OHR SRT News Summary, 12 Dec. 1997

Headlines

- Milosevic received Krajisnik and Plavsic in separate meetings in Belgrade today
- The Prijedor municipal building searched for documents in the case of Dr. Kovacevic
- Serbian Minister of Interior's statement saying that police controls everywhere in Kosovo
- London Heathrow Airport closed because of fire this morning

According to a news report by Tanjug, President Milosevic of Serbia today received President Plavsic and Momcilo Krajisnik in two separate meetings in Belgrade. The meeting focused on the current political situation in the RS and assessed that the main task of the newly elected Government was to appoint a new Government that will work to overcome current divisions and differences, to implement the DA, to reconstruct the RS economy and to curb criminal activities.
0:48

Representatives of the Hague Tribunal today searched the municipal building in Prijedor. During the search, some municipal documents from the time of Dr. Kovacevic's term as the local Mayor were photographed and also taken away. Hague Tribunal officials who entered the building, escorted by strong SFOR and IPTF units, however, refused to give any statements and explained that this was the responsibility of the Hague Tribunal's press office at the Hague. SFOR and IPTF troops first blocked the respective buildings of the City Hall, the SDS and the Public Security Centre. After an SRT crew managed to enter the premises of the SDS, IPTF officials present told them not to film anything and that no information

would be given on the spot. According to IPTF, a related press statement will be released when conditions so allow. After an SRT crew asked the local Mayor, Borislav Maric, to intervene and to ask international representatives to give a statement, Bob Ritt, the leader of the data collection team, said that he was not at liberty to give any details regarding the joint SFOR and IPTF action. The local Mayor said that he had reproached Bob Ritt for entering the building without prior notice. Ritt, on his part, explained that the order released by the Hague Tribunal had been forwarded to the RS Ministry of Interior and that the RS President was aware of the action.

SFOR troops providing safety around the buildings, however, allowed the SRT crew to film and became involved in a conversation saying that the military exercise was supposed to end in the afternoon, which was the case.
2:22

A statement by Predrag Jesuric, the RS Deputy Minister of Interior, regarding the Prijedor action: “A representative of UN Civil Affairs, Mr. Eric, with an interpreter, this morning asked to meet the RS Deputy Minister of Interior. At 9:00 hrs this morning, we were given copies of four orders for the search of civilian facilities in Prijedor, in line with which representatives of the Hague Tribunal entered the respective premises of the local Public Security Centre, including police stations in Ljuboja, Omarska and Kozarac, the Town Hall, the “Kozarski Vijesnik” and Radio Prijedor and the SDS, searching for documents against Dr Milan Kovacevic, a war crime indictee. I immediately contacted the Head of the Public Security Centre in Prijedor and gave him instructions in terms of how to behave in the newly emerged situation and we decided to be cooperative towards Hague Tribunal representatives. We wished to avoid any incidents. Hague Tribunal representatives visited the four aforementioned locations at the same time. We insisted that we should be provided with copies of all documents taken. The Ministry do not need copies, but we

wanted to have a record of documents that were going to be taken from the four locations.
2:31

Johan Verhayden, the OSCE Spokesperson, stated that the OSCE had decided to confirm the results of the recently held parliamentary elections in the RS after all complaints had been refuted as unfounded. According to him, the composition of the RS Parliament will be valid even without modifications by the PEC.
0:27

Unlike Eastern Slavonia, where Croatian authorities are resorting to cunning methods to endanger the safety of the local Serb population and the safety of their property, the situation in Kosovo seems to be under the control of the only legal authority, the Serbian Ministry of Interior.
0:21

A visit by the NATO Supreme Commander for Europe, General Wesley Clark, to Sarajevo planned for today has still not been confirmed. Clark was supposed to meet with the newly appointed SFOR Land Force Commander, General Hugh Pike, and his Chief-of Staff. After meeting Pike in Sarajevo, Clark was supposed to arrive in Banja Luka.
0:11

The Serbian Deputy Minister of Interior, Colonel-General Rade Markovic, today stated that there was not a single place in Serbia that was not under the control of legitimate authorities and the police. Markovic denied news report claiming that the place of Serbica, were conflicts recently erupted between Albanian terrorists and Serbian police, was under the control of Albanians. The leader of the Kosovo Albanians, Ibrahim Rugova, has requested that a separate international conference should be held to resolve the Kosovo issue.
0:30

The UNTAES Information Unit in Vukovar have stated that the current transitional police forces in the area would be completely taken over by the Croatian Ministry of Interior on 15th December. However, UNTAES will keep the right to intervene until the expiration of its mandate, and, also, to make different decisions if necessary. Today's issue of the Belgrade-based "Dnevni Telegraf' daily newspaper reports that the situation of the remaining Serb population in Eastern Slavonia is becoming more and more complicated and that forcible evictions have already started in the area.
0:55

The Leader of the Serbian Radicals, Dr. Vojislav Seselj, has stated that the Serb Radical Party and the SDS have reached an agreement to refrain from making any unilateral arrangements in terms of the future composition of the RS Parliament, but rather to create a firm block. Seselj, at a press conference in Podgorica, stated that such an agreement had been reached with Momcilo Krajsinik, Gojko Klickovic and Aleksa Buha. According to Seselj, the two parties had appealed to the RS Socialist Party to enter a tripartite coalition. SRNA claims that the RS Socialist Party had still not responded to the proposal, for there are two factions inside it, Radisic's and Ilic's.
0:52

The President of the RS SP, Zivko Radisic, and the President of the RS Radical Party, Nikola Poplasen, today met in Banja Luka to discuss the possibility of the urgent establishment of the RS Parliament. The meeting expressed their mutual commitment to focus on the preservation of the RS and its stabilisation.
0:29

The SDS Local Board in Banja Luka, in a press release, stated that they support the decision by the RS delegation to leave the Bonn conference. The fact that the conference continued and that the conclusions were made regardless, proves the

dishonest intentions of the IC. The Main Board supported the idea expressed in a recent letter by the President of the RS Socialist Party that the constitutive session of the RS Parliament should be held in Brcko as soon as possible.
0:51

The President of the Democratic Party for Banja Luka and Krajina, Nikola Spiric, at a press conference today, supported the decision by the Serb delegations to leave the Bonn conference.
0:10

Members of the Serb Peasant Party do not support the decision by the RS and the FRY delegations to leave the Bonn conference, because they believe that this was just a political maneuver by the Serbian Socialist Party on the eve of the third round of presidential elections in Serbia. This is also because no conclusion made at the conference could possibly endanger the status of the RS within BH.
0:18

The Chief of the RS Army General-Staff, General Pero Colic, today met with the families of imprisoned Serb troops from the area of Posavina, Podrinje, Semberija and Borca. The meeting concluded that, two years after the Dayton Agreement had been signed, there were still Serb troops detained in Muslim and Croat prisons in BH.
1:16

(A short statement by the RS Presidential Cabinet was read towards the end of the news denying the statement by a SFOR official in Prijedor claiming that the RS President was aware and had even authorised the joint SFOR and ITPF action there today).