

OHR Local News Issues, 17 April 1997

Bajram greetings – BiHT congratulated Bajram to all Bosniaks in the country and in refuge. The central celebration took place at Gazi Husref Beg Mosque in Sarajevo, and there was also the Bajram reception at the Holiday Inn, hosted by Reis Ceric. In Mostar, the believers, headed by Deputy Mayor Orucevic, were able to visit the two graveyards of their dearest in the west part of town, one of them for the first time since 1993, and the other for the first time after the Mostar carnival incident. Since all the mosques were destroyed in Banja Luka, the believers had to perform their Bajram prayers at the office of the local mufti.

12:00

Sarajevo – Upon initiative of the UN Special Envoy Kai Eide, a hot telephone line was established between the two entity ministries of interior yesterday and with IPTF, for the purpose of avoiding incidents during the visits of Muslims to graves of their dearest in the RS. Police escort was also agreed by the two ministers for “problematic areas”, but this agreement had not been reached for Foca and Gajevi.

1:00

At the SFOR Press Conference– Colum Murphy on [Carl Bildt's report](#) to the UN Secretary-General – With regard to the peace process, HR Bildt called the last year the year of success, although each new step ahead shows that there are many more that still need to be taken. Bildt's recommendation was that BiH Presidency Member Krajisnik should be contacted only with regard to his essential duties in that body, because Krajisnik is still tolerating and appreciating the current undercover actions of Radovan Karadzic. He said that accused war criminals are still holding posts in Bosanski Samac and Foca and urged the international organisations to stop all their

contacts with these two cities.

3:00

Doboј – On Wednesday morning, the OSCE office in that town received a threatening phone call from someone who spoke English and introduced himself as the member of a Serb terrorist organisation. The local police and IPTF were informed about this, and the OSCE took all necessary steps for enhancing its security.

1:00

Washington – Clinton's meeting with the Congressman – The Republicans were in favour of return of US troops before the end of this year, while the Defence Secretary Cohen insisted that they stay until the end of their mandate next year even if another war broke out.

2:00

Srebrenica Seven Trial in Zvornik – The accused are defended by lawyers from the RS, appointed to them by official duty. Although OHR demanded that the Federation lawyers appear as co-councillors, RS Ministry of Justice said that they can only be assistants to the RS lawyers. Ambassador Steiner said that this only means violation of basic human rights to a fair trial and the right to choose a lawyer. Because the trial was turning into a farce, the Federation lawyers abandoned the Zvornik courthouse today. It is up to the international community now to show to the RS that this does not mean that it is a state of its own. Ambassador Steiner was assured by RS authorities that this situation will soon be rectified.

4:00

Summary SRT News

Bileca – RS President Biljana Plavsic met with local officials to discuss economic problems in the region and how to secure shelter for refugees. The RS President stressed that the state

authorities should enhance the process of democratization and privatization. She also referred to the problem of refugees and declared that "if one-third of the state population are refugees, as in the RS, than such a problem can only be resolved by a state intervention".

2'00"

Pale – "Equality of three nations, consensus in decision-making, even representation of RS representatives in the joint institutions, balanced distribution of international aid are the basic principles for keeping peace in the former BiH", declared Momcilo Krajisnik, RS President in the BiH Presidency during his talks with Korean Ambassador Li Choan Mo. Krajisnik briefed his collocutor on the situation in BiH, with a special reference to the relations between the RS and the FBiH. President Krajisnik and Co-Chair in CoM, Boro Bosic, informed the Korean Ambassador on disproportionate distribution of international aid in the previous period and supported development of economic relations with the Republic of Korea.

2'50"

Pale – The RS Government chaired by PM Gojko Klickovic convened a session to review a set of draft-laws and reports on current internal political issues. A draft on public works has been endorsed. It is related to restoration of water-supply system, roads, educational and health facilities. A draft on housing policy had been accepted in principle but the Government will take a stand on the issue at its next session. The Government has approved of a report proposing construction of pre-fabricated housing settlement in Prelovo and Visegrad to accommodate refugees.

The issue of the state media was also on the agenda. SRNA's project of joining Internet system and the establishment of SRTV second channel received Government's support.

3'00"

Banja Luka – Within the preparations for the next session of the RS National Assembly, parliamentary commissions for

political system and judiciary, commerce and industry and civic policy held separate meetings to review issues from their domains.

4'00"

Repatriation – RS Minister for Refugees and DPs Ljubisa Vladusic met with the Norwegian Charge d’Affaires to discuss the issue of repatriation. It was jointly agreed that the repatriation of refugees from Norway would be organized on a voluntary basis. 12.000 refugees from the former BiH are currently residing in Norway.

1'00"

Srem-Baranja – Due to electoral manipulations and fabrications by the Croatian authorities, international observers have warned that the situation in those areas could deteriorate. The behavior of the Croatian authorities is interpreted as a clear signal to Serb population and another exodus of Serbs is considered as likely.

1'00"

Leader of the Serb Radical Party Vojislav Seselj assessed today that the elections in the Srem-Baranja region were irregular and the results engineered. According to him, the victory of the Independent Serb Party in 11 municipalities was staged up by the US Administration with an aim to have all Serbs gradually move out.

2'00"