OHR SRT News Summary, 6 March 1998

Headlines

- Lieutenant-General Momir Talic officially takes over as Chief of the RS Army General-Staff
- Canada announces humanitarian assistance for the RS
- Prime Minister Dodik – opening of the RS towards the world to back its prosperity
- BH Parliamentary Assembly House of Peoples fails to pass laws on the common flag and the policy of foreign investments

RS Minister of Finance, Novak Kondic, today confirmed that the payment of outstanding salaries due to RS public servants for the months of December and January would start on Monday, 9th March 1998.
0:10

Members of the BH Parliament House of Peoples today failed to pass the draft law on the BH flag and the draft law on the policy of foreign investments. The 7th session of this common body discussed the same agenda as the session of the BH House of Representatives yesterday. The session adopted two economic projects: the reconstruction of the natural gas pipe line and the reconstruction of the BH electric power supply system.
1:44

President Plavsic today met with the Canadian Minister for International Cooperation, Diana Marleau. Marleau announced that the Canadian Government was going to contribute 1 million Canadian dollars to support the RS budget. Another 2 million Canadian $ is currently available to support the power supply system. The Canadian Minister promised to try to resolve the problem of collective accommodation for refugees and DPs in

due course. Plavsic also held a protocol meeting with the newly appointed Russian Ambassador in BH, Filip Filipovic Sidorski.
3:04

The situation continues to be tense in the area of Drenica (Kosovo). While unofficial Serb sources claim that no major fighting took place during last night and today, Kosovo Albanians claim that the fighting continued throughout the day. According to a BETA report, shooting and explosions were recorded around the village of Srebica this afternoon. According to Albanian sources, the number of Kosovo Albanians that were killed during the violent fighting yesterday was 50, not 20 as reported by the Serbian Ministry of Interior. The Greek Foreign Minister today arrived in Belgrade and met with President Milosevic of Yugoslavia, President Milutinovic of Serbia and Foreign Minister Jovanovic. The Greek Minister stated that his country condemned all terrorist actions and was against any changes to the current borders, but was advocating respect for human rights in Kosovo. No official statement has yet been released by the Serbian Ministry of Interior, whereas the state media keep broadcasting a statement by the Pristina Municipal Assembly describing the security situation in the area as good.
2:07

Ambassadors of the Contact Group member states, led by the British Ambassador, Bryan Daniel, today visited Kosovo and expressed concern at the current situation there and the possibility of the on-going conflict spreading to a wider area.
0:18

A Pentagon spokesperson, Kenneth Bacon, stated that he was not aware of any plans by either the U.S. or NATO to deploy troops in Kosovo. The NATO secretary-general, Javier Solana, stated that the main responsibility for the present situation in Kosovo lay with President Milosevic. German Foreign Minister

Kinkel today stated that the situation in Kosovo was developing into a new critical hotbed and announced an international preventive diplomatic initiative to force Belgrade to be restrained and to work to reach compromises, as well as to activate the moderate wing of the Kosovo Albanians. The Russian Parliament House of Commons are preparing a statement condemning terrorist actions by separatists in Kosovo and stressing the importance of a dialogue between the official authorities and the Kosovo Albanians. The President of the European Council Parliamentary Assembly, Lenny Fisher, today assessed that the violence in Kosovo could only be prevented from escalating through an urgent political dialogue.
1:50

RS Prime Minister Dodik, along with 11 ministers and his associates, today visited the area of Hercegovina, where he held meeting with representatives of 10 different municipalities on the economic reconstruction of this part of the RS. Dodik also met with representatives of local political parties and local business people.
1:58

Lieutenant-General Momir Talic today officially took over from Brigadier-General, Pero Colic, as the Chief of the RS Army General Staff. The official ceremony was also attended by RS President Plavsic. At the ceremony, General Talic introduced members of his General-Staff.
3:01

The Speaker of the RS Parliament, Dragan Kalinic, has scheduled the forth session of the RS Parliament for 14th March in Banja Luka. The agenda is expected to contain 37 items, including discussion on the RS budget for 1998.
0:17

The IPTF Spokesperson in Banja Luka, Alun Roberts, confirmed that Dragoljub Kunarac, a Serb war crime suspect, had been

transported to the Hague Tribunal and that in due course the public would be informed about the contents of charges against him. Roberts went on to say that, following the increased incidents of arson in the area of Drvar, IPTF representatives met with the Cantonal Minister of Interior to request that police presence should be strengthened in the area. On a planned visit of Serbs to Kupres this weekend, Roberts said that the local authorities there had refused to assume responsibility for providing safety for visiting Serbs.
1:13

The RS Ministry of Interior today released a statement, appealing to those members of the RS Government and employees of state bodies and institutions who were in possession of vehicles registered as Ministry vehicles, to return those vehicles to the Ministry in Bijeljina within 48 hours at the latest.
0:34