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BH VRS /Republika Srpska Army/ Main Staff

Strictly confidential no. 02/5-33

17.06.1992.

u r g e n t

Raised level of combat readiness in the Birač Brigade, order

To: Eastern Bosnia Corps Command

(the commander, personally)

We looked at the level of combat readiness and tasks in the Birač brigade during the past few days and established that the brigade is militarily well-organised, that the brigade commander is familiar with the situation in the brigade and has good judgement. The brigade has well-set tasks, namely 1) securing that it is possible to pass along the axis: Vlasenica – Šekovići – Caparde – Zvornik, 2) closing down the Kalesija-Zvornik road, 3) providing conditions for the functioning of the bauxite mine in Milići, 4) crossroads under the control of Sereg /sic/, in the region of Cerska. However, the brigade command does have certain problems, most of which are your responsibility. The problems are as follows: 1) slow and indecisive action by the Zvornik brigade, which put the right flank of the Birač brigade in its defence along the axis Kalesija-Zvornik into direct danger, 2) 350 combatants from the Virač /sic, probably Birač/ are engaged in and around Zvornik outside the brigade, 3) the brigade has close to 600 prisoners – you did not establish a camp for war prisoners at corps level and 4) the brigade has a mixed artillery division of weak capabilities – 3 90-mm self-propelled guns, 6 self-propelled AAA gun and 6 120-mm mortars.

This, in order to have full control over the area of Birač and to secure the corridor between Romanija and Semberija and to maintain a link with Serbia.

I hereby o r d e r :

1. The chief of the BH VRS Main Staff shall equip one 105-mm howitzer battery (6 weapons) and attach it to the commander of the Birač brigade. He shall personally establish a mixed artillery division in the Birač brigade consisting of: 105-mm howitzers (6 weapons), a 76-mm self-propelled AAA gun battery (6 weapons), one 120-mm mortar company and one 90-mm self-propelled gun platoon (3 weapons). They firing systems will be connected in the area of Vlasenica, Zvornik, Kalesija, Živinice and Kladanj.
2. The Eastern Bosnia Corps Command shall:
 - secure safe, constant and protected communication with the Birač, Zvornik and Ozren brigade;
 - organise and activate the Zvornik brigade, so as to engage sufficient forces for activities from the line: Metaljka- Križevići towards the village of Mededo in order to connect with forces in Majeвица. Linking the wider area between Birač and Semberija and securing the right flank of the Birač brigade engaged in the defence of the axis: Kalesija-Zvornik. Take action together with the authorities in Zvornik and Birač to return 350 /illegible/ of the Birač brigade from the area of Zvornik return to the brigade. Their families are to be secured by the Serbian authorities in Zvornik.
 - the corps is to set up a camp of war prisoners pursuant to our order, confidential no. 18/28-6 dated 12.06.1992. The brigade is to be relieved of guarding prisoners.
 - the commander of the Birač brigade shall: 1) organise and have secure communication with its battalions and the Zvornik brigade 2) in a joint operation with the Zvornik brigade enemy forces are to be repelled as far as possible from the Kalesija-Zvornik road and 3) secure safe passage for our forces along the axis: Zvornik-Caparde-Vlasenica at any cost.

And vice versa, including the repairs and maintenance of roads, by relying on workers from Milići /as written/.

The road between Milići-Konjevići-Zvornik and Konjevići-Bratunac is to be liberated.

3. The tasks are to be carried out as soon as possible, by 21.06.1992. the latest. The BH VRS Main Staff is to be informed in a regular combat report.

Commander

Lt General

Ratko MLADIĆ

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RECEIVED 17.06.1992. 1910 /signed/

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PROCESSED: 17.06.1992. 1935 /signed

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