

OHR SRT News Summary, 16 Dec. 1997

Headlines

- New passports in 60 days
- No agreement on Law on Citizenship
- Cheryl Plumridge awarded with the medal of Njego{ of the third rank
- 15 Albanians from Kosovo sentenced to 4-10 years of prison

0:20

The Senior Deputy High Representative for BiH, Hanns Schumacher yesterday demanded the representatives of RS to call for a session of the new Parliament within the time specified by the law. He added that it would be a good sign of progress were the President and the Vice-president of the Parliament to be appointed.

0:30

The member of BiH Presidency from RS, Momcilo Krajisnik, stated that Serb representatives of the BiH Parliament would not accept the law on citizenship without adopting the agreement on dual citizenship made with FR Yugoslavia.

After a meeting with the Head of Russian Diplomacy in BiH, Jakov Gerasimov, he stated that Serbs had the right to obtain dual citizenship and that the President of the BiH Presidency, Alija Izetbegovic, according to Krajisnik, signed the joint statement of the Presidency.

0:40

The House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament adopted the law on Council Ministers and Ministries, and the law on travel

documents, today in Sarajevo. Passports will be issued in 60 days. "The passports of RS will be printed in the Serb language and Cyrillic letters and in the BiH Federation passports will be in the Croatian and Bosniac language and Latin letters", said Albijani}. He stated that Serb delegates at the session of the BiH Parliament yesterday were very disappointed when members of SDA and the Party for BiH, disputing the law on Citizenship, disputed the right of the citizens to obtain the citizenship of FRY. They referred to the Constitution of BiH, while they were breaking the basic principles of the BiH Constitution, the equality of all three constitutive nations and all citizens of BiH, stated Albijani}, and added that Croats in BiH had the right to obtain citizenship of the Republic of Croatia while Serbs are being denied the right of citizenship of their motherland.

Minister Albijani} underlined that this way the Agreement with the BiH Presidency, by which Serbs in BiH can have dual citizenship with FRY, is being denied.

1:00

The President of the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament, Slobodan Bijeli}, stated this morning at the end of a BiH Parliament session that Serb representatives were not responsible for the non-adoption of the law on Citizenship. Expressing the will of the Serb representatives to adopt this law according to the amendments from the Bonn Conference, he stressed, with members of the Coalition for Democratic BiH, that the opinions on dual citizenship for the citizens of BiH had not been agreed.

2:30

President of USA, Bill Clinton, will talk only with the President of RS, Biljana Plav{i}, on behalf of Serb representatives, according to a British newspaper report regarding his trip to Bosnia before Christmas.

0:10

Diplomatic heads from NATO in Brussels today adopted political-military directives for the establishment of four options for the presence of international forces in BiH after the expiration of the SFOR mandate in June 1998. The final decision on the forces is expected, at the latest, at the beginning of March, stated the Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana. Diplomatic heads today discussed the situation in Bosnia and Kosovo. A high official of NATO stated that Ministers have concluded that international forces will have a very active role in the implementation of DA in BiH, closely co-operating with the High Representative for BiH and giving him full support in measures for unblocking the peace process. The Supreme Commander of NATO forces in Europe, American General Wesley Clark, and the President of the Military Committee of NATO, German General Klaus Nelman, informed the Ministers of NATO that the situation in Bosnia was very fragile and that the DA was being realised very slowly. Military officials underlined that the strategic aims of certain parties in BiH significantly differ from DA. Generals Clark and Nelman have warned that if military forces were not present, the Peace Agreement would prove a failure, and therefore it was necessary for military troops to remain in Bosnia after June 1998.

3:00

American State Secretary, Madleine Albright, today asked European allies to provide a larger commitment in forming the police forces in BiH, if Congress supports the prolongation of the mandate for American soldiers in SFOR troops in BiH.

0:50

The polemics in relations between Paris and the International Tribunal for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia are to be resolved, the French press report.

0:40

The President of RS, Biljana Plav{i}, today received the Head of the Office of the High Representative in Banja Luka, Ms

Cheryl Plumridge, at her farewell visit and awarded her with the medal of Njego{ of the third rank.

0:15

Member of the BiH Presidency from RS, Momcilo Krajisnik, said farewell today to the Head of OSCE Mission in BiH, Robert Frowick, thanking him for his efforts and engagement since the signing of DA up until now. "We have separated the function of OSCE from the wonderful person, Robert Frowick", said Krajisnik and wished him all the best in his life and career.

0:30

"The Party of Independent Social Democrats, which won two seats in the National Assembly of RS, would plead for the constitutive Assembly of RS to take place before the New Year", said the President of the party, Milorad Dodik, at a press conference today. He stressed that this party, joined in a weak coalition with the Socialist Party of RS and the Serb National Alliance, would propose that the Government of RS consist of those three parties and, of course, suggested that its location should be in Banja Luka. He announced his meeting today with the representatives of the Socialist Party of RS and the Serb National Alliance regarding this initiative. "Our opinions differ from the opinions of the member of SDS and the radicals in that they wish the Government to be constituted from five parties, allegedly, in order to retain the unity of RS, which is unacceptable. He stated that the Party is satisfied with the adoption of the law on passports and stated that SDA in the BiH Parliament obstructed the adoption of the agreement on dual citizenship for citizens of RS with FRY.

2:00

After the 6th session of the constitutive Assembly in Prijedor, the mayor of Prijedor has been elected; Mr. Drago Grgi}, a qualified economist, is a member of the board of the Serb Radical Party.

1:30

At a press conference of international organisations, the representatives of OSCE, IPTF and SFOR stated the following:

The arrested man Milovan [teti}, an OSCE employee, accused of ethnic cleansing in 1991 to the east of Grada~ac, as well as killing a Croatian policemen in 1992, will stand trial in Gospi}, said a spokesperson for OSCE. He stressed that the members of this organisation intervened with the Croatian Government, but without any positive results. Therefore, the trial will be monitored by OSCE representatives and many other organisations dealing with human rights.

IPTF spokesperson, Alun Roberts, underlined constant incidents taking place in Drvar recently. Last week two Serb returnees were assaulted, one house demolished and one person beaten. He also spoke about the initiative to employ 75 Serb policemen in Drvar, Grahovo, Glamo~ area, who would, after passing a certain course, be assigned to places depending on the authorities in Livno. Concerning Radio St. George, he stated that the equipment of the radio station remains in Banja Luka and a decision of the court is expected to determine who it will belong to.

SFOR spokesperson, Paul Young, strongly denied the insinuation that NATO forces had used uranium while bombing RS. However, NATO forces do not discuss the types of the weapons they use.

2:00

15 out of 17 Albanians from Kosovo accused of terrorism and membership of the terrorist fraction "Liberation Army of Kosovo" have been sentenced from 4-10 years imprisonment.

1:00