OHR Local News Issues, 17 July 1997

Sarajevo – Momcilo Krajisnik, BiH Presidency member did not attend RS today's Presidency meeting. He was represented by deputy Foreign Minister Bozanic. The session discussed the previously achieved agreement regarding the BiH diplomatic missions. According to this agreement, BiH is supposed to have 28 Embassies and four consulates, and the allocation of the representatives within diplomatic network is based on the national key. It was agreed that all three sides should make propositions on this matter in written form. The Presidency also made a decision to send a letter to FRY President, offering a non-conditional diplomatic relationships between BiH and FRY.
4'00"

Sarajevo – The RS representatives did not attend today's Council of Ministers meeting. The reason for it, although not announced, is related to the current situation in the entity. The CoM held a consultative session instead, also attended by Ambassador Gerd Wagner, Senior Deputy HR. Discussing the forthcoming Donors Conference, the CoM agreed on the structure of BiH representatives in Brussels, as well as on the program of work at the Conference. Ambassador Wagner, surprised by not attendance of the RS CoM members said that this should not happen again. Haris Silajdzic, CoM Co-Chair considers the actual situation in RS as warring. War criminals are in power and Pale authorities do not want to implement the DPA obligations, especially Annex seven, concerning refugee return, Silajdzic added. He suggested that non-fulfilling of the DPA obligations should carry consequences, and one of these may be the erasing of the RS entity, since it was founded under the condition to fulfil all DPA obligations.
3'00"

Alija Izetbegovic, BiH Presidency Chairman, also received HR deputy Wagner and they discussed the current situation in BiH, and further implementation of the DPA.
0'30"

Sarajevo/Vitez – At the regular SFOR press conference, the international officials did not want to comment the relation between recent attacks on SFOR officials and the Tango arrests. Although SFOR received the announcement of the Black Hand secret organisation, where the International Forces are called the invaders of the RS, and where the organisation threatens by action The Last Tango With Cocktail Molotov SFOR do not have the information of such an organisation existence. SFOR announced details regarding the last night's bombing attack at SFOR base in Banja Luka. It was said that there were three explosions last night, and one this morning. No one was injured, and SFOR patrol arrested four civilians, and handed them to the RS police who investigates this case, with IPTF monitoring. British Foreign Affairs Minister Cook pointed at the new action of arrest, saying that there can be no peace before those responsible are behind bars.
3'00"

Sarajevo – OSCE spokeswoman Seider announced that the pre-elections campaign of political parties registered for September elections begins next Monday. OSCE will organise meetings with political parties representatives, and will actively follow the media reports. OSCE will also do everything to support the UNHCR in order to realise the process of refugee return in open cities. BiH President Izetbegovic spoke to Deputy HR for Brcko Farrand regarding the elections and the problem of Brcko. BiH Federation vice-president Ganic spoke to OSCE Ambassador Erlekman, discussing the Brcko elections and the implications of the reported fraud allegations in the registration process which, Ganic said, was getting out of OSCE's control.
2'00"

Vienna – Regarding the September elections and latest events in RS, the OSCE Chairman Petersen said that political climate is worsening, but that the elections must not be disturbed. Peterson said that the special procedures will be applied, and that OSCE does not see any danger for its officials. He did not specify what these procedures are.
1'00"

Sarajevo – At the meeting of Federal Police Reorganisation Committee, organised by IPTF and chaired by Commissar deputy Kriskovic the OHR representatives were also present as well as Federal MUP minister Zilic, his deputy Leotar and MUP Ministers and deputies of all ten cantons. The discussion regarded the key points in Federal police foundation, and timelines for Police forces promotion in the remaining eight cantons besides Sarajevo and Gorazde. Although there was no official statement from this meeting, Minister Zilic expressed a lack of optimism.
3'00"

Summary SRT TV News

Pale – The RS President in the BiH Presidency, Krajisnik and the CoM Co-chair Bosic met SFOR Commander Gen. Crouch and his deputy Simpson, and discussed the situation in the RS. They agreed that present relations between the RS and SFOR only complicate further the already difficult situation. With that regard SFOR and the RS institutions have to co-operate closely in order to avoid further tensions. Krajisnik expressed his concern with regard to the list of sealed indictments, saying that it will cause anxiety among the RS people and jeopardise the present peace and implementation of the DPA.
3:00
Pale – Krajisnik and Bosic also met the OSCE Ambassadors and discussed holding of the local elections and work of the Media Experts Commission, underlining that the Commission must strictly work within its mandate.

