

OHR SRT News Summaries, 29 Aug 1997

Vice premier of the RS, Aleksa Buha, visited Prnjavor today. In a meeting with local political leaders and businessmen, he discussed the current political crisis, with a special emphasis on the decisions adopted by the RS Assembly.

"I arrived in Prnjavor two days ago, together with Miroslav Vijestica, deputy Speaker of the RS Assembly. Yesterday I was joined by Mr. Vrkesa and Mr. Radovan Markov Karadzic. Namely, our party, backed by the Assembly, decided to make some visits around the country to explain the decisions taken by the Assembly. You know that the elections have been scheduled for September 13-14, that the pre-election activities had started, but the Assembly adopted a conclusion that elections could not take place under current conditions. When talking about conditions, we have in mind a couple of elements. First, [SFOR](#) exceeded its mandate in BL, and yesterday in Brcko and Bijeljina. The situation is not normal at all. The OSCE also used an unacceptable practice. The election rules were changed at the last moment. We received the last amendments on August 7, not mentioning the fact they were more damaging than previously agreed. The OSCE again did not live up to the given promises to submit municipal lists of voters names by August 20. I was informed that we received these lists today, but not in the form we expected. Maybe in coming days we will get what the OSCE was obliged to do earlier. The general political situation is such that one cannot expect to have democratic and fair elections. The Assembly, as you know, proposed to postpone municipal elections and to do everything possible to hold municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections at the same time."

Anchor: Mr. Buha, do you have any indications as to how the IC is going to behave with regard to the conclusions of the RS

Assembly? Buha: "I hope they will not turn a deaf ear to the conclusions. If this happens, we will have further proof that the IC is stepping out of the DPA, changing the mandate and introducing a protectorate with elements of a military occupation. I hope that common sense will prevail and that the highest officials of the IC, implementing the [DPA](#) in Bosnia, will see reason."

6 min

The RS Supreme Defence Council assembled in Bijeljina and issued the following statement:

- Since Biljana Plavsic refused to attend this meeting, despite the fact that she had received a written invitation, the Supreme Defence Council demands that the RS President take an active role in the work of the Council and to co-ordinate with decisions and stands of this body regarding her constitutional and legal authority in the defence domain.
- The SDC assessed that in the RS an attempt of coup-d'etat is underway, led by the RS President who is supported by the International political and military organizations. With such activities of the RS President, the territorial integrity and the constitutional order of the RS is under threat.
- The SDC demands from all state bodies and political parties to overcome the current crisis, using political methods and means. The respective state bodies are due to take legal measures against those individuals who are violating the RS Constitution and the Law.
- The SDC firmly resolves to take over the defence management and the command of the RS army in case the RS President continues to behave unconstitutionally.
- The SDC demands that the state bodies and the army carry out their obligations in the implementation of the DPA.
- The SDC demands that the International organisations and SFOR return to their mandate agreed in Dayton.

5 min

The RS Interior Ministry held a meeting in Bijeljina, chaired by the Minister Slavko Paleksic. All heads of the Centres for Public and State Security were present, as were both police chiefs from Mrkonjic Grad and Banja Luka. Slavko Paleksic officially took over from his predecessor, Dragan Kijac, now the vice president of the RS Government. The meeting in Bijeljina focused on the current security situation in RS.

3 min

The situation in Brcko and Bijeljina normalised. SFOR pulled back from the streets and people went back to their normal life. Streets were cleaned and the damage done by SFOR combat technique restored. SFOR Commander Shinseki said today that SFOR troops will stay in Brcko and continue to carry out their duties without any change of the mandate.

The Security Council in Brcko called upon people to return to their normal duties and to do their utmost in repairing the damage. The Council also assessed that relations with the IC are correct and should stay as such. In Bijeljina, SFOR pulled the armoured vehicles back to the suburbs, from where they had started their move to take over the MUP building. The assumption is that they had not completely given up their intentions. People stayed in front of the MUP building. It is not likely that SFOR undertakes similar adventures after the lesson they learned yesterday.

7 min

In Zvornik, president of the local SDS, Stevo Radic and president of the municipal assembly, Jovan Mitrovic, warned SFOR today to immediately stop demonstrating force throughout the RS.

Senator Kosta Cavoski stated today in Paris that the IC is trying to split the RS in two parts. Cavoski is presenting his new book in Paris, called 'The Hague against justice', in which he explains the unjustified charges of the Hague

Tribunal against Dr. Radovan Karadzic.

Local SDS Boards from Trebinje, Uglejivik, Srebrenica and Prnjavor gave full support to the state bodies and people of Brcko and Bijeljina (letter of support read out)

UN Special Envoy, Kai Eide, protested today against the use of violence in Brcko. In a public announcement, Mr. Eide said that the UN personnel was targeted with stones, bottles and sticks which caused injuries to the IPTF members. IPTF property was intentionally targeted. In Brcko, the IPTF station was looted. More than 40 vehicles were damaged, some were completely destroyed. The RS police did not try to establish order and some policemen even openly participated in the violence. The UN personnel was ordered by Mr. Eide to withdraw because of the absence of the RS police. There is no justification for the participation of the RS media in fueling up the situation and misinforming. Especially unpleasant was the role of the RS leaders who openly applauded the use of force, said Mr. Eide who added that it was now up to the same leaders and the media to call upon peace. It is crucial to punish those who exercised or call upon others to use violence. According to the [DPA](#), both entities are obliged to provide security for all individual living on the territory under their jurisdiction. This agreement was seriously violated yesterday in Brcko, said Eide, and concluded that this must not happen in the future.

