

OHR SRT News Summary, 12 January 1999

Headlines

- Poplasen, Dodik and Djokic in separate meetings with Westendorp and Barry on the current situation in the RS in BL today
- SNSD Main Board announced that an initiative would be launched to pass a new Law on recalling RS Presidents
- RS Government met in BL today
- BiH Presidency adopt a report on the work of the BiH CoM
- Following the murder of Dragan Gagovic tomorrow is to be declared a day of mourning in Srbinje
- Release of eight FRY Army soldiers likely to take place soon

Poplasen, Dodik and Djokic held separate meetings with the HR, Carlos Westendorp, and the Head of the OSCE mission in BiH, Robert Barry, in Banja Luka today. After the meeting with Westendorp and Barry, a statement was released from Poplasen's cabinet saying that Westendorp had informed the RS President that, on the issue of the new RS PM, the IC was going to support any solution that would get majority votes at the RS NA.

0:54

Barry and Westendorp also held meetings with Dodik and Djokic separately on the current situation in the RS. After meeting Westendorp, PM Dodik stated that the HR had presented him with the position of the IC on the issue of the new RS PM and stated that the RS could rely on the continuation of support for the current RS Government by the OHR, including financial support on several credit lines by the WB and the EC. After the meetings in BL today, Westendorp held a press conference where he confirmed that the IC was going to respect democratic

principles here and support the PM and the Government that would be able to obtain the necessary parliamentary majority. "The RS NA will eventually confirm whether President Poplasen was right in proposing Brane Miljus to be the new RS PM". Westendorp went on to reiterate to the press that he was not planning to influence the election of the new PM nor to use his powers on the issue. "However, there will certainly be problems with the RS Government if, in the end, it contains the same people whom the IC had problems with earlier". "I am confident, Westendorp concluded, that Milorad Dodik is the only candidate here who will be able to obtain the necessary majority". The press was also addressed by the Speaker of the RS NA, Petar Djokic, who denied reports by certain media claiming that a political crisis was developing in the RS. On the issue of the new RS PM designate, Djokic stressed that some of his "contradictory and controversial" statements had provoked strong reactions. "His concept is absolutely unacceptable for the RS, it is against its interests and needs, it is against the principles that the RS opted for a long time ago and what the RS expects from its Government and the PM". Djokic concluded by saying that after the consultative meeting of heads of respective caucuses scheduled for 15th January, the RS NA could meet on 25th January.

4:26

The HR, Carlos Westendorp, and the Head of the OSCE mission in BiH, Ambassador Barry, have made a decision to suspend the Mayor of Vlasenica, Stanislav Reljic. Explaining their decision, the two high-level international officials stated that Reljic's false statements and misinformation on the arrest of General Krstic were encouraging citizens to take an aggressive attitude towards international representatives.

0:30

The RS Government met in BL today and adopted the preliminary draft Law on the territorial organisation of the RS and the draft Law on local self-management. According to the Law on

the Territorial Organisation, the RS will be comprised of 53 municipalities and 8 districts. The Government also adopted a decision on the temporary funding of the RS to cover the period from January until March 1999, unless the RS Budget is not adopted as scheduled.

1:23

On behalf of the RS Government and on his own behalf, the RS PM, Milorad Dodik, today wished a Happy New Year to Serb people and Orthodox citizens of the RS.

0:32

The BiH Presidency, at their today's session in Sarajevo, adopted a report on the work of the BiH CoM. The session also analysed the work of the new BiH Presidency so far and stressed that a high level of mutual trust and tolerance had been achieved in it. The session ratified a trade agreement between the respective Governments of the Czech Republic and BiH. After the session, the Chairman of the Presidency, Zivko Radisic, met with representatives of the Norwegian Committee who expressed readiness to support the reintegration of BiH into Europe. "In a discussion on all aspects of co-operation between Norway and BiH, a particular interest was shown on the implementation of the DA and on overall efforts here to stabilise the situation in the country".

