OHR SRT News Summary, 21 Jan. 1998

Headlines

- The RS Government announces to pay outstanding salaries due to RS teachers
- RS Prime Minister Dodik met with the Mayor of Banja Luka, Djordje Umicevic
- The High Representative, Carlos Westendorp, publicly presented a design of the new BH currency
- Clinton-Netanyahu meeting fails to reach a concrete agreement

According to the statement released by the Cabinet of the RS Prime Minister, the newly elected RS Minister of Interior, Milovan Stankovic, today visited the respective public security centers in Doboj, Bijeljina and Zvornik and met with senior police officers there. The RS Ministry of Interior have informed that a meeting of the expanded collegiate body of the Ministry will be meeting in Bijeljina next Monday. The meeting is also expected to be attended by heads of the respective RS public and state security centers. “I made a decision to convene such a meeting after visiting the majority of public security centers in the RS in the last two days. By doing so, I wish to make clear that from 26th January, the RS Ministry of Interior will become united again and will act as one Ministry throughout the RS”.
1:29

The RS Government have managed to provide funds needed for the payment of salaries due to RS teachers. According to the statement by the RS Governmental Cabinet, the funds will, most likely, be distributed next week. The funds represent part of the support project that has already been authorized by the IC, and that is now to be implemented.

0:27

RS Prime Minister Dodik, along with his associates, met with the Mayor of Banja Luka, Djordje Umicevic, and the President of the local Municipal Executive Council, Nebojsa Radmanovic, in Banja Luka today. “We discussed issues that regard relations between the RS Government and the town of Banja Luka. We also discussed the issue of the future locations of a number of state institutions, including the RS Government. The meeting tackled some practical issues too, such as the one of the local sewage system and other issues of importance in terms of the town of Banja Luka meeting conditions required for a possible capital of the RS. We were not able to answer all of the questions today, but we agreed on the dynamics by which those will be resolved and, also, by which new agreements will be made. Full cooperation will be established between governmental institutions and Banja Luka municipal bodies on these and other matters that may arise in the course of the current year.
1:27

A statement has been released by the Canadian Embassy in Sarajevo saying that the Canadian Government wishes to welcome the decision by the RS Parliament to adopt the proposal on the election of the new RS Prime Minister and the new Government. The statement also says that a senior representative of the Canadian Foreign Ministry will be visiting Banja Luka shortly to met with the newly elected representatives of the RS Government.
1:04

The Serb Patriot Party and the Serb Party of Krajina and Posavina, at their respective press conferences today, expressed support for the new RS Government.
0:28

The Speaker of the RS Parliament, Dragan Kalinic, has scheduled a resumption of the second round of the first

session of the RS Parliament for Saturday, 24th January in Bijeljina. Following the announcement, the RS Governmental Cabinet released a statement saying that the second session of the RS Parliament ended with the election of the new RS Government.

The statement went on to say that the invitation to the alleged resumption of the session represented a continuation of the policy of divisions pursued by the SDS and the Serb Radical Party. “The RS Government have already proposed that the third session of the RS Parliament should take place shortly, in Banja Luka, in order to make it possible for RS MPs and Government members to attend a solemn mass that will be served at the Church of St. Trinity on the first anniversary of the death of professor Koljevic. The Government will not change this position and, therefore, suggest to the Speaker to convene the third session accordingly”.
1:29

The High Representative, Carlos Westendorp, at a press conference in Sarajevo today, presented the press with the design of the new common BH currency, convertible mark. Westendorp and the Governor of the BH Central Bank were the main arbitrators in the final decision-making process on the design of the new currency, for the BH Presidency have not managed to agree on the matter. The new design foresees no national symbols on any bank notes. Westendorp also told the press that he had urged the EU HQ in Brussels to offer urgent financial support for the RS Parliament. According to Westendorp, the EU, the U.S., Japan , the World Bank and other donors seem to be ready to give their support immediately, provided the RS Government give assurances that it will encourage the economic development of the RS and that the funds will be spent legally. Westendorp added that he had been given assurances by the FRY and Croatia that they would help in collecting data on their respective foreign trade with BH in order to prevent any possible frauds, as well as that a

Commission for the Prevention of Corruption had already been established within the OHR.
1:20

UN monitors in Eastern Slavonia have registered the crossing of 387 Serb families at the border with the FRY in the first half of January. A Spokesperson for UN, Susan Manuel, confirmed at a press conference in Belgrade, that 180 UN civilian police officers have been present in Eastern Slavonia since the Croats took over there, and described their presence "as the shadow of the UN mission that was deployed in the area until 15th January".
0:47

The Executive Director of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, Aaron Rhodes, today stated in Belgrade that the situation in Kosovo had escalated to a critical point where it was necessary to hold an urgent international conference similar to the one that had been held in Dayton. Stressing that the Kosovo issue should be resolved similarly to the BH one, Rhodes appealed to Milosevic to immediately accept an international arbitration in resolving the crisis there. "The IC will not accept the position of the Belgrade regime claiming that Kosovo was an internal issue of Serbia and the FRY". While a proposal by Athens asking for a conference to be scheduled where the respective representatives of Serbia and the Kosovo Albanians would establish contacts and have direct dialogue has still not been responded to by the official circles in Belgrade. The Albanian Prime Minister has welcomed such an initiative.
0:44