OHR Local News Issues, 09 July 1997

Madrid – On the second day of the NATO summit, there were two conclusions relevant to Bosnia. One of those is US President Clinton's statement in which he said that NATO has a clear mandate to arrest the accused war criminals, if the risk are not too high. The second statement is a document regarding the summit members conclusions about BiH. In the special statement of NATO officials, the long-term interests for stability in BiH were confirmed. It was repeated that those who do not respect the DPA will be forced into great isolation. Regarding the current situation in the Serb entity, NATO expressed concern about the political crisis, for it is where the anti-democratic climate is worsening, and authority misuses are increasing. NATO demanded from the RS Police Forces to cease the policy of harassment and fully respect the DPA. NATO also appealed to local leaders to fulfil their obligations in the extradition of accused war criminals to Hague.
5:00

Brussels – Instead the announcement of the precise date of the Donors Conference, the officials of EU decided to suspend further economic aid to Serbs. According to the Associated Press sources, this decision will be valid until the arrest of accused war criminals Karadzic and Mladic. Mr Van den Brook spokesman said that it is no longer smart to send tax-payers money down there.

Banja Luka – The Coalition of eight opposition Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary parties in the RS asked from Bosnian Presidency member Krajisnik that the support President Plavsic's Parliament dismissal decision, and the decision about the elections. At the press conference held in B.Luka today, representatives of the Coalition judged the terrorist and criminal activities, the hiding of truth and untruths

published in the media. The Coalition representatives accused the authorities of quiet and continuing robbery of the Western part of the RS.
2:00

Belgrade – Serbian President Milosevic invited B. Plavsic for the second time to visit Belgrade for consultation regarding the RS situation. Plavsic refused the first invitation because of her capture at the Surcin airport in Belgrade, and her escort to the FRY and RS border.

Sarajevo – BiH Co-President Silajdzic met HR Westendorp today. During the conversation Westendorp repeated that former HR Bildt has done the difficult work, but that the current OHR team will remain persistent in the implementation of the DPA

London – The World Bank conference was held in London today. At the conference it was decided to approve the reconstruction and rebuilding credit for BiH for the amount of 15 million dollars.

Dubrave – The change of duties was carried out today in Dubrave, base of SFOR Multinational Division North and Operative Group The Eagle. The SFOR commander Gen.W. Crouch was also present on this occasion.

Mostar – The multimedia presentation of the Old Town Mostar reconstruction, organised by OHR Mostar was held today. The donor of Old Town reconstruction is UNESCO, who has also prepared a detailed reconstruction plan.

Summary SRT News

Pale – The RS President in BiH Presidency Krajisnik held separate meetings with the French Ambassador to Sarajevo and the US Embassy Deputy Chargé D'Affaires Parmley. No press release was issued after the meetings.
The RS President Plavsic didn't accept Serbian President

Milosevic's invitation to Belgrade to solve current problems in the RS, saying that it is not possible to hold the meeting there after the incident she experienced at the airport on June 29. She invited Milosevic to Banja Luka instead. Milosevic replied that the crisis must be solved in interests of the RS and its people. It is not important who will win or lose – Banja Luka or Pale. Milosevic added that the people need to have a successful republic and that the invitation is still open. Therefore, he kindly asked Plavsic not to be late. Plavsic already replied, saying that Milosevic doesn't understand the current situation in the RS, 'which doesn't surprise me because of the media blockade. This is not about confrontation, but whether the RS will finally become a legal or a criminal state. I take care of the whole of the RS. Therefore, your concern is unnecessary.'
4:00

Banja Luka – Plavsic held a press conference informing the media about her position and new decisions. With regard to the meeting with the VRS HQ yesterday, Plavsic said that the VRS HQ letter is in accordance with the HQ position that they expressed at the meeting held on July 2. However, the only difference is in the fact that the HQ expressed their concerns with the security situation in the RS. Commenting on Milosevic's letter, Plavsic said that he doesn't understand the situation in the RS, because he attended a lot of meetings discussing the RS issues, but he actually visited the RS only once. Therefore, it is high time for him to visit Banja Luka. Commenting on the resolving of the crisis, Plavsic assured that all the moves were made in line with the Constitution, and informed that at yesterday's meeting with Frowick they discussed the local elections in the RS and Federation, as well as the holding of the pre-term elections in the RS.
3:00

Bijeljina – Ljubomir Savic Mauzer [Serb Party of Peace and Progress] violently broke into the offices of the independent

Radio BM, demanding a continuous live transmission of the rally in support of Plavsic.

The Defence Ministry Secretary Dragan Kapetina sent a letter-commentary on the VRS HQ letter to Plavsic and her reactions, saying that Plavsic showed disbelief towards the VRS by not allowing them to be involved in the politics. She asked that the people condemn the VRS HQ. And how is that possible when the Army is the people, i.e. the Army is the whole of the RS. 'We shouldn't be surprised if Plavsic decides to dissolve the VRS HQ with regard to the current situation.' In the letter to Plavsic the HQ warned Plavsic of possible terrorist attacks which proved to be true (on July 8, Muslim attacked a village near Sokolac). Serbs believed the RS President when she started the fight against crime in the country, but the present crisis has removed all the players from the fight against crime and brought the RS to the edge of a catastrophe. Now the international factor controls the crisis, leading the RS to the total reintegration into a unitary BiH. One should know that the RS President and the Supreme Commander of the VRS is in constant contact with the VRS HQ, and the VRS letter to Plavsic is yet another way of communication. The VRS is the real army, which proves it with its readiness to defend the Constitution, and not like the former JNA which lost its own country. The Constitution requests defence of the RS integrity which does not have to be defence of the RS President or any other institution which doesn't respect the Constitution. However, the RS President proved that she wanted to remove the VRS from the political crisis and take away its right to defend the country by giving the same right to the international forces (the SFOR commander at her office), and finally leaning on the false support of the international factor.
10:00

Banja Luka – The SDS Banja Luka held a session and adopted the following decisions: it is high time to protect the vital

interests and survival of the RS which cannot be denied by any of the RS officials; the SDS supports the Presidential post only if Plavsic carries out her duties in line with the Constitution and really fights against crime in the RS; they also expressed their concerns because the officials politicised their struggle against crime, which helps the external enemy to get what they want.
3:00

The General manager of the SRT, Toholj sent a letter to the RS President with regard to her wish to address the RS people through the media, saying that she is more than welcome to take part in a talk show anytime she wants. Toholj also said that she can be the SRT guest any time after July 10 at 20:30, except Saturdays and Sundays, as well as that she can decide where she wants to come (five SRT studios). Toholj kindly asked her to announce her attendance because of the protocol and possible divisions among the SRT staff which would suit the Serb enemy.
3:00

Comments on the crisis in the RS:

The Dutch media reports that NATO finally has a good excuse to impose a full patronage over the RS, which has been their wish since the DPA was signed. This would also be a good excuse to expand their duties and maybe even to extend the SFOR mandate. Their support to Plavsic is only a temporary judgement which will disappear once they have what they want i.e. a Muslim BiH.

The New HR Deputy, German diplomat Wagner expressed his support to Plavsic and the arrest of war criminals, but he refused to comment on whether SFOR will carry out that task, saying that this is rather sensitive issue.
4:00