02:03

SRNA has quoted a Deputy High Representative, Jacques Klein, as claiming that nobody knows what the final decision by the Brcko Arbitrator, Roberts Owen, will be. What one can claim for sure is that Owen is an independent and systematic judge, Klein added.

0:17

Todor Galic, the Head of the Brcko Police, today described the safety situation in the town as satisfactory and confirmed that the local police would do their utmost to ensure that all citizens of Brcko, regardless of their ethnic background,

could be completely safe in all parts of the town.

0:25

The Speaker of the RS Parliament, Petar Djokic, met with representatives of the BiH Constitutional Court on the proceedings initiated before the BiH Constitutional Court to evaluate the level of compliance of the RS Constitution with the BIH Constitution, as requested by Alija Izetbegovic, a member of the BiH tripartite Presidency. Izetbegovic's requests, amongst others, include that the RS Constitution should be changed in its provisions determining the constituency of nations in the RS and certain constitutional principles provided in the DA.

1:15

The burial of Dragan Gagovic, a war crime indictee murdered by [SFOR](#) troops whose body was delivered to Srbinje last night, will take place at the Srbinje City Graveyard tomorrow. A new autopsy was carried out today as [SFOR](#) had earlier refused to allow RS forensics to be present during the autopsy conducted by international experts. The murder of Gagovic was, also, one of the topics tackled at today's international conference in Sarajevo. Yesterday's statements by some international representatives, including the one saying that those were not children who were with Gagovic at the time of his murder but teenagers have provoked strong reactions in Srbinje. Their parents today addressed a protest letter wondering if [SFOR](#) troops, thus, had the right to shoot at teenagers i.e. all those who are older than 13.

1:38

The Spokesperson for the OHR, Alexandra Stiglmayer, at an international press conference today, stated that the HR strongly condemned violence against international representatives in Srbinje and has requested RS authorities at all levels to undertake measures to prevent any violent actions against international officials and to make sure that those responsible should be punished. According to Sheena

Thompson, the [SFOR](#) Spokesperson, as an ex-police officer, Dragan Gagovic should have been aware of his obligation to stop at a check-point but, she said, he rather chose to ignore it and thus endanger the lives of "the young passengers". "[SFOR](#) will continue to arrest war crime indictees, unless local authorities in BiH themselves move to extradite those to the Hague Tribunal".

01:07

The President of the SNSD, Milorad Dodik, at today's press conference, stated that the main goal of Miljus's nomination as the PM designate was to harm the SNSD. The irresponsible behaviour of President Poplasen puts the RS in jeopardy, Dodik added saying that nobody should have the right to play with RS institutions. Krstan Simic a RS MP from the SNSD, said that the RS had been brought to a situation where it had to defend itself from the President and reiterated the request by the SNSD for the RS Government to submit a law to the RS NA in an expedited procedure to reconsider the way in which the RS President is to be recalled and to make it possible for people to have a referendum and give their vote of confidence or non-confidence in President Poplasen.

2:07

Biljana Plavsic, the President of the SNS, today stated that wrong moves by President Poplasen have politically and economically de-stabilised the RS. Plavsic went on to stress that she still hoped that Poplasen would take the mandate away from Miljus and give it somebody else. Plavsic concluded by saying that she had strong arguments to support Dodik as the new PM and that she was going to present those at the meeting with President Poplasen and hoped that he was going to have at least one argument against Dodik's re-election.

2:00

The SRS, at a press conference held in BL today, again supported the nomination of Miljus as the new RS PM designate. The Acting President of the Party, Mirko Blagojevic, stressed

that President Poplasen had not jeopardised interests of the RS by nominating Miljus and that Miljus was going to create a government that would be supported by the majority of political parties. The conference stated that Miljus was going to meet with SRS leaders for the first time today.

0:47

Kosovo-related news

4:36

Federation-related news

1:40