

OHR SRT News Summary, 8 January 1999

On the occasion of the Day of the Republic and the Patron Saint's Day of the RS, Saint Stephen, on January 9, by the order of the RS President Nikola Poplasen, honorary artillery fire was performed tonight, 15 salvos from 12 artillery pieces. The main ceremony will be held in Brcko. The RS President Nikola Poplasen will give a speech at the academy, which is to be preceded by the holding of a holy liturgy. Tomorrow's ceremony will be attended by a great number of invitees from the RS and the FRY, as well as representatives of the international organisations and ambassadors accredited to BiH. On the occasion of the Day of the Republic and the Patron Saint's Day of the RS, and according to constitutional and legal authority, the RS President Nikola Poplasen has awarded several medals to fallen soldiers of the RS, enterprises, distinguished foreigners and RS citizens. President Poplasen has also made a decision to pardon a number of convicted persons in the RS. On the occasion of the Day of the Republic, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to BiH, Filip Filipovic Sidorski has sent greetings to the RS President Nikola Poplasen and all RS citizens, wishing great success in creating a better future. The RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik, on behalf of himself and the RS Government, has sent greetings to all RS citizens on the occasion of the Day of the RS expressing the most sincere wishes for progress and welfare. The RS vice-president Mirko Sarovic has also sent greetings to RS citizens with best wishes. On the eve of the Day of Republic, remembrance of all those innocent victims of World War II; report follows.

5:30

Prior to the main celebration of the Day of the RS, the RS President Nikola Poplasen with his associates arrived in Brcko

tonight. On arrival, the President inspected a company of the RS Army that was lined up in his honour. After the inspection, the RS President was welcomed by the RS National Assembly Speaker Petar Djokic, the Head of the RS Army General Staff HQ Momir Talic, Commander of the Third Corps of the RS Army Momir Zec, the Mayor of Brcko Borko Reljic and representatives of the Brcko authorities. The RS President Nikola Poplasen is to visit the Brcko Port and to meet with businessmen from the region.

1:10

The Board of War Invalids of the RS Veterans' Organisation considers that there is no need for passing a new law on the rights of veterans, war invalids and the families of fallen soldiers. The provisions, which will define the penalty measures for violation of the rights of this population category, should be put into the existing law. This standpoint was presented at today's constitutive session of the Board of this Organisation in Brcko. A report from the session.

1:25

"The day of the RS is for all of us a solemn and committing day which offers the RS President the possibility of correcting some of his actions so far", Biljana Plavsic, the SNS president and the president of the Coordinating Board of the Coalition "Sloga" stated to the Serb news agency. According to Biljana Plavsic, President Poplasen is offered a possibility to deprive Miljus of the mandate, after, as she said, his disastrous moves, and went on to say that it is time that the President of the Republic, in her opinion, stops humiliating the people, Srna reports.

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The latest statements of Brane Miljus have also initiated numerous reactions and conflicting opinions. The SNSD Main Board sent a letter to the RS President Nikola Poplasen requesting him to remove the mandate from Brane Miljus immediately and to respect, as it is stated, the real

interests of the RS and the political reality. The SDS Presidency today presented its reservations regarding the latest statements of the prime minister designate for the composition of the new RS Government. The press release of the SDS Presidency followed Miljus's statement for Sarajevo Television 99 that he is ready to form a multiethnic government of the RS. The Radical Party of the RS calls upon the RS President Nikola Poplasen to give the mandate to a person who can form a Government, unlike the current prime minister designate. "When somebody states that he advocates the multiethnic government without the SDS and the SRS, the government of experts, and that he is proud of not taking part in the war which he himself defines as civil and religious, then he belongs to the politics of the past. Only the prime minister designate does not understand yet that BiH, during the war, experienced transformation, expressed by the Dayton Agreement. The outcome is the establishment of the RS and the BiH Federation". The Republic Association of families of captured and fallen soldiers and missing civilians of the RS issued a press release regarding some assessments on the past homeland war which Brane Miljus, newly-elected prime minister designate, gave in his interview for the Independent Sarajevo Television "Studio 99". "We cannot accept the assessment by which Miljus underlines that he is proud of not taking part in the past war which created the RS". "It is absurd, according to our deep belief, that such a person intends to be the Prime Minister of the Republic which he, by the aforementioned assessment, in a certain sense, denies. How does Mr. Miljus intend to form a compromise government of the RS when he, by these and similar assessments, hurts the feelings of numerous families of fallen and captured soldiers, missing civilians and all RS patriots". The Coalition for King and Homeland believes that the appointment of Brane Miljus for the new RS prime minister designate by the RS President Nikola Poplasen, has offended the whole Serb people. In the press release of this Coalition sent to Srna, it is stated that the prime minister designate, during the greatest Orthodox holiday,

Christmas, was composing a multiethnic government in Sarajevo. In that way, he insulted all veterans and families of fallen and missing soldiers, especially by his statement that he is glad for not participating in the war. "We call upon all the Serb parties, associations of veterans and refugees, families of fallen and missing soldiers to condemn such acts of the prime minister designate and to distance themselves from his statements". "The prime minister designate has planned to give the post of deputy speaker and the posts of four ministers to the KCDBiH", claims Sulejman Tihic, an SDA deputy within the KCDBiH in the RS National Assembly, Srna reports. Tihic stated that after the meeting with Miljus, the parties, which the Coalition consists of, should meet and hold certain consultations in order to make a final decision. The President of the Democratic Party from the FRY Zoran Djindjic stated that little has been done in the political maturing of the RS and that there are not many reasons for celebrating. "The RS is Milosevic's hostage and his current plan is to return to the political scene in a bizarre manner by causing a political crisis there". Srna reports that sources from the BiH SDP have confirmed that the prime minister designate Brane Miljus has held consultations with this parliamentary party stating that Miljus offers 8 mandates to the Moslem deputies and 5 mandates to the Croat deputies in the new RS Government.

5:50

Kosovo-related news.

3:30

Dabro-Bosanski Metropolitan Nikolaj held today, on the second day of Christmas, a holy liturgy in the presence of about 100 Orthodox believers, residents of Sarajevo, in the old Orthodox Church on Bascarsija in Sarajevo.

1:25

News from the BiH Federation.

2:10

News from the world.

3:15