

OHR Local News Issues, 5 March 1997

Sarajevo – BiH President Izetbegovic received members of the Contact Group headed by HR deputy Steiner. Co-chair Silajdzic and Vice-president of the Federation Ganic also attended the meeting. Izetbegovic pointed out the number of problems in the Federation. They also discussed the Agreement between FRY and the RS, the Brcko issue, problems of refugee return, especially the Gajevi incident, the Mostar issue, and Croats' rejection of the IPTF decision.

2:00

OHR Spokesman Murphy, commenting on the Croat side failing to arrest three policemen who were found guilty for the Mostar incident by IPTF, said that the international community could lose its credibility if its requests are not respected. He said that the Croat refusal is causing them serious headaches.

Sarajevo – CoM session – Ministers discussed the forthcoming Brcko conference in Vienna, although they were supposed to solve problems with regard to the QSP. CoM will not attend the Vienna conference because the OHR did not even send them a formal invitation. The OHR invited only Foreign Minister Prlic who will not represent the CoM, Co-chair Silajdzic said. Silajdzic also said that he talked with HR deputy Steiner about this problem, and Steiner promised him that he would inform HR Bildt about it. However, Silajdzic said, Bildt did not find it necessary to inform or consult the CoM regarding the issue. Therefore, BiH, that is, the CoM will not be represented in Vienna, Silajdzic stressed. The CoM will discuss the QSP and adopt Diplomatic Immunity and Foreign Trade Policy Laws at its next session.

3:00

Great Britain – A BiH delegation headed by Foreign Minister

Prlic met British Defence Minister Portillo and Foreign Minister Bonsor. Prlic emphasised the need for foreign peace troops to stay longer in BiH to preserve peace in the region.

Banja Luka – Federation President and member of the BiH Presidency Zubak met President Plavsic in Banja Luka yesterday. Zubak's assessment was that the status of the Croat minority in Banja Luka is satisfactory. Plavsic expressed the RS position saying that Croats in the RS will have their all rights in accordance with the BH and the RS Constitutions. They also talked about the Brcko arbitration decision, the Vienna conference, and the forthcoming local elections. Zubak was interested in the HDZ party's participation in the elections in Banja Luka. Plavsic said that there were no obstacles for HDZ participation in the elections if they were registered. They also agreed on mutual POWs exchange and mass grave exhumations. After the meeting Zubak met local Croat representatives and the Catholic Bishop Komarica.

3:00

The church and state leadership held a press conference with regard to the Pope's visit to Sarajevo in the Vrhbosna archdiocese building. The Pope will visit Sarajevo on April 12 and 13, which was officially confirmed by the organisational board.

2:00

All opposition parties and other independent organisation (Social Democratic Party, Croat Peasant Party, Citizens Democratic Party, Council of BiH Intellectuals) strongly condemned a bomb attack on the St. Anto church on the night between March 3 and 4.

3:00

The Main HDZ Board sent a letter to BiH TV saying that 'so called BiH TV spreads hatred and is still waging an anti-Croat propaganda war now even more perfidiously than before.

France Press reported that Krajisnik gave an interview to Belgrade daily Vecernje Novosti saying that the Agreement between FRY and the RS prevented undesired ties between the RS and the Federation. SDP thinks that the BiH authorities knew that FRY and the RS were planning to make such an agreement but they didn't react in time. The Council of BiH Intellectuals requested that the international factors impose sanctions against FRY. Reuters reported that HR Bildt asked from FRY not to ratify the Agreement until it is verified by the BiH Parliament.

5:00

The US Federal Court for Human Rights is conducting a trial against war criminal Karadzic who is accused by victims of the BiH war. Karadzic's lawyer, a former US state prosecutor Clark, sent a letter to the Court saying that Karadzic told him to give up defence because Karadzic cannot defend himself in the USA. Karadzic representatives denied the US Court jurisdiction so the Court decided that this case presented a political gesture which is inappropriate for the Court decision. Therefore, the Appealing Court which raised the charge against Karadzic in '93, will continue with the proceedings against him on the request of the civil victims of the BiH war. This Court decided that Karadzic could be charged at both the individual and political level.

3:00

Seven Bosniaks from Srebrenica who were hiding in the woods after the fall of Srebrenica, surrendered to the US IFOR who handed them back to the RS police. They were in Zvornik prison for some time and then transferred to Bijeljina where, according to their lawyer, Bakir Pasic, a court will conduct a trial. Their lawyer announced the public hearing to be held at March 20, and said that they could even be sentenced to death.

3:00

Tuzla – Mayor of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic, met German Ambassador to BiH, Preisinger and talked about refugee return to BiH. The

return will be carried out in three stages – the Tuzla-Podrinje Canton, the Zenica-Doboj Canton and the Sarajevo Canton.

2:00

Summary SRT News

The RS delegation attending the international conference on modalities in implementation of the decision on Brcko, scheduled to take place the day after tomorrow in Vienna, will be headed by President Biljana Plavsic. Charge d'affairs of the American Embassy, Robert Parmley, visited Banja Luka and discussed this matter with Plavsic. Issues such as the return of refugees, reconstruction of the region and building of the democratic institutions will be on the agenda of the conference. Also going to Vienna are the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aleksa Buha, member of the Council of Ministers, Dragan Bozanic and Ljubisa Vladusic, Minister for Refugees and DPs in the RS government.

5:00

President from RS in the presidency of BIH, Momcilo Krajisnik met in Pale with the UN Secretary-General special envoy, Kai Eide. A communiqué released after the meeting says that Krajisnik emphasized the important role of the UN in the area and expressed hope for co-operation to continue.

2:00

A session of the CoM took place in Sarajevo. It was decided that a delegation of this body will not travel to Vienna to participate in the conference on Brcko. The CoM was not informed nor invited to this conference. "We have agreed that we shall not on our own initiative send a delegation, nor shall we take responsibility for the results of this conference," said Boro Bosic. Second co-chairman of the CoM, Haris Silajdzic, announced that the Council would protest to the High Representative's Office, and demand that "international institutions work on promotion of the joint B-H

bodies, but not on their margining". In the next session of the CoM, due to take place next Tuesday in Sarajevo, a draft law on Immunity and Foreign trade will be discussed. 5 :00

Parties, businessmen and associations from FRY and RS continue to give support to the agreement on special parallel relations.

40 sec

Vice President of RS, Dragoljub Mirjanic, hosted a German economic delegation which has held talks on providing assistance to revive the economy of RS.

1:00

Representatives of the RS Government met with executives of the public information agencies, which were founded by the state. An opinion was shared that the state budget should provide means for maintenance of basic functions of the state media and for priority investments in their development. In order to carry out the special agreement between RS and FRY, a respective Minister of Information from RS should make contact with her counterpart from FRY as soon as possible.

3:00

Vice President of the RS government, Velibor Ostojic, met with the FRY cultural and scientific delegation. A conclusion was made that in both spheres co-operation was never halted. In Borovo Naselje (Croatia) a constitutive assembly of an Independent Democratic Serb Party took place. This unique Serb party was formed with agreement of all the parties from the Srem-Baranja region.

3:00

World news:

The Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Safet Orucevic, asked from the Int. community to introduce State of Emergency in the town, since the Croat side is refusing to implement agreements they have signed.