

OHR SRT News Summary, 15 January 1999

Headlines

- President Poplasen in a consultative meeting between the Speaker of the RS NA and RS Parliamentary parties
- Poplasen – I will respect any decision by the RS NA on the election of the new PM
- Serbian Government convened in Pristina – an appeal to the IC to condemn terrorism in Kosovo
- Conflicts continue in Kosovo and Metohija today
- Iraq refute U.S. ultimatum again

Following a consultative meeting between the Speaker of the RS NA, Petar Djokic, and representatives of RS parliamentary parties in BL today, Djokic gave a press statement saying that the fourth session of the RS NA would be taking place on 25 January to elect the new RS PM and the new Government. According to Djokic, the participants in the meeting disagreed on the new PM designate which is why the outcome of the forth session was still entirely uncertain. Djokic went on to say that: "Assessments are that the current PM designate does not have the support of the majority at the RS NA. However, not all of the parties have yet expressed their positions on the new PM designate. They will most likely do so at the next session of the RS NA". The RS President, Nikola Poplasen, on his part, said that: "We have managed to avoid political discussions and to stick to the Constitution and the law. I requested that the next session of the RS NA should be held on 25 January.... The final decision on the new RS PM and the New Government will be on the RS NA, and I will certainly respect it". Nedzad Sasivarevic, an MP from the Coalition for a Single and Democratic BiH, said that the Coalition had still not had talks with Miljus and, therefore, had still not taken any

position on him as the new RS PM. An SNSD representative claimed that the SNSD had nothing against holding a session of the RS NA on 25 January, but that it had already expressed its position that President Poplasen would be held responsible for any political crisis that might arise due to insufficient preparations for the forthcoming session, rather than the RS PM Designate, Brane Miljus. Importantly, the consultative meeting today was attended by representatives of all RS parliamentary parties and coalitions.

3:27

The Deputy HR for media issues, Simon Haselock, has assessed that the current ongoing crisis in the RS was a presidential crisis, rather than a parliamentary one, because, as Haselock explained, President Poplasen was disrespecting the will of parliamentary majority. Haselock explained that Poplasen was in possession of two documents: one with signatures by 32 MPs against Dodik, and the other one with signatures by 38 MPs pro Dodik. Haselock concluded by saying that Poplasen was disrespecting democratic practice according to which a President must act in line with the will of the majority, regardless of his personal motives and beliefs.

0:48

The IPTF Spokesperson for BL and Bihac, Alun Roberts, at a press conference in BL today, stated that IPTF officials were going to return to the town of Srbinje after the RS Ministry of Interior completed their investigation into developments that had taken place following the murder of Dragan Gagovic. According to Roberts, this was going to be a joint investigation by IPTF and the RS Ministry of Interior and was not going to deal with the murder itself. On the situation in Tiskovci and Martin Brod, in the vicinity of the border with the Republic of Croatia, Roberts said that few returns by Serb refugees had, so far, been registered. Roberts praised the move by the responsible Cantonal Ministry making it possible for Serb returnees to Tiskovac to be issued their IDs in the

place itself. Roberts concluded by saying that he had been given a list of Serb police officers from Prijedor wishing to start working in the Una-Sana Canton police and described this as an encouraging signal for returns.

1:50

Kosovo-related-news

4:47

The Independent Media Commission today stated that another two regional advisory boards had been established in Banja Luka and Bihac respectively, so that now there are four such boards in the RS and BiH all together. A press statement released by the Commission went on to say that a meeting that had taken place in Bihac today had discussed the issuance of new licences for radio and TV stations, the new Media Law, media coverage of elections, relations between media and authorities and cross-border programme disturbances.

0:33

Federation-related news

2:15

According to a statement by the Spokesperson for the OHR, Alexandra Stiglmayer, as of 1 February this year, those wishing to phone to the RS or the BiH Federation will need to dial the same country code. The universal country code for the two entities will thus be 387, which is the code currently used for the BiH Federation.

0:35