

OHR Local News Issues, 24 April 1997

Zvornik– The shameful court farce has ended. The seven people from Srebrenica have been sentenced to 67 years of imprisonment .The three indicted were sentenced for the alleged murder of four Serb civilians to 20 years of imprisonment while the other four were charged and sentenced for the illegal possession of arms. Deputy HR Michael Steiner sent a letter of protest to RS PM Gojko Klinkovic. Mr. Steiner told the press that the entire trial was “a farce” and that the judge needed only 34 minutes to prove the guilt of the accused. He further stressed that the court proceedings in this case seriously violated the DPA. “The RS government keeps complaining about not receiving aid from the international community. But such behaviour only confirms that it would be wrong to invest money unless they begin to observe the DPA and the Constitution”, concluded the Deputy HR.

2'00

Croatian view – In response to President of the BiH Presidency Alija Izetbegovic and Co-chair Haris Silajdzic's letter of 21 April addressed to the CG country-members, HR Carl Bildt, the EU and the OIC, Kresimir Zubak, a member of the Presidency, Neven Tomic, Deputy Co-Chairman in the CoM and Jadranko Prlic, BiH Foreign Minister sent a letter to the same addressees. The letter contains the views of " the Croatian side in the BiH joint institutions" regarding " assessments stated in the letter of 21 April". "We would like to underline that none of Croatian officials in the BiH institutions took part in the preparation of the said letter", read the letter which was read out in full. It further maintained that the expressed assessments were one-sided and represented the position of the Bosniak side only.

4'00

"Strasbourg -President Izetbegovic's letter on the implementation of the DPA was presented at a meeting of the Commission for Political Affairs of the European Council in Strasbourg. FBiH PM Edhem Bicakcic took part in this meeting.

Sarajevo – At a press conference, Halid Genjac, President of the SDA Main Board stated that "Izetbegovic's letter on the implementation of the DPA was meant to enhance the implementation of the agreement and not a signal that it has collapsed".

2'00

Brcko – Supervisor Robert Farrand announced the procedure for return of refugees to Brcko. Under Annex 7 of the DPA all refugees and DPs are entitled to return home. They are supposed to submit evidence about ownership or other relevant documentation and within 60 days previous tenants will have to vacate their premises. Supervisor Farrand is empowered to decide on priorities of areas of return and categories of returnees.

3'00

CoM– The session of the CoM scheduled to be held in Lukavica today has been postponed upon a request by Co-Chair Boro Bosic due to the upcoming Orthodox Easter. However, this did not prevent SDS officials from meeting with HDZ representatives in Pale today, commented the media.

1'00

Usora municipality– FBiH PM Edhem Bicakcic issued a statement related to the split municipalities claiming that" Minister Mato Tadic, contrary to the conclusion of the FBiH Government, included the settlements Loncarevo and Blazevo in the area of municipality Usora". Thus, the provision related to the constitution of the Usora municipality has to be altered, he concluded.

2'00

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic met HR Bildt, and after that the US Embassy Charge d’Affaires, Beecroft. Plavsic discussed with Bildt the functioning of the common institutions, work of the Central Bank, as well as the restoration of air traffic in the RS and the Federation and opening of the Mahovljani airport. Bildt said that the talks were successful, adding that the general economic situation in BiH was also discussed, along with the issue of establishment of telephone lines between the Entities with regard to which Bildt said that the RS telecommunication system will be reconstructed as a part of an EU project. Economic aspects of the DPA were also discussed with Beecroft. ‘This was a very successful meeting. Mr. Beecroft showed a lot of optimism with regard to implementation of the DPA. I do hope we will meet more often in the future in order to further analyse the DPA.’ Plavsic said.

4:00

With reference to the 7th session of the RS Parliament held in Jahorina yesterday, Parliament Speaker Kalinic said that the session was very important because of the consensus on the economic policy for this year. The RS Parliament is ready to strongly support the process of privatisation and the open market for the flow of goods and money, not only with the FRY, but with the BiH Federation and other neighbouring countries. Therefore the RS is expecting both political and financial assistance from all the countries of Europe and the USA.

3:00

Bijeljina – Preparations for building the railroad from Bijeljina to Samac, which is of vital importance for the RS economy, shall be completed soon and the works, financed by the RS Government, will start in early May as planned.

3:00

Pale – Acting SDS President Buha talked with HDZ representatives about the upcoming elections, work of the joint institutions, and return of refugees. The two parties

will hold their next meeting in 15 days and discuss adjustment of the IEBL in the area of Banja Luka. Buha said that the two parties noted the recent statement by Izetbegovic, concerning his judgements of the DPA, given on behalf of the BiH Presidency without consultations made with the other two Presidency Members. Buha said that they agreed not to accept Izetbegovic's statement since none of the peoples in BiH should be allowed to be domineering in these territories. There are three constituent peoples in BiH, which is a decentralised country consisting of two state units, and it is useful to say this over and over again, Buha said.

3:00

Brcko – Brcko Supervisor Farrand said at a press conference today that the DPA clearly says that all returnees must be loyal to the RS and respect its laws. Responding to the statement of one of the Muslim leaders, Munib Jusupovic, who said that he would not accept the RS identification documents if he returns to Brcko, Farrand called on the DPA and stressed that it must be implemented. The refugee return procedure, announced by Farrand today, should protect the RS interests on one hand, and gradually return the BiH Federation citizens to this town on the other.

2:00

Banja Luka – The High Court in Banja Luka continued the trial against Alija Izetbegovic.

2:00

Zvornik – The High Court sentenced today the Srebrenica Seven to twenty years of prison (three of them) and one year of prison (four of them), under the charge of murder of four Serb civilians in Milici village.

3:00