OHR Local News Issues, 5 May 1997

Alija Izetbegovic, BiH Presidency President received Susana Agnelli , Italian Ambassador with OSCE and Robert Frowick, Head of the OSCE Mission in BiH. Their talks focused on the forthcoming local elections in BiH. Alija Izetbegovic expressed his hope that these elections would be more fair and democratic than last year's general ones. They agreed that freedom of media will have a capital importance for the holding of elections. Elections in Brcko remain a question for which an extra solution should be found in accordance with the DA. Alija Izetbegovic pointed out that some steps forward had been made in the implementation of the DA, but not satisfactorily and therefore he had written the letter to the International Community.
2'00'

Alija Izetbegovic received a delegation of the Moslem National Council of Sandzak headed by its President, Dr. Sulejmann Ugljanin. The delegation informed Izetbegovic about the strengthening of co-operation with BiH.
1'30"

A BiH CoM began unexpectedly, taking the public rather by surprise, by its 2 day meeting in Dubrovnik in the Hotel Argentina. Topics to be discussed at the meeting coincide with the agendas of the BiH Federation Government meeting, which started today in Sarajevo, as well as themes which Christian Schwartz-Schilling, German Mediator for BiH held with the Bosnian officials. This fact, together with the visit to Sarajevo of American Ambassador Parmley and Italian Ambassador Agnelli, speak enough of the diplomatic pressure, especially of the American diplomacy which is exercised on the BiH officials. The organization of the meeting in Dubrovnik is supported by the OHR.

2’00”

Somebody described the Dubrovnik meeting as the Mini Dayton, but this is not correct, Colum Murphy, the HR’s Spokesman, said and pointed out that this is a meeting initiated by Ambassador Steiner with a key aim to move forward the QSP project. It will focus on the draft laws necessary for this country to obtain its legislature and to open a way for the next Donor’s Conference.Privatization questions and budget are also on the agenda.
2’00”

The BiH Federation Government discussed at its 9th session today, the amendments on the draft laws relating to the exchange of communal territories which are divided by the inter entity boundaries and forming of the new communities in the BiH Federation. Most amendments were filed on the community Usora issue. The Government did not accept any amendments and stuck to former solutions. Other points on the agenda will be discussed tomorrow just before House of Reps meeting starts.
2’00”

The BiH Federation House of Reps meeting which started mid-April, will continue tomorrow at 11,00h. All 29 themes are on the agenda, among others amendments of the BiH Federation Constitution concerning Sarajevo and Mostar, amendments on the draft law relating to the exchange of communal territories and forming of new communities, as well as a large number of the laws concerning health care issues.
1’30”

Dr. Christian Schwartz-Schilling, Mediator for BiH, having visited various towns in the country, held separate talks with the high level BiH officials: He informed Kresimir Zubak about his visits to Drvar and Tesanj and talked also of undertaken and planned activities on refugee return. Vladimir Soljic, Federation President and the Mediator stated that pressure

must be intensified so that the principle of home return all for all on the whole territory be respected. With Ejup Ganic the Mediator discussed the strengthening of the authority institutions. Edhem Bicakcic in his talks with Sch. Schilling pointed out as positive examples the refugees return to Travnik, Jajce and Bugojno, but also mentioned Stolac a town completely closed for their return.
4’00”

Voter registration for the forthcoming local elections started today. (Follows explanations for the procedure). The electoral process will be held under full international supervision by monitors from 29 countries, OSCE members.
2’00”

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic met Head of the OSCE mission in BiH, Frowick, and discussed the upcoming local elections and registration of voters which started today in the whole of RS, except in Brcko. Frowick and OSCE are soon to decide whether the local elections will be held in Brcko on the same date as everywhere else in the RS. The decision will be made after the PEC’s meeting to be held tomorrow.
2:00
Banja Luka – Members of commissions of the Political System and Administration of Justice, and Economy and Finances held a five-hour meeting today and underlined basic principles of the post-war reconstruction of the RS and basis of the economic policy of the RS in ’97. Members of different commissions emphasised the most important problems and issues with regard to the economic policy which must be urgently solved, such as revitalisation of the most important industry, usage of natural resources, infrastructure, reconstruction of the banking system, and the process of privatisation.
3:00

Krajisnik said in Zvornik that the RS is a large construction site, and substantial resources should be invested in reconstruction of housing units and revival of the economy. Now when the political situation has normalised, some factories have started working again, but we will be able to sense the true effects of the economic rebirth only when large companies and industry start to work, Krajisnk said. He attended a joint meeting of two large RS companies, 'Energoinvest' and the factory 'Birac' of hydrated alumina, which will be work as a one large company in future.
2:00

Registration of voters – SRT appeals to voters to register themselves in order to have their right to vote at the local elections. A camera crew went throughout the RS to find out what is the voters' response to their obligation. The registration of voters also started in the FRY. Serbs are complaining on conditions they will have to comply with in order to vote and which were defined by OSCE, such as paying travel costs to municipalities where they will live in future, which most of them cannot afford.
5:00

World media about the RS:

Drvar – Croats burned 18 Serb houses in order to prevent owners to return before eyes of German Arbiter of Federation, Schwartz-Schilling during his visit to this town. SFOR troops barely stopped a Croat man from shooting on Schilling. Led by his bad experiences in Drvar, Schilling confirmed all hardships of the process of refugee return to their original places to a German press agency DPA. This German politician who was strongly against the Serbs during the war, noticed that he would have to learn a lesson from destroyed Serb houses, whilst avoiding condemnation Croats for their acts of barbarism.

Hague – European News reported on the journalist Dejan Lukic's

article ‘The Hague Hasn’t Seen Justice’, where the journalist concluded that the Tribunal did not take into consideration instructions and suggestions of Karadzic, the RS President at the time, with regard to humane treatment of POWs because the Hague, that is, a devil [misinterpretation, meant to be Hades], doesn’t like justice. Lukic analysed Karadzic and Izetbegovic’s orders in parallel. The latter ordered his soldiers to exterminate Serb POWs in ’92, if it was in the interest of the public-spirited and the Islamic Community; women, children and priests shouldn’t be spared either, if the same interests were jeopardised.
4:00

VRS General Colic and Commander of the 5th corps, General Josipovic attended a training course of an elite unit of the VRS. After the training Colic happily addressed soldiers thanking them for their efforts and wishing them to continue with their training in order to defend the RS. Commenting on the current situation, Colic said that there are ‘some places in the RS where military secrets have been disclosed because of money, and that Serb refugees are expelled from apartments for the aim of letting Muslims move in. These incidents will be energetically warded off with the assistance of the Ministry of Interior and responsible individuals will be punished,’ Colic promised.
3:00