

OHR Local News Issues, 6 Aug 1997

Split – The Presidential meeting between BiH President Izetbegovic and Croatian President Tudjman ended today. Details about opening Ploce harbour and transfer through Neum will be known in about three months. In the joint statement from two presidents, a new political formulation appeared which says: BiH is a state of two multi-ethnic entities. The remainder of the statement points out that BiH has state integrity; it is sovereign and politically independent; it's major population is officially called Bosniaks. Croatia asked for a policy of mutual trust, and both delegations appealed to media to revalue common life between two nations. The statement clearly concludes that Croatia and BiH want to establish the relationships on two levels: between the Republic of Croatia and the State of BiH, and between the Republic of Croatia and the BiH Federation. However, Croatia points out the relationships between Croatia and the BiH Federation, as concluded from the decision to make Ploce harbour disposable exclusively for the BiH Federation. Regarding the subject of war criminals, it was concluded that the two sides should remain objective according to involvement level of each side, and individuals. Both states confirmed the right of refugee return, although recent events in Jajce were not mentioned. Both presidents pointed out that the agreement was achieved without any involvement of the USA or Western countries. Minister of Foreign Trade & Economy Muratovic said that it is important to establish a customs office in Brcko, consisting of all three nation representatives. US delegation – Holbrooke, Galbraith and Gelbard, talked to the Presidents behind the closed doors, and they have had separate meetings afterwards.

10'00"

Sarajevo/Pale – AP reports that indicted war criminal Karadzic is ready to face the internationally supervised Court of Law, but only in RS. Karadzic proposed to the Hague Tribunal the hand over of his case to the Court in RS. Karadzic said that this readiness to face the Court is the only honourable way out of the current dilemma.

2'00"

Sarajevo – Federal President Soljic announced yesterday that Jajce expellees will be able to return to their homes by the end of the week, as requested by HR Westendorp.

1'00"

Jajce – As referred by SFOR spokesman Maj. Blakely, seven more houses were burnt down last night in Jajce. OSCE spokesman Janowski reported on the failure of yesterday's meeting in Jajce. The meeting was interrupted by a group of people who threw eggs at the meeting building. The main subject of the meeting between OSCE and Middle Bosnian Canton authorities was how to begin the implementation of decisions and conclusions from yesterday's meeting at the OHR in Sarajevo. OSCE regional Representative Joseph pointed out the cooperativeness of local authorities in solving the Jajce problems.

2'30"

Konjic – Fifty BiH Croats visited Konjic municipality under the organisation of the US Refugee Committee. Mayor Miksic welcomed the Croat refugees, saying that this should be an example for all Bosnian cities. US Refugee Committee and UNHCR were also present at the occasion.

1'00"

Sarajevo/Vogosca – Endangered Peoples Society President Zilch addressed a letter to HR Westendorp, asking that he apologise to women of Srebrenica for his statements from Aug. 2, calling them a gang of four hundred persons. Zilch said that Westendorp slandered the women who lost almost all the men in their families.

1'00"

Sarajevo – At the meeting of Serb City Council and Croat City Council, great concern was expressed regarding recent events in Jajce, Vogosca, and Brcko. It was pointed out that these events are within the responsibility of current authorities and leading political parties.

1'00"

Sarajevo – Canton HDZ organization announced that the return of several thousand BiH Croats is out of the question. The announcement says that the unequal distribution of Croats is obvious in all institutions of the Canton.

1'00"

Sarajevo/Pale – EASC brought a decision to solve the problem of 642 individual refugee appeals. OSCE spokesman Foley said that 40 appeals were accepted by the committee, while 485 are not in accordance with the Election Law, so those DP's cannot register in their place of living. The remaining appeals consider citizenship, so they were handed to the committee for citizenship verification.

2'00"

Summary SRT TV News

Pale – Krajisnik met the Russian Special Envoy Gerasimov, and discussed the crisis in the RS, ways to overcome it, and September elections. Krajisnik said that manipulations with 15% of voters in Brcko must stop because the elections might be called into question. He also said that the Constitutional Court's decision will be respected regardless of what they decide. Commenting on the possibility that Plavsic schedules the pre-term elections for September 1, Krajisnik said that this issue will be discussed and will also depend on the Constitutional Court's decision, to be made next week.

3:00

Banja Luka – SRT wonders how it is possible to regain trust

among the three nations in former BiH after the bloody civil, ethnic, and religious war, concluding that there is no way to have brotherhood and unity again. However, people should talk. Such talks were organised by The British Foundation for Eastern and Central Europe. RS and Federation representatives talked about their future. Kalinic, who represented the RS, condemned the Federation side for not sending their 'real' representatives (referring to the current leadership), adding that the DPA gives chances for reconciliation. 'The IC should not insist on reintegration of BiH, but on joint discussion between the two entities who live under the same roof.' He reiterated the RS position with regard to the civil war, adding that the best solution for BiH and its people would be in reconciliation and global amnesty.

4:00

Banja Luka – Kalinic announced the possibility of changing the Constitution if the Constitutional Court dismisses Plavsic's decision with regard to dissolution of the RS Parliament. 'We need stability in the future and energy to overcome this crisis,' Kalinic said. He underlined the leadership does not have any intentions to influence the Court's decision and denied Plavsic's statement that the Parliament dismissed her, saying that the Parliament only considered this possibility. Commenting on Holbrooke's visit, Kalinic said that Holbrooke contributes stabilisation of peace, as always.

3:00

Doboj – The RS MUP (Ministry of Internal Affairs) headed by Kijac held a meeting with Doboj police, and discussed the security situation and the issue of crime in the RS. They concluded that the situation is satisfactory and crime is decreasing. MUP energetically rejected Plavsic's statement that MUP is responsible for incidents that occurred after SFOR actions in Prijedor, saying that they had undertaken various measures in order to overcome the tough situation. The investigation of this case will prove who is backing Plavsic.

MUP also said that Plavsic was invited to the meeting, but she did not come, which is strange because she pressed heavy charges against the MUP. Plavsic gave legitimacy to some parts of the IC to condemn the MUP. It was also said that SFOR troops increased their numbers and patrolled in the vicinity of the MUP building during this meeting.

4:00

Pale – Minister of Refugees Vladusic talked with OHR representatives (Herdina) about the return of refugees and repatriation.

2:00

Flash news:

SFOR and IPTF representatives who wanted to remain anonymous said for SRT that division of BiH will occur either peacefully or with a new war. The US Special Envoy, Shattuck stated for Dutch media that the DPA is not a blitz action but a long-term film, adding that although the signatories of the Agreement said that BiH will be a country with two equally respected entities, they considered reintegration as the only solution for BiH even then.

Gen. Crouch and HR Westendorp finally admitted that the Muslim and Croat side are those who undermine the DPA, and we should thank them for this new situation, SRT reports. Holbrooke's threats to impose new sanctions against FRY demanding the hand over of alleged war criminals can be fatal for the Serbs in the RS and FRY, President of the Serb Radical Party, Poplasen said. 'They demand that Serbia commit aggression against their own people. This is blackmail. Foreigners want to solve their problems through bloodshed, and Serbs must prevent this,' Poplasen said, adding that the Serb struggle should not be targeted against the US, but against its policy.

5:00

Bileca – Herzegovina – Rally in support of President Plavsic (no pictures) – More than 1,500 people gathered to support

Plavsic who delivered a speech talking about the current situation in the RS, crime, and pre-term elections. She said that elections will probably be held right after the local ones. The crime is a disease which eats the RS's heart out and does not give opportunity to the donors to invest their money there. She underlined the necessity of establishment of the legal state and asked people to stay close together.

3:00