

OHR SRT News Summary, 5 April 1998

Headlines

- Prime Minister Dodik at Zvornik hydrated alumina factory
- Serb protests in Bonn – dialogue on Kosovo -YES, violence – NO
- Belgrade automobile fair finished
- Chinese diplomatic offensive – Prime Minister in Paris
- Unique sports spectacle in the streets of Banja Luka – Vivicitta race

RS Prime Minister Dodik today visited the aluminium hydroxide factory in Zvornik to research the possibilities of reactivating production there. A meeting between Dodik and factory representatives concluded that US \$8 million would be necessary to ensure the continuity of aluminium hydroxide production. The meeting was also attended by RS Minister for Refugees and DPs Dragicevic.

2:13

The Mayor of Bologna, Valter Vitali, visited the RS and the town of Banja Luka this weekend. Vitali was today received by the RS Vice-President, Dragoljub Mirjanic. The Bologna Mayor stated that Bologna, along with Berlin, Copenhagen, Strasbourg, Stockholm, Rotterdam, Rome, Venice and Torino, were prepared to offer the hand of friendship to Banja Luka, which is expected to become a member of a large European association of towns committed to building peace and a better future. He announced that the Association of European Towns was planning to open an office in Banja Luka shortly.

2:11

The situation in Kosovo continues to attract attention both internally and internationally. A Serb protest rally was held

today in Bonn in the immediate vicinity of the office of the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl. (Report by Dejan Vasiljevic, a correspondent from Bonn): The rally signaled that world media continued to misrepresent events in Kosovo, appealed for a dialogue between the parties but refuted any possible foreign involvement. Some banners expressed doubts about the sincerity of initiatives to get a third party involved in negotiations on the matter. However, while Bonn stressed that the territorial integrity of Serbia must be preserved, initiatives continue to press for a third party as a mediator in the ongoing negotiations. The rally announced that a new series of Serb protests would start on 25th April.

4:12

The Serbian National Assembly is to meet tomorrow to discuss the proposal to hold a referendum on the possible involvement of the IC in resolving the situation in Kosovo. The Radical Party, the JUL, the Serb Movement of Renewal and the SPS have already expressed their willingness to support the proposal. Regarding a new round of negotiations scheduled for 7th April, Kosovo Albanian leaders have already announced that they would not attend the meeting without the presence of a third party.

1:17

The 37th international automobile fair is to end in Belgrade at 21:00 hrs this evening. Over 500,000 people have visited the fair during the last 10 days.

1:53

About six months ago, the Banja Luka heating plant was granted a US \$500,000 credit by the World Bank to purchase necessary equipment, train staff and design a heating plan. However, DM 600,000 allocated for the plan has just disappeared into a Hungarian bank. Namely, 138,000 DM was paid to a consulting company tasked with designing a plan.

However, on realising that the heating plant had not cooperated with the World Bank on the matter, the responsible Bank suspended payment. The director of the Banja Luka heating

plant claims that his signature was forged and that the World Bank never responded to his request that this should be checked. A representative of the World Bank, Domenis, claims that the money has to be returned to the Bank.

3:04

Semi-official sources in Zagreb are speculating on possible replacements for present HDZ hard-line leaders.

0:18

The French President, Jacques Chirac, will be visiting BH tomorrow and the day after. This is Chirac's first visit to the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

0:28

Muslim and Croat Ministers of the Hercegovina-Neretva Canton yesterday again failed to agree on the return of refugees to the six municipalities of divided Mostar, in spite of efforts by Sir Martin Garrod to get the plan adopted. The Mayor of Mostar, Safet Urucevic, appealed to the IC to introduce political and financial sanctions against the Croat side due to their obstruction of Annex 7.

1:12

The BH Federation Trade Union Congress have appealed to Federation top-level officials to cease illegal privatisation by private and state companies from Croatia in the Hercegovina-Neretva Canton. Illegal privatisation activities were made possible based on laws passed by the self-declared Republic of Herceg-Bosnia, which should have been dissolved under the DA.

0:52