

OHR Local News Issues, 15 April 1997

At today's session held at the National Museum in Sarajevo, the BiH Presidency has reached a long awaited agreement on establishment of the single Central Bank and a single currency to be used throughout the country. John Cornblum, US Special Envoy-in departure, attended the presidential session for the last time. For an interim period, until the design of a single currency is completed, a coupon called "convertible Deutsche mark" will be used for all financial transactions as well as Deutsche mark. The participants have jointly concluded that the achieved agreement has greatly contributed to fulfilment of conditions for a donor conference.

2'00"

The central ceremony on the RBiH Army's fifth anniversary was held at the Stadium Kosevo in Sarajevo. President Izetbegovic, Supreme Commander of the BiH Army in his address reminded soldiers that they had not only defended BiH but also "a grand idea of worldwide importance, an idea of tolerance and peaceful living of people of different religions and nations".

4'00"

An extraordinary session of COM held in Sarajevo today lasted three hours. However, ministers debated on the budget issue only. Co-Chair of COM Boro Bosic told the press that the Bill on budget was debated at length and that the relevant ministry was instructed to prepare an amended version of the draft for the next COM session. Another issues on the agenda such as draft-laws on citizenship and passports and immunity will be reviewed at the next session to be held in Lukavica.

Members of COM will meet tomorrow at the OHR to discuss the external debt. The meeting is convened to prepare COM representatives for talks with the London and Paris clubs.

Prior to the session, Co-chairs Bosic and Silajdzic and Deputy Co-chair Neven Tomic met with US Special Envoy- in departure, John Kornblum. They discussed the issue of Central Bank.

2'00"

After a long discussion, the FBiH Government has endorsed the draft on constitution of municipalities in FBiH at its today's session. Deputy HR Michael Steiner attended the session. Amendments to the FBiH Constitution related to the organization of the cities of Sarajevo and Mostar have also been endorsed. According to Amendment 25, the city of Sarajevo will be a local administrative unit within the Sarajevo canton.

The city administration will be structured in such a way to reflect its multi-ethnicity and its special status as the capital of the FBiH.

Amendment 26 regulates the status of cantonal capitals in the Federation and the status of Mostar.

In addition, the Government endorsed amendments on drafts on privatisation of banks and the 1997 federal budget.

At press conference in Mostar, Sir Martin Garrod, OHR Regional Head expressed his satisfaction with the situation in Mostar and the achieved compromise on the city administration. UN Spokesperson Kelly Moore stated that IPTF was not so much worried that deadline for constitution of cantonal police had not been met, since joint police forces had been formed in the central district of Mostar.

FBiH House of Representatives will hold a session tomorrow morning. Deputies are supposed to debate on a large number of issues, among which the most important are : draft on restitution and privatisation, purchase of state-owned flats, amendments to the FBiH Constitution, etc.

Summary SRT News

Ljubinje – RS President Plavsic and her delegation talked to authorities of this little Herzegovina borderline town about improvement and development of economy, and the security situation. 'The border regions must be very strong in the economic sense... I will leave it up to our Army HQ to find ways to provide security in these regions in accordance with the DPA, because when the Serb people know they are protected on that level, then they can easily devote themselves to economy. I could see the people are full of enthusiasm: they will fight for their economic prosperity like they have fought during the war.'

In the afternoon, Plavsic met the First Secretary of the US Embassy to Sarajevo, Pontenau, and gave him the Njegos of the First Order medal as a present to John Kornblum whom she thanked for good co-operation.

3:00

Pale – President of the BiH Presidency, Krajisnik met the Russian Prime Minister Gerasimov and discussed the establishment of the Central Bank and BiH Presidency's position agreed with regard to that issue at today's Presidency session. They also discussed the arrival of Brcko Supervisor Robert Farrand and the necessity for holding the local elections.

2:00

Pale – Krajisnik met the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogatha. The discussion was mainly about the return of refugees and displaced persons. Krajisnik said that they agreed to support the return and after that they will solve the problem of finding accommodation for them. Krajisnik emphasised that they cannot accept another wave of returnees if the accomodation for displaced persons isn't found first. Sadako Ogatha said that the return of refugees from abroad is of essential importance but those who can return to areas of their national majorities are to go first.

2:00

Sarajevo – Presidency session – Presidency members discussed the establishment of the Central Bank and joint currency. John Kornblum and US Treasury Department representative also attended the session. The RS member insisted on establishment of the Central Bank as well as on fulfilling all conditions for holding of the Donors Conference in order to prove that RS is not the one obstructing the DPA. The Presidency agreed on not having a new currency – for the time being, a “convertible mark” will be used instead of cash. The RS and the Federation convertible mark will not be the same.

3:00

Sarajevo – CoM session – the members of the Council continued the discussion on the Budget Execution Law and the Law on the CoM. The CoM first held a meeting with John Kornblum with regard to the Central Bank and future obligations of the CoM.

2:00

RS Peoples Assembly Speaker Kalinic convened the 7th session of the Parliament for April 23.

Croatia – Baranja and Srem – After three days of organisational chaos caused by the Croat authorities in order to forge the electoral process, these so-called democratic elections supervised by the international community ended. According to statements of international officials, the world would still recognise the results of the election, which can't be seen as elections except for the fact that they had voters.

2:00