

OHR Local News Issues, 21 May 1997

Sarajevo – Chairman of the BiH Presidency Alija Izetbegovic received a delegation of the Russian Federation headed by Principle Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. Jakov Gerassimov, representative of the Russian Federation in BiH also participated in the meeting. The talks focused on the implementation of the [DPA](#), in particular [Annex 7](#) related to return of refugees and FOM.

Relations between BiH and FRY were also on the agenda. Russian officials met with member of the BiH Presidency Kresimir Zubak and BiH Foreign Minister and his Deputy, Jadranko Prlic and Husein Zivalj respectively. Commenting on the meeting, Foreign Minister Prlic stated that the Russian Federation had contributed considerably to the peace process in BIH in terms of the preservation of its integrity and establishment of a state structure to protect the interests of the three BiH constituent peoples.

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Sarajevo – Croatian Ambassador to BiH, Darinko Bago notified BiH Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic that the government of the Republic of Croatia endorsed the decision on running presidential elections in Croatia on 15 July. In his diplomatic note, Minister Bago requested an agreement on holding elections in BiH, whereupon Croatian citizens in BiH could take their vote at the Croatian Embassy and some other places.

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Pale – OHR Spokesman Colum Murphy's appeal to Serb people in the RS to join the rest of democratic world and hand over war criminals to the Hague Tribunal was given a high profile in the media. The report from a press conference in Pale

extensively quoted Mr. Murphy's speech. There will be no peace without the truth and that is what you owe to the future generations, was the Spokesman's message to Serbs. According to the report, a British person, who claimed to be a journalist but had no credentials to prove it, repeatedly asked provocative questions and had caused an incident.

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ICTY -The UN General Assembly has appointed eleven judges to the [ICTY](#). The elected judges will serve a four-year term commencing on 17 November.

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Washington – BiHTV correspondent from Washington Envera Selimovic maintained that a US diplomat David Scheffer had been appointed US representative for war crimes. The report also covered the announced visit of the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the Balkans. A new Albright strategy will comprise more pressure on FRY, Croatia and the RS with concessions to those willing to cooperate. The US State Department evaluated the Bosnian Government in Sarajevo and President Izetbegovic as the most cooperative, claimed the report.

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British Foreign Minister Robin Cook has pressurized his American collocutors to reconsider the decision on withdrawal of US troops from BiH next year and warned that the UK and other western allies would not stay on after American withdrawal.

1'00"

Pale – Today's meeting between FBiH and RS PMs Bicakcic and Klickovic has ended without the signing of an agreement on trade and commerce between the two entities. PM Bicakcic stated that some reservations towards this agreement have arisen from misinterpretation of agreement's provisions as customs levies. According to Bicakcic, a liberal trading

without any control between the entities would be an ideal solution but cannot be implemented at this stage.

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Summary SRT News

RS President and Deputy President met in Banja Luka with special UNHCR envoy, Carrol Faubert. President Plavsic: "Obviously if the refugee return part of the [Dayton agreement](#) were to be implemented, many would be very happy" -Our interlocutor today understands that nothing can be achieved simply with orders from above- It was good to hear an opinion that says that results can only come once conditions are created for things to start happening at the level of the people themselves... This is the first time that I've heard such an opinion, a very realistic one, but one that obviously demands a lot of time, for all the wounds to heal- Nothing should be forgotten, but certain conditions should be created" President from RS in BH Presidency, Momcilo Krajisnik met today in Pale, in separate visits with Russian deputy Foreign minister Ivanov and German ambassador to Sarajevo Henneke Graff von Basseritz. President Krajisnik's office issued statement saying German ambassador relayed Bonn's official position that implementation of civilian aspects of the DPA must be expedited and intensified. Krajisnik stressed that the key to resolving all problems in BH is treating the two Entities and three peoples equally.

President from RS in BH Presidency, Momcilo Krajisnik met today with Russian deputy Foreign minister Ivanov. After meeting Krajisnik said: "The difficulties we face today in implementing the peace agreement are understandable, and we hope that the forthcoming conference in Portugal will get things moving beyond square one. I'd also like to express my gratitude to Russia for its major role in helping us implement the Dayton accords". Mr. Ivanov stressed Russia's position that the two entities must be treated equally, especially when

it comes to foreign aid.

RS PM Gojko Klickovic met today in Pale with US Embassy Acting head of mission Mike Parmley. Parmley informed PM Klickovic that US Secretary of State Madeline Albright will visit the RS and the Federation as well as some other Balkan states towards the end of the month.

RS PM Klickovic also met with Federation PM Edhem Bicakcic and discussed advancing trade relations. Agreements on a number of issues, such as railway traffic and trade between the two entities are being concluded now. Klickovic: "We have agreed that future meetings are to be held at the seats of our respective governments in Sarajevo and Pale instead of at the US embassy... I'd like to thank Mr. Parmley and his staff for the help they've provided and the concrete results which are emerging". The two PMs confirmed that a number of issues have been agreed on and should be implemented shortly. Certain articles of the trade agreement, such as the control of goods across the two entities still need to be agreed with international experts. This is expected to take place before the end of the week when representatives of the two governments are expected to sign a protocol on trade co-operation between the RS and the Federation.

Voter registration in Yugoslavia is picking up speed. In less than 16 days, over 22.000 voters for the September elections in the RS and the Muslim-Croat Federation have been registered, which is about 10% of the total number of those who registered last year. It is expected that the registration commission in Yugoslavia will request an extension of the OSCE deadline in order to give all voters a chance go register. At a press conference in Belgrade, RS member of the PEC Radivoje Duvnjak, informed journalists of the registration process in the RS. He informed them that so far 350.000 voters have been registered in the RS, which accounts for approximately 2/3 of the electoral body, adding that the numbers continue to increase on a daily basis.

On the international scene, the issue of the High Representative's successor continues to draw attention. Diplomatic sources in Geneva say that the decision will be made at the forthcoming Steering Board meeting in Lisbon (sic). Five candidates are in the running for the job: former Spanish foreign affairs minister Carlos Westendorp, former UK Defence Minister Michael Portillo, former Finnish Parliament President Ilke Suominen, Italian senator and head of Foreign Affairs Committee Giacomo Migonne, and former Portuguese Foreign Minister Jose Periera.