorities. Voter registration will end on 19 July 1996. The PEC remains very concerned that the process of establishing the LECs has not yet been completed by the relevant local authorities.

The PEC has decided to extend the deadline for the registration of Political Parties and Independent Candidates from 7 to 14 June. This decision was taken so as to facilitate participation by the maximum number of political parties and candidates in the elections by providing additional time for the collection of signatures of supporters.

Some 40 representatives of political parties from both Entities participated in the 31 May meeting of the Political Parties Consultative Council (PPCC) in Banja Luka. The PPCC is a forum for dialogue between the PEC and the political parties.

Joint Bodies

With a special guest appearance by Federation President Zubak, the Joint Civilian Commission Sarajevo (JCCS) meeting on 29 May, in the Sarajevo suburb Ilidza, covered a number of points related to reintegrating Sarajevo as a multi-ethnic city. The largest part of the discussion focused on the security situation with UN International Police outlining the problems and the additional steps needed by the Federation police. Practical issues covered included reconstruction, return of refugees, ID cards, housing, public records, and cross IEBL contacts.

Earlier, on 28 May, Ilidza integrated its municipal assembly by swearing in fourteen local Serbs who had remained in the town following the transition of authority. The OHR has been working for months to promote such integration required by the February 14 Rome Statement on Sarajevo. Ambassador Michael Steiner gave a short address to the assembly in which he praised Ilidza for acting to "counter the forces of division in Bosnia," and for showing "serious progress toward building a democratic, multi-ethnic future".

Media Development

Five commercial TV stations in BH signed an agreement on 1 June in Mostar creating a joint venture company that will produce programming for a new country-wide TV network. This will be set up with the support of the international community. The network, operating under the name INTV – International Network Television – is to be established before the election period, with the active involvement of the OHR, the OSCE and the International Federation of Journalists. The signatories represented broadcasters and program producers from Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Tuzla, Mostar and Zenica.

The OSCE-initiated inter-entity exchange of newspapers project was expanded last week with the “Unsko-sanske novine” from Bihac. This exchange is part of a larger project bringing together journalists from the two Entities. The first OSCE-organised meeting with journalists from both Entities took place on 10 April in Banja Luka. Several participants at this meeting agreed to exchange newspapers, articles, pictures and other printed material. The next Inter-Entity Journalists Meeting will take place on 5 June in Bihac.

Refugee & Humanitarian Affairs

The Expert Group on Exhumation and Missing Persons met in Geneva on 30 May. The meeting was chaired by OHR and attended by UN Special Rapporteur, the UN Expert on Missing Persons, and representatives of ICRC, ICTY, Physicians for Human Rights, and IFOR.

The UN Special Rapporteur, Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, reaffirmed her commitment to head a project to collect and identify the exposed remains of 50-70 war victims in the Srebrenica area; the project is expected to be launched by the end of June with financial support from Finland and the Netherlands.

Other priority projects identified were the placing of a permanent monitoring team of forensic experts in Sarajevo, and the compilation of an antemortem database.

The Regional JCC NW Working Group on Refugees and DPs met in Banja Luka on 30 May. Representatives of the RS Commission on Refugees and the Una-Sana Cantonal Minister for Refugees agreed to form local working groups to enable across-IEBL confidence-building measures in NW BH. The Working Group will meet monthly. The next meeting will be held in Bihac at the end of June.

Looking Ahead

- **5 June:** Joint Civilian Commission Northwest, Banja Luka.
- **6 June:** 5th session of Joint Interim Commission, Sarajevo
- **6 June:** Working Group on Refugees and DPs JCC NE, Zvornik
- **11 June:** Joint Civilian Commission, Sarajevo
- **12 June:** OSCE deadline for signing of agreement on regional stabilisation.
- **13 June:** Peace Implementation Review Conference, Florence

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