

OHR SRT News Summary, 16 April 1998

Headlines:

- Easter meeting between Serb Patriarch Pavle and the RS President and the Prime Minister
- A serious test for the DA – two Serbs brutally killed in Drvar
- BH Council of Ministers along with the BH Standing Military Committee met today
- Does Yeltsin have a reserve candidate for the position of Prime Minister

The RS President and the RS Prime Minister today met with Serb Patriarch Pavle. Prime Minister Dodik stated that the meeting discussed general circumstances in the RS.

3:09

President Plavsic and Prime Minister Dodik today separately wished happy Easter holidays to all Orthodox Serbs and all people of Orthodox religion.

1:06

The RS minister of Religions, Jovo Turanjanin, and the Serb Co-chairman of the BH Council of Ministers today wished happy Easter holidays to RS Orthodox believers and the Orthodox church clergy.

0:45

The respective Cabinets of the RS President and the Prime Minister today released a joint statement expressing their outrage and strong protest against a brutal murder of two Serb returnees in Drvar. The statement went on to say that this crime had put the implementation of Annex 7 in jeopardy.

0:50

The Mayor of Drvar, Mile Marceta, at a press conference in Banja Luka today, stated that a Serb couple that had recently returned to Drvar had been brutally murdered in their house in the vicinity of Drvar the previous night. Marceta appealed to the IC, primarily to the Contact Group, to take a firm position on the crime, to condemn it and put pressure on the responsible, including Croatian President Tudjman.

1:50

The UN Spokesperson in BH, Alexander Ivanko, told the press that SFOR troops had recovered dead bodies of an elderly Serb couple from a burning house in the vicinity of Drvar last night. Ivanko specified that the victims were first stabbed and beaten and then shot at. Elizabeth Rehn has requested that the Minister of Interior of Canton 10, along with the Chief of Police in Drvar should be ousted. A UNHCR Spokeswoman stated that Kresimir Zubak and the Federation authorities had been requested to sharply condemn the crime and that a multiethnic police force should be established in the Canton urgently.

2:30

The OHR today condemned in the strongest terms possible the serious incident in Drvar last night. Jacques Klein, who visited Drvar today, described the murder as an act of political violence designed to stop returns to the town.

1:20

The RS Party of Independent Social Democrats today sharply condemned yesterday's murder of two Serbs in Drvar and described it as being designed to hinder democratic efforts aimed at creating conditions for restoring confidence in both entities.

0:36

The RS President recently gave an interview to German "Noise Deutchland" newspaper. On the future of BH, Plavsic stated that she saw it as developing within the framework of the DA towards a loose union, rather than as a centralized country.

2:38

Another session of the BH Council of Minister failed today. The strongest disagreements appear to be related to the ethnic background of officials that are to be appointed to high-level positions within BH joint ministries. The session also discussed the respective Laws on Customs and Custom Fees.

1:46

The BH Standing Military Committee today again failed to make progress on the military representation of BH abroad. Another session has been scheduled for mid May to finally resolve the issue. The meeting in Serb Sarajevo also discussed the Regional and Sub-regional Armament Control programs.

2:11

The RS Minister of Interior, Milovan Stankovic, today visited Serb Sarajevo and met with the key local officials there. Stankovic listed the ongoing police reconstruction and centralization processes as the two main objectives of the Ministry at the present.

2:14

All RS military vehicles will, in the future, carry universal license plates. The Deputy Head of the European Commission Office today delivered the first 3.000 license plates to the RS Army.

1:11

Kosovo situation remains tense. While Albanians continue with peaceful demonstrations asking for an independent Republic of Kosovo, the Serb side seems to be preoccupied preparing for the referendum scheduled for 23rd April. The Deputy U.S. Secretary of State and the German Foreign Minister are expected to meet on the issue in Bonn tomorrow.

1:30

The Contact Group is expected to meet in Rome on 29th April to discuss the current situation in Kosovo, where decisions will

be made on what steps to take next.

0:39

SFOR MND South- West arrested Zoran Zigic, a war crime indictee from Prijedor, in Banja Luka today. According to the Hague indictment, Zigic will be tried for war crimes at the Keraterm concentration camp.

0:29

The U.S. Ambassador in BH, Richard Kauzlarich, today stated that two parallel authorities cannot exist in the territory of the BH Federation, and that these should have merged into one unique system.

0:28

Muslim and Croat representatives last night again failed to reach an agreement on the two-way return to the divided town of Mostar. The Cantonal Government therefore cancelled a session scheduled for last night, which was to adopt a complete refugee return plan at the cantonal level.

0:26