OHR SRT News Summary, 26 August 1999

- The RS Governments finds Talic's arrest unacceptable;
- VRS will stop relations with the ones responsible for Talic's arrest, says the VRS General Staff;
- FRY requested an urgent session of the UN Security Council due to the massacre of 13 Serb civilians;
- bodies of Gypsy refugees recovered from the Adriatic Sea;
- HR appointed Special Envoy for Srbinje;

Lt. Gen. Talic is in custody of the Hague Tribunal since 19:30 last night and will appear before the Court on Monday, said Paul Risley (ICTY Spokesman). The RS Government assessed the Talic's arrest as a heavy political blow emphasising that the manner of the arrest was totally unacceptable. The item was followed by the statement of Dodik who condemned the arrest and said it would have political consequences. The RS Government will take measures including the establishing of the Documentation centre that will collect evidences of the genocide against the Serbs. Other items on the Government agenda were: auditing institutions, international aid, situation in the education (commending the policy of the Education Ministry), draft law on privatisation of apartments, draft decision on additional vouchers, funds for local development, KCD request to enter the RS Government ("Sloga" Coalition will soon meet KCD). Radisic and Plavsic also attended the session. VRS issued the press release saying that the VRS will stop all relations with institutions responsible for Talic's arrest. The press release further reads that the VRS is embittered with Talic's arrest and said it will undermine efforts aimed at the implementation of the DPA. Press release was issued after the meeting of the Extended Collegium of the VRS Chief of Staff. The RS Ministry of

Defence condemns Talic's arrest based on sealed indictment. the press release emphasised the high reputation of Talic, saying this is an attack on the RS, its Army and its people. Svetozar Mihajlovic condemns Talic's arrest as violation of basic human rights. Mihajlovic said that sealed indictments are reserved for Serbs only and requested urgent establishing of delegation to visit the Hague Tribunal. Biljana Plavsic said that the entire RS is stunned with the arrest of Talic. Talic's arrest should not be treated separately from the events in Kosovo where the genocide against the Serbs is taking place. SRT also carried the statements of SPRS (condemning the arrest), Serb Coalition for the RS (same tone, carrying the statements of radic, Lazarevic and Zupljanin) and "Sloga" Veterans' Organisation. SRT also carried the news on Russian criticising Talic's arrest and French authorities welcoming the arrest. SRT carried the statements of SRS, Social-liberal Party of the RS and Democratic Party of the RS (all condemning the arrest), Haris Silajdzic who said that justice has to be satisfied, SFOR who said this will not affect relations with the VRS and ICTY spokesman (Jim Landale) calling the RS authorities for co-operation, Chris Benett (former head of ICG) anticipating the protests throughout the RS. SRT also carried inflammatory statements of Ivica Dacic (SPS Spokesman) and Vojislav Seselj (SRS) on Talic's arrest, as well as the statement of SPO.

BiH Council of Ministers held a session in Sarajevo today; The IMF representatives also attended the session and pointed out the problems in implementation of stand-by arrangements. CoM also discussed the problems of harmonisation of entity budgets with state budget and stressed that urgent measures had to be taken regarding the issue.

Kosovo and FRY related news SRT carried the news on Yugoslavia protesting at the UN Security Council against the massacre of Serb civilians in the vicinity of Gnjilane, 40 bodies of Gypsy civilians recovered from the Adriatic Sea, growing tension

between Russian K-for and Albanians in Orahovac, US K-for is building the big military base in the vicinity of Urosevac, the Synod of the Serb Orthodox Church scheduled the extraordinary session for 13th of September.

SRT dedicated the second part of the report to the FRY political scene and to the extraordinary local elections in Serbia;

SRT carried the statements of Dacic (SPS Spokesman), Vojislav Seselj (SRS), Milovan Bojic (JUL);

All these parties commended the extraordinary elections and expressed their full confidence regarding the election results claiming that opposition stood no chance to win the elections. SRT also carried the statements of Vladan Batic (the Alliance for Changes Co-ordinator), and Vesna Pesic (GSS- "The Civic Alliance of Serbia") who said that opposition should not participate in the elections if Milosevic is the one who sets the rules. Draga Grubic (SRT correspondent from Belgrade) reports on protest of pensioners in the centre of Belgrade;

Protest rally of pensioners in Banja Luka; SRT made its own coverage of the refugee return in Sokolac, where the reconstruction of the houses for Bosniak returnees started. SRT reported on visit of Bosniak returnees to village Banjalucica in the vicinity of Sokolac. The aim of this reconstruction is to ensure the return of 113 Bosniaks who live in Serb apartments in Sarajevo. SRT interviewed some of the returnees who were complaining of water supply system and power-supply. OHR spokesman James Fergusson on OHR decision to appoint the special Envoy for Srbinje;