

OHR Local News Issues, 30 April 1997

Sarajevo – Both Houses of the BiH Parliament held a session today and appointed BiH representatives to the EC Parliament, the OSCE and the Inter-parliamentary Union.

Deputies of the House of Representatives agreed to take off the agenda three draft-bills from the package "Quick Start"-external debt, customs policy and foreign trade and commerce. It was decided to review the three draft-laws at the next session scheduled for 8 May. Zlatko Lagumdžija (SDP) and Sejfudin Tokić objected to the selection of candidates for the EC Parliament. The SDP leader advocated that "it is not logical to have only candidates from the three national ruling parties when the EC Parliament is the most organized social-democratic body". However, the opposition was outvoted.

The session of the House of Peoples lasted only 20 minutes. The agenda was reduced to three issues. The deputies appointed members of 8 working commissions and endorsed appointment of BiH representatives to the international associations. Mirsad Ceman's proposal that a joint session of both Houses should be convened on similar solemn occasions was accepted.

6'00

Brcko – President of the Brcko municipality Munib Jusufović announced his resignation due to disagreement with Supervisor for Brcko Bill Farrand. According to Jusufović, Farrand literally "blackmailed" him by conditioning the return of expelled Bosniaks to Brcko with their recognition of the RS authorities. In addition, Farrand ignored the Serb provocation of building an orthodox church in the location of Meraje, where Bosniaks constituted 100 per cent of the pre-war population. "Such interpretation of the arbitral decision which is humiliating for Bosniaks... to force them to live under

the authorities responsible for thousands of dead citizens of Brcko compels me to submit my resignation ..", wrote Jusufovic.

5'00

FBiH Vice President Ejup Ganic wrote a letter to HR Carl Bildt and Supervisor Farrand requesting clarification on the issue of procedure for the return of refugees to Brcko. "If it is true that the proposed procedure stipulates that all returnees to Brcko are supposed to recognize the RS rule and obtain RS documents, then the proposal represents a flagrant violation of the arbitral decision and as such is totally unacceptable", declared Ganic.

2'00

Sarajevo – The Kuwaiti Fund for Arabic Economic Development and the BiH Bank for Reconstruction and Development have signed a contract on a loan worth US\$ 20 million. In addition "Elektroprivreda" company signed a contract with the WB for three loans worth US\$ 7 million.

4'00

Donors Conference – Donors conference on BiH will not be held at the end on May as initially announced. The second postponement was caused by non-adoption of a package of laws for "Quick Start" and a set of laws on the Central Bank.

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic met Ambassador Frowick to discuss the upcoming local elections and the Brcko problem prior to the final PEC decision for the elections to be made on this Friday. SRT points out that it does not understand the reason why the international community is equalising Brcko and Mostar, although it is more than certain that Brcko is in the RS, whereas Mostar is a deeply divided city. After the meeting, Biljana Plavsic said that the emphasis was put on

Brcko since the RS is expecting many returnees to that unstable region. A 'strong hand' will be used for taking care of this problem, and there is room for such an approach if one takes into consideration the 'background' such as the DPA and the Brcko arbitration decision. Frowick said that the OSCE will take into account the strategic interests of all three parties and will apply not just the DPA and the Arbitration process guidelines, but also the rules and regulations of the PEC.

4:00

Sarajevo – BH HoR and HoP 2nd sessions – At separate sessions held at the National Museum, MP's of both Houses established several working commissions and appointed their representatives. The two Houses founded Comissions for Constitutional and Legal Issues, International and Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Customs, Financial and Budget Issues, etc. All commissions consist of representatives of all three peoples in BiH. A five-member commission was also appointed for the Parliament of the Council of Europe and for the OSCE. HoR elected six out of nine judges for the BiH Constitutional Court, and they signed the solemn declaration. The QSP Customs Policy Law and the issue of international treatties shall be discussed on May 8.

4:00

Pale – The RS Government representatives met the Council of Europe and OSCE delegations and discussed the creation of conditions for a new system of local self-government.

2:00

Banja Luka – Representatives of about 40 political parties from the RS and Federation talked with OSCE representatives about the upcoming elections. There were several disputable matters, but the main problem for which the parties showed the greatest interest was the question of providing financial resources for the elections preparations and campaigns. It seems that most of the parties decided to run in the elections only because of the financial support and without paying too

much attention to the cruel reality. The OSCE announced that another 40 parties, apart from 48 already registered, applied for the local elections.

2:00

Pale – The British Government organised a seminar on privatisation and reform of enterprises which was attended by the RS Government representatives, representatives of respective Ministries, and the Director of the RS Agency for Privatisation. The British Ambassador to Sarajevo and representatives of the main British Institute for Privatisation, Adam Smith, also attended the seminar. British experts who deal with problems of the countries in transition pointed out the usual difficulties that each new country undergoing this process is facing.

3:00

Banja Luka – The trial against Alija Izetbegovic continued today by the public hearing of three more witnesses at the High Court.

2:00