

OHR SRT News Summary, 21 February 1999

Headlines

- In Rambouillet – additional negotiations on the agreement for resolving the Kosmet crisis
- Albanian terrorists again attacked Serbian security forces and civilian population
- Svetozar Mihajlovic: "The RS President is the supreme commander of its armed forces"

The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright did not manage to convince the Albanian delegation to accept the peace agreement that guarantees autonomy for Kosovo, but does not foresee a referendum on independence, stated the State Department spokesman. James Rubin. Albright then talked to the Serbian President, Milan Milutinovic to see if he would accept both the political and the military part of the agreement. Asked if failure to reach an agreement would automatically mean the bombing of the Serbian side, Rubin said that neither the Americans nor the Contact Group ever said they would automatically launch military attacks, should the Serbian or the Albanian side refuse a part of the agreement.

1:05

The negotiations in Rambouillet continued today after the decision by the Contact Group to extend the deadline for reaching agreement, due to progress in the political part of the negotiations. The Contact Group ministers require the Serbian side to accept the deployment of foreign troops. As stated by the French foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, the Albanian side is expected to accept the sovereignty of the FRY, give up the request to include in the agreement a clause on a referendum on independence after three years and accept the disarmament of the separatist KLA.

2:00

Conflicts in Kosovo continue.

1:00

In his interview to "Itar-Tass" agency, the Serbian President, Milan Milutinovic said that only a political agreement on Kosmet could be signed on February 23, and that the Yugoslav delegation will not agree to the deployment of any foreign troops on Yugoslav territory. He stressed there were many different opinions within the Albanian delegation.

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The German foreign minister Fischer said today there was no possibility of further extending the deadline for reaching an agreement on Kosovo, and that the deployment of allied troops was not negotiable.

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The British foreign minister Robin Cook today warned the Kosovo Albanians that [NATO](#) will probably not attack Yugoslavia if they fail to sign the agreement. He expressed hope that the Albanians would accept the draft agreement and give up the demand for independence.

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The spokesperson for the illegal KLA, Jakub Krasniqi said today that any agreement for Kosovo had to include a referendum on independence after three years and the deployment of [NATO](#) troops.

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"According to the RS Constitution, the supreme commander of the RS armed forces is Nikola Poplasen, the RS President", the CoM Co-Chairman, Svetozar Mihajlovic, told "Srna" agency in his reaction to yesterday's OHR statement. Mihajlovic said there were different views in interpreting the Dayton Accords and BiH and RS Constitutions. "Competent institutions, before all the Constitutional Courts of the RS and the BiH should

take final position on the matter, and until the Constitutions are harmonised, the Entity Constitutions should apply.", stressed Mihajlovic.

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The President of the RS Constitutional Court, Rajko Kuzmanovic thinks that demands for the harmonisation of the Entity Constitutions with the BiH Constitution are in most cases unjustified and only serve to regulate certain political issues. Speaking to the "Srna" agency about the civilian command over the armed forces, Kuzmanovic said the agreement was reached at the level of the BiH Presidency that its members co-ordinate the armed forces of BiH and deal with many issues pertaining to the armed forces, but the command still remains within the competence of the Entities.

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