OHR Local News Issues, 29 May 1997

Sarajevo – Late last night the Presidency adopted the Draft Laws on the Central Bank, the Joint Currency, Budget and Customs Policy thanks to the US Special Envoy for implementation of the DPA Gelbard, as well as HR Bildt and his Deputy Steiner. 'Much remains to be done very clearly, but the key tasks have been completed,' Gelbard said after the meeting. This confirms once again that the US is firmly determined to implement the DPA, BiH TV concluded.
2:00

Sarajevo – The CoM session – The CoM finally adopted the Draft Law on the Customs Tariffs after only an hour of discussion. According to Co-chair Silajdzic, this agreement opens the door for holding of the donors' conference. The whole package of the QSP Laws has now been adopted. The CoM also discussed the opening of BiH borders towards Croatia. Ambassador Steiner also used this to give his comment on adoption of the QSP Laws, saying that 'first of all I think that this was very efficient meeting of the CoM chaired by Haris Silajdzic. Secondly, the Co-chairs and the Vice-chair and, on the decision of the CoM, also the Foreign Minister have been in light of this success also invited to go to Sintra and, I think, what has been shown today is that this institution, if the political will is there, can work and do its work, and that is good. It is really a success for the institution.' The CoM also met the delegation of the German Parliament and discussed the return of refugees, considering the minimum conditions for their return.
5:00

Sintra/The Hague – The session of the NATO country members and the meeting between Clinton and Blair – The US Secretary of state Albright said that the NATO task in BiH is far from

over. BiH is making headline news again in the US, as was the case with regard to the meeting between US President Clinton and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. The two of them supported further implementation of the DPA and announced additional support in that sense. Clinton said that the DPA is not implemented as fast as it was planned. 'Much more could be done but we are late, we are not on schedule. We shouldn't talk about leaving, but about what we shall do tomorrow, the next week, the next month, and if we work hard in the next 13 months I believe we shall be able to complete our mission. I think we will have to make some very important decisions. We cannot just hang around and disappear in a year and yet expect that the DPA will be implemented. Therefore, I would like to stop talking about the date of our departure, but about some other date which is tomorrow.'
5:00

Sanski Most – BiH expert team for exhumations together with the ICTY started the exhumation of three out of 15 mass graves located in this region. They exhumed 26 bodies, and believe that there are 40 all together.
3:00

Mostar – SDA and HDZ delegations talked about the establishment of six Mostar municipalities as a part of a task which must be done if they want to be prepared for the upcoming local elections. The meeting was held at the OHR South and hosted by Sir martin Garrod, who also prepared the draft materials on establishment of municipalities which should have been adopted. The documents were not signed because of HDZ obstructions. The HDZ member of the City Administration explained the reasons, saying that they noticed some new disputable items which could damage and block the new City Administration in future.
3:00

Sarajevo – regular SDA press conference – SDA spokesman, Grbo commented on the US decision to support implementation of the

DPA, saying that the party leadership is convinced again that the US Administration fully supports BiH. He also commented the letter that HDZ President Rajic sent to Izetbegovic in which Rajic requested holding of a meeting on the highest party level, saying that the two main parties can solve problems only in Parliament, which was established for that purpose. He thanked HR Bildt and Ambassador Steiner for their support of implementation of the DPA, saying that they only took part in the overall inert response of Europe with regard to the implementation. If Europe had a different position towards BiH, the two of them would have had a successful mandate.
3:00

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS Deputy PM Dragoljub Mirjanic held talks with the Ambassadors of Portugal and Belgium on the implementation of the DPA, FOM, return of refugees and DPs and the organization of local elections.
1'50"
Pale – RS PM Gojko Klickovic held talks with Head of the European Commission, Ambassador Donato Chiarini on the process of reconstruction in BiH, return of refugees and the forthcoming Donors conference. PM Klickovic told the press that the meeting concluded in a joint agreement that the process of return of refugees and DPs had to be carried out gradually along with the provision of conditions for return. The report underlined that the EC intended to fund repair of roads and bridges in the RS and to enter into joint venture projects in the metal industry. Overall, the EC planned to invest around 5 million Ecus within the reconstruction projects in the RS and FBiH, maintained the report.

The Donors Conference on BiH was discussed as well. The final decision on the Donors Conference would be made in Lisbon next

week.

The misunderstanding related to the trade agreement between the two entities had be resolved. Klickovic explained to his collocutor that the intention behind it was to put control on commodities transactions between the two entities, and not to impose levies.
3’50”

Appointed judges of the RS Supreme and District Courts have taken a solemn oath before Speaker of the RS National Assembly Dragan Kalinic. In his address, Kalinic stressed that interference of political lobbies and organizations with the work of courts must be prevented. Kalinic criticized the decision of the Election Appeals Sub-commission related to irregularities in eight RS municipalities, which he qualified as discriminatory towards the SDS
3’00”

Sarajevo – After two abortive attempts to hold the CoM session (failing due to FBiH representatives disregard for the agreed agenda), a session of the BiH CoM was held today. The draft on customs tariffs had finally been endorsed, confirmed Boro Bosic, Co-Chair of the CoM. Along with an earlier reached agreement on the Central Bank, conditions set by the international community for holding the Donors Conference had been met, he added. The second item on the agenda was agreement with the Republic of Croatia on opening other border crossings
2’50”

Sarajevo airport – At a press conference today, Special US Envoy Robert Gelbard announced that late last night the three-member presidency had reached an agreement on three key laws – the Central Bank, budget and customs policy. Gelbard expressed his optimism in regard to holding of the Donors Conference but reminded that much work needed to be accomplished.
4’00”

HR Principle Deputy Michael Steiner reportedly stated that mass departure of Serbs from Sarajevo represented a joint failure of the international community and domestic political factors. Another disappointment for Steiner was the little success in return of refugees, maintained the report.
1’00”