

OHR SRT News Summary, 17 Oct. 1997

Headlines:

- The implementation of the Dayton Agreement was the topic of conversation between the RS President Biljana Plavsic and Supervisor for Brcko Robert Farrand and members of the American Congress.
- The Contact Group confirmed that the Parliamentary elections in RS would be held on November 23rd.
- The first Collegiate body meeting of RS MUP in Banja Luka.
- The political crisis in Russia deepened by the discussion on trusting the Government.
- The RS President Biljana Plavsic talked in Banja Luka today with the Supervisor for Brcko Robert Farrand and members of the American Congress.

The topics of these meetings were fully devoted to the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. The focus of the conversation was the implementation of results of the municipal elections in Brcko. Mr. Robert Farrand stated for the journalists that he had talked with the representatives of both entities about the constitution of the new municipal authorities in that town. Mr. Farrand said that the RS Government had not refused cooperation. Upon the invitation of Mr. Robert Farrand, the Vice President of RS, Dragoljub Mirjanic, in the capacity of the RS President Biljana Plavsic's envoy, would participate in the work of the conference on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement and arbitration for the area of Brcko, which would be held in Vienna on Monday.

2:55

The representatives of the Contact Group countries discussed in Rome today the issue of media in RS in the framework of the implementation of the Dayton Agreement and forthcoming elections.

According to what was agreed today, all the political parties should have a fair access to the media in the electoral campaign before the Parliamentary elections, scheduled for November 23rd, and that would be monitored by the Office of the High Representative. The previous requests for demoting the Director General of SRT were repeated. The Contact Group for BiH confirmed in Rome today that the Parliamentary elections in BiH would be held on November 23rd, while the date of the Presidential elections was not mentioned. In the announcement after the meeting, the Contact Group expressed satisfaction with the fact that the OSCE would supervise the Parliamentary elections. The Contact Group also thought that the reorganization of the informative system in whole BiH should be done in accordance with the democratic European standards as soon as possible.

1:15

The American Secretary of Defense denied that there were deep differences between him and State Secretary Madeleine Albright about whether the American soldiers should stay in BiH or not.

1:10

The employees of the SRT Studio Banja Luka sent a letter to the High Representative Carlos Westendorp informing him about the violation of the Agreement Plavsic – Krajisnik – Milosevic and agreement with the international community concerning the functioning of the unique informative system of RS.

1:50

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia announced today that there was no important protocol signed with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of RS, Aleksa Buha during his stay in Moscow, informs Tanjug.

0:25

Today, in Banja Luka, the Collegiate Body of RS MUP took place, and the issues discussed were the reorganization of the police and current problems.

2:00

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Pale – Krajisnik met the Brcko Arbiter, Owen, and discussed a forthcoming session of the arbitration commission to be held in Vienna on October 20, as well as implementation of the [DPA](#), and the Brcko arbitration decision. RS Deputy Foreign Minister, Lukic said that the session in Vienna will be held on the request of the Federation and talk about procedures regarding future work of the arbitration.

2:00

Banja Luka – RS President Plavsic talked with Brcko Supervisor Farrand. He denied that either the right on holding the Orthodox festivities that are devoted to this town or building a new Orthodox church would be excluded by implementation of further measures for Brcko, saying that this information was misinterpreted since he fully supports all religions.

Plavsic also met representatives of the Committee for International Relations with the US Congress, and talked about implementation of the [DPA](#) and the US assistance in reorganisation of the RS police, economy, and infrastructure.

3:00

Belgrade – RS delegation headed by the Parliament Speaker, Kalinic met Patriarch Pavle and his assistants, and discussed issues on religion and further development of relations between the Orthodox Church and the RS authorities.

2:00

Moscow – RS Foreign Minister Buha met the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Atanasyev, and signed a very important agreement on Protocol between the RS and Russia. Buha underlined that the Russian President Yelsin has a positive position regarding the Serb interests. He criticised the RS President because of her co-operation with 'forces which have

tendency to review the [DPA](#)', stressing that the dual authorities will be in power if the only the parliamentary elections are held.

2:00

Flash News:

AP reported that the Contact Group (CG), which held its session in Rome, concluded that all political parties should have an equal media coverage at the forthcoming elections, which will be supervised by OHR. In line with this decision the CG requested the replacement of the Pale TV General Manager Toholj, and asked for journalists to behave US Envoy Gelbard criticised SRT because of the broadcast of the programme from the Serb Sarajevo Studio.

The New York Times said that eastern European countries were strongly against the SFOR action of seizure of the SRT transmitters and hushing of the SRT Pale, comparing it to the communist regime. German media reported that it is no wonder that NATO wants to keep their troops in Bosnia even longer, once they realise that 'strangling' of the RS media is a tough job.

In his interview to Liberation, [NATO Secretary General Solana](#) said that he is in favour of the extension of the SFOR mandate. He said that several months that are ahead should be used for reconstruction on the country. He underlined that SFOR guarantees safety and peace. Their mission is to maintain peace, not to cause another war. They are not an occupation army, said Solana.

4:00

Brcko – US soldiers arrested two customs officers at the crossing point at the Croatian and RS border. IPTF representative said that the officers violated Farrand's provision regarding the road-toll ban and established an illegal check-point. Brcko Mayor Pajic said that the arrest

does not have any legal basis, adding that he would demand an urgent explanation from SFOR, IPTF and OHR.

2:00

Statement of the Ministry of Interior (MUP) – an information regarding the increase of crime in, the RS (Bijeljina, Brcko) which even indicate that members of MUP are involved, are created to ruin the reputation of the respective Ministry. The Crime Department in Bijeljina arrested four persons believed to be involved with the above, and it will keep their names secret in line with further actions.

Trebinje – SRT and the police denied information that there were any changes of the police staffing in this town. Deputy Minister of Interior Mandic and his assistants, recently held a meeting with the local police, and concluded that Bijeljina police should carry out an urgent replacement of the staff from Herzegovina, and that all decision that were made by the Banja Luka police should be suspended until the parliamentary elections are held. Commenting on the above, SDS Trebinje said that changes occurred due to the IC request to conduct the reorganisation of the police.

2:00

Belgrade – SDS Serbia decided to establish a commission for protection of the media in the RS, which would fight for freedom of media, speech, and different opinion.

Banja Luka – With regard to beginning of the Pale TV work, the Banja Luka studio sent a letter to HR Westendorp accusing the Pale studio for usurping the network and violating the Belgrade Agreement, and demanded from HR Westendorp to ban their work. Is it possible that colleagues who should respect the right on different opinion are actually exercising the dictatorship, accusing us for violation of the Agreement according to which this studio has the right to participate. Instead of democratic dialogue, constructive co-operation, and struggle for protection of journalism, they are using the same

methods that are being used by those (the IC) who want to destroy media if it does not suit them.