5 min

In Belgrade, a meeting between Milosevic and Gelbard is still ongoing.

The NAC met today in Brussels, reported France Press. The main goal was to contemplate ways for solving the tense situation in the RS. Special attention was devoted to possible pressures that could be used against the RS leadership. The meeting was summoned after HR Carlos Westendorp repeatedly asked Mr. Solana to convene it. The goal was to silence certain Serb

media in the RS. NATO is also reviewing ways to change the SFOR mandate, which would allow actions against the Serb media, using the excuse that they are initiating violence. Not all the NATO members agree with such measures. Some diplomats doubt that the decision will be made today.

3 min

We just received a news of a bomb blast at the Banja Luka railway station. Reportedly, one person was killed and several wounded.

Summary SRT TV News Banja Luka

The RS President Biljana Plavsic met with the SFOR Commander Eric Shinseki, and his associates in Banja Luka today. There were no official statements after the talks, and one of the members of the SFOR delegation stated to the journalists that the reason for their coming was to explain President Plavsic that the mandate of SFOR had not been changed and that they were continuing with their usual duties.

After that, upon their request, President Plavsic also talked with the delegation of the Federal Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, which should meet with Momcilo Krajisnik, member of the BiH Presidency on August 31.

The mandate of SFOR will not be changed, and SFOR and IPTF will not get involved in politics, was heard at the press conference of the international organizations held in Banja Luka. Today IPTF expressed regret because of the level of conflicts in Brcko yesterday. The consequence of the violence from the local people was 28 destroyed IPTF vehicles. Fifty IPTF officials left the center of the town with the assistance of SFOR, stated Alun Roberts, spokesman of IPTF in Banja Luka. The situation in Brcko is calm today, but still uncertain. That is why the SFOR Headquarters, after estimating the situation, will make a decision on the return of IPTF officials to Brcko. >From this moment, the UN mission wants to

make it clear that the members of IPTF are not involved in the attempt of taking over the police stations in Brcko – Alun Roberts added.

Because of the escalation of political tensions in RS, two more press conferences took place in Banja Luka – press conference of the Socialist Party of RS and Coordination Board of the RS opposition parties. They issued public announcements appealing to all the political figures in RS to give their contribution in diminishing political tensions and providing conditions for the local elections to take place. They also estimated that the events in Janja, Bijeljina, Brcko, and Doboj indicated that the crisis was deepening and tending to get out of the control of the authorities both at Pale and in Banja Luka. The Coordination Board of the opposition parties condemned the misuse of citizens in the political conflict between two SDS factions, terroristic attack on the premises of SPRS in Doboj and Alternativa newspapers, and arrest of the opposition parties members. Because of these events, the SPRS President Zivko Radisic sent a letter to the RS President today requesting an urgent normalization of the situation in RS.

The Mayor of Brcko, Miodrag Pajic called on his fellow-citizens to get back to their daily duties. The situation became calmer and about 300 people dispersed last night, after 8:00 o'clock, when Momcilo Krajisnik and Dragan Kalinic came to Brcko. Momcilo Krajisnik addressed the gathering: – We have the right to defend ourselves. We do not want to have any unnecessary conflicts with the international community. But if somebody attacks our police station and our center, you should defend it. Both Krajisnik and Kalinic accused the RS President Biljana Plavsic for the events in Brcko. Dragan Kalinic said to the people: – Nobody has right to beat you, and nobody has right to shoot at you. The sirens which alarmed the citizens of Brcko last night were the first signal for movement. Another important factor in increasing tensions was Radio

Brcko which was all day long calling on the citizens to defend the police stations. The drivers of the Banja Luka "Autoprevoz" bus felt how much pain can be inflicted by the brotherly Serb hand, when their bus was stoned in Brcko, only because it had Banja Luka registration plates.

The supervisor for the region of Brcko, Robert Farrand said the behavior of the local people was to be blamed for the disorder in that town yesterday.

The former special American envoy for BiH, Richard Holbrooke emphasized that the conflict between SFOR and people in RS had, for sure, been the most serious confrontation since [Dayton](#).

The coming of Slobodan Milosevic to Banja Luka would represent a victory of Mrs. Plavsic, and it is possible that he will support her in exchange for canceling financial blockade of Yugoslavia, foresees a Dutch paper.

The Republic Center of State Security (Banja Luka) gave a public announcement signed by the Head of the Center, Predrag Ceranic. After the personnel changes in the Center of State Security Banja Luka on August 23, 1997, the people of RS were informed about the existence of a group of employees who remained loyal to the demoted Deputy Head of the Center of State Security, Ljuban Ecim, and who were asked to come to work by August 25, upon the invitation of the newly appointed leadership. A bigger number of people from that group came, but not the extremist core, which continued its obstructive activities. That is why the group of five people, together with Ljuban Ecim, got sacked on August 26, 1997. If the mentioned group of people continues with their obstructive and blackmailing activities, all legal measures and sanctions will be undertaken against them, says in the announcement of the RS Ministry of Interior, Center of State Security Banja Luka.