OHR Local News Issues, 30 July 1997

Sarajevo – In his visit to Sarajevo NATO Secretary General Solana met BiH President Izetbegovic, Presidency member Zubak, and Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Bozanic who replaced Krajisnik.. HR Westendorp was also present at this meeting, and the issues were the functioning of permanent military committee, and opening of BiH airports. Afterwards, Solana also met Co-chairmen of CoM Silajdzic, and Bosic. Vice-president Tomic said that there was no agreement on opening the airports, because the RS side did not agree with the clause on returning the airports to previous owners. Tomic said that this agreement should be achieved by Friday.
5'00"

Sarajevo – The change of duties of SFOR commander was carried out today in the presence of NATO Secretary General Solana, European NATO commander Gen. Clark, IC representatives in BiH, and BiH high officials. The new SFOR commander is the US General Shinseki.
1'00"

Sarajevo – A session of the Federal House of People was held today. The report on the work of the government was adopted. Federal Prime-Minister Bicakcic pointed out three important matters for BiH Federation: the results of the Donors Conference, establishment of joint police forces, and the intensified process of refugee return.
3'30"

Hague – Recently arrested indicted war criminal Kovacevic made a plea of not guilty at his first stand before the Tribunal. Kovacevic was arrested for genocide, and charged of forming the concentration camps in Omarska, Kereterm and Trnopolje,

where he allegedly took part in murders of Bosniaks and Croats.
1’00”

The New York Times – reported on the forthcoming visit to former Yugoslavia of US Special Envoy Holbrooke. The reason for his visit, as stated by US administrative representative, is to increase the pressure on Serbian and Croatian leaders with the DPA implementation. US administration spokesman explained that the DPA implementation is being delayed and that the current situation can be described as the failure of the DPA.
3’00’

Washington – US Senator Levin proposed a disturbance of BiH Serbs radio and TV broadcasting, suggesting the broadcast of messages in order to prevent support for former Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic. He said that this could be done with US military aeroplanes with strong transmitters that could emit the messages from the IC which would explain to the Serb people the reasons for their isolation.
2’00”

Jajce – UNHCR spokesman Janowski announced that a group of about 200 DPs returned to the territory of Jajce municipality. Janowski said that there were no problems during the return, and that the local police were very co-operative in helping the refugees return to their homes.
1’00”

Sarajevo – Commenting on the recent visit to BiH of British Foreign Affairs Minister Cook, vice-president of the Social-Democratic party for BiH Avdic said that this visit represents the high level of national-politics towards the BiH, with the clear message of equating the criminal and political Mafia in both entities. Avdic also said that Krajisnik’s statement of Karadzic’s innocence represents the failure of the DPA agreement. Considering the situation, SDP asks for a few

months a delay of the September elections, with pre-elections for all leading structures in BiH.
2’00”

Summary SRT TV News

Mrkonjic Grad – The RS Prime Minister, Klickovic met the local leadership, and discussed the political, economic, and social situation in the town. Klickovic said that 25,000 people returned and have a strong will to remain there. He assured residents of Mrkonjic Grad that they don’t have any reasons to fear that this town will be sold to the Federation which can be heard at rallies these days. He underlined that those stories are nothing but manipulations and nonsense which could never have been heard in the Government.
3:00
Pale – In relation to the letter he sent to the head of OSCE, Frowick, Buha met Frowick in order to improve the present situation. They agreed to have the voters’ lists ready by Aug. 20, and to review the complaints of 3,500 voters from Brcko.
3:00

Sarajevo – The head of NATO, Solana paid a visit to Sarajevo and met the Presidency and the CoM. In talks with the Presidency, Solana was informed about the issues of establishment of the Standing Committee for Military Issues and the Memorandum of Understanding with regard to the Mostar and Banja Luka airports. Minister Bozanic, who replaced Krajisnik again, said that the Presidency could not agree on either of the issues, but the solution regarding the airports can be reached if Muslims accept Serb and Croat’s proposal.

HR Westendorp and the new NATO Commander for BiH, Shinseki also attended the meeting. HR Westendorp expressed desire to be more informed about the issue on the airports. The CoM discussed the issue on the airports and, according to Co-chair Bosic, they will reach a solution soon.

4:00

Flash news:
Dr. Milan Kovacevic, who was kidnapped by SFOR in Prijedor, pleaded not guilty to committing alleged genocide, adding that thanks to god and justice he will be found not guilty by the Court. Former NATO Commander for BiH, Gen. Crouch officially hand over his duties to his successor, Gen. Shinseki in Sarajevo today. The new NATO commander already stated that the SFOR mandate will not be changed, and it will continue with the arrest of war criminals only if they come across them.

The New York Times reported that former US Special Envoy to BiH Richard Holbrooke is coming back to BiH. He shall assist the current US Envoy, Gelbard in speeding up implementation of the DPA, because President Clinton is not satisfied with the tempo of the implementation and return of refugees that has been carried our so far.
4:00

Banja Luka – RS Presidential Cabinet released a statement in which Plavsic said that the RS will become isolated, will face a collapse, and be totally unprepared for international trade if the current crisis continues. She warned that such behaviour and disregard for the presidential office damages the internal sovereignty of the RS which makes the world suspicious about the development of a legal state. In line with Article 82 of the RS Constitution, Plavsic convened a Government session, to be held on Aug. 8.
2:00

Brcko – Plavsic, representatives of the VRS HQ, and OHR attended a ceremony on the establishment of the Former Soldiers Association, and said that former soldiers must be brave and wise so to communicate to the people of Brcko to be patient, brave, and wise in order to preserve Brcko in the RS. After the ceremony, Plavsic held a meeting with Brcko Supervisor Farrand behind closed doors. ‘Press can only guess

what they discussed because President Plavsic did not have time to address journalists.’
3:00

Svjetlica near Doboj – A group of about 20 armed Muslims, headed by a commander of 109 Muslim Army brigade, broke into the village and physically attacked Serb residents. There was neither SFOR nor IPTF in the vicinity to help the Serbs who asked for medical assistance.

Minister of Information Svjetlana Siljegovic sent a letter to HR Westendorp accusing Muslim and Croat media of stigmatising the Serbs. She said that the RS state media do their job professionally and with credibility They made a significant contribution in protecting the RS institutions. SRT, Glas Srpski and other state media truly explained to their audience what the real intentions of the IC are in relations with the RS. Both Government and the RS Media Council support their position about SFOR, opposition leaders, rallies in Banja Luka and Bijeljina, and burning issues of Glas Srpski. Such SFOR behaviour goes beyond its mandate and directly interferes with the RS interior matters.
3:00