2:00

Pale – The RS Foreign Minister Buha talked with the OSCE Ambassador Kuznyetsov, emphasising that the IC must respect the RS institutions and that the Constitutional Court is the only body that can make legally valid decisions with regard to the current crisis. Buha concluded that SFOR had gone beyond its mandate with regard to the brutal murder of Drljaca and Kovacevic's arrest. He concluded that if the IC doesn't respect the RS position, chaos in the RS may occur, which will prevent further implementation of the DPA. The IC shouldn't interfere with the internal problems of the RS since this is not in its mandate. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the voters' registration in Brcko, saying that thousands of RS citizens were not able to register.
3:00

Pale – the 50th session of the RS Government – RS Government adopted the Pension Law and Draft Customs Law, which will be passed to the Parliament for final adoption.
3:00

Sarajevo – the 40th session of the BiH Presidency – Krajisnik did not attend the session due to his busy schedule, so he sent his advisor Radovic instead. The Presidency discussed distribution of ambassadorial posts and agreed to have 28 embassies and four representatives in international organisations. The RS received 1/3 of posts, whereas the Croat and Muslim side could not agree among themselves on the share of their posts.
3:00

Bosic's letter to HR Westendorp – The CoM session that should have been held today was cancelled because the RS representatives refused to come to Sarajevo. Bosic sent a letter of explanation to the HR, saying that the participation of RS representatives is seriously called into question because of the recent incidents caused by SFOR, after which

SFOR continued with its hunt of Serbs in accordance with their phantom sealed indictments list. It is an illusion to expect from the RS representatives to behave like nothing had happened. The RS representatives in the CoM first of all want to protect the lives of Serbs who work with this institution. Today in Lukavica and Trebevic, SFOR continued to search for those who are guilty of who knows what and cause unrest among the RS population, which is the reason for the RS representatives' non-attendance of the CoM. 'We warn you about this unacceptable fact and demand of you to use your authority to eliminate such occurrences. The international community's one-sided approach will not help the implementation of the DPA, even worse, it will lead to final dissolution of BiH,' Bosic said.
4:00

The CoM Co-chair Silajdzic commented on the postponing of today's CoM session, saying that it is related to the political crisis in the RS. Silajdzic acted as the spokesman of the IC, saying that his concern with regard to the crisis would immediately be allayed if alleged war criminals were brought to the Hague. This position represents a continuation of the Muslim policy that was actually the main cause of division of BiH in the first place.
2:00

In its detailed analysis of the media for the last 15 days which was sent to the SRT General Manager, the OHR in a way denied Plavsic's statement that she was denied access to the media. The analysis showed that SRT extensively covered Plavsic's activities through interviews with her, which is confirmed by the fact that SRT offered her to appear in its programme any time she wanted. However, the media analysts condemned SRT for creating paranoid anti-SFOR propaganda by quoting RS officials and by its comments. The report said that SRT intended to involve the VRS in the crisis by quoting General Colic and his staff. However, they forgot to note that

some statement is nothing compared to murder or arresting people in a country whose hospitality was brutally abused.
4:00

Banja Luka – four hand-grenades were set off early this morning near SFOR HQ outside Banja Luka. SFOR is again arresting everybody in their way, regardless of the fact whether they are guilty or not. This time they arrested four innocent men who just happened to be near to where the incident took place, but they were later handed over to MUP for further investigation. The four people gave their statements to the SRT, explaining the manner in which they had been arrested – 'SFOR brutally came down on us like cowboys in some movie, forced us to lie down on the ground, searched us with their guns pointed to the back of our heads and told us not to move.' One of the men said that SFOR hurt him while arresting him, but it was nothing serious, 'just a scratch or two'. SRT said that 'four innocent men were set free this evening, but their souls will be scarred for as long as they live'
5:00

SRT's comment on the attack on SFOR – In the last several days the RS people started attacking SFOR, OSCE, IPTF, and other international organisations, despite calls from the RS leadership to calm down. This is the result of the brutal murder and arrest in Prijedor. It is obvious that people do not make a distinction between various organisations, thinking that all of them are governed from one office and that the IC does not respect the RS interests. People massively cancel deals for renting apartments to internationals and refuse to sell goods to them, which clearly shows that those forces cannot count on support of the RS people anymore. Only the French SFOR does not have any problems so far, because they refused to be involved in the arrest of alleged war criminals.
3:00