

BiH Media Round-up, 1/4/2002

BiH State-related Issues

- Unless they sack removed officials, some political parties will not be able to run in October elections
- Removed officials from the RS say Petritsch's decision is violating their rights
- BiH gets 30 million dollars from World Bank for road improvements

Constitutional Reform

- FRY, RS officials: RS is ready to implement the agreement on constitutional changes
- Party for BiH: We reached our maximum with the agreement
- SDP says constitutional deal will end "political manipulations"
- SNSD' Molorad Dodik: Agreement will create a new national homogenization
- DNS leader: Constitutional deal "last nail in Serb Republic's coffin"
- RS Prime Minister says RS will implement constitutional changes itself
- Serb member of BiH Presidency fears accord could paralyse government
- SDA: Alliance secured the RS position
- OHR: SDA and HDZ are misinforming the public
- French ambassador in BiH: RS is becoming a multiethnic entity
- Wolfgang Petritsch: Dayton period has ended
- Miroslav Mikes: substance of the agreement must stay the same, but details can be discussed
- LDS: Parties that fail in implementing the CC decision should be banned from running in the elections
- Bosniak intellectuals: RS still mostly Serb
- Serb Civic Council: Returnees will win the most from the Agreement on constitutional changes
- "BiH – chances and perspectives for development" supports the agreement on constitutional changes
- Bijeljina based TV station: opinion poll on constitutional changes

Republika Srpska

- Mass grave containing 11 bodies found in western BiH
- No construction in Kotorsko until the OHR revokes the ban
- Former FRY intelligence officer says RS will extradite Mladic

International Community

- Wolfgang Petritsch most responsible for good results in process of return
- ICG: Misrule of laws in BiH
- AFP: Belgrade misses deadline for improving cooperation with ICTY

Editorials

Headlines

BiH State-related Issues

Unless they sack removed officials, some political parties will not be able to run in October elections

Oslobodjenje reports that the BiH Election Commission will ban HDZ, SDA, SRS (Serb Radical Party) and HD (Croat Christian Democrats) from running in the upcoming elections in October unless they eliminate all officials previously removed by the High Representative due to obstruction of the Dayton peace agreement. The daily notes, quoting anonymous sources, that the HDZ will have to strip Ante Jelavic, Zdravko Batinic, Marko Tokic and Ivo Andric Luzanski of the party membership, SDA will have to do the same with Edhem Bicakcic, while Nikola Poplasen (SRS) and Petar Milic (HD) will also have to resign from senior posts in their respective parties.

OHR spokesman Oleg Milisic explained that in order to be eligible to participating in the upcoming elections, political parties whose candidates and senior officials have been removed by the High Representative have to eliminate such officials from most important posts, namely, the party president, vice president and the secretary. "The candidates who have been removed by the PEC (Provisional Election Commission) or the EASC (Elections Appeals Sub-commission) cannot be on any party candidates list. The BiH Election Commission is obliged to remove them off these lists immediately," said Milisic.

NOTE: Federation media carry extensive articles and commentaries on the High Representative's decision issued on Friday banning parties with senior post occupied by removed officials from running in the elections.

Removed officials from the RS say Petritsch's decision is violating their rights

Several officials from the Rs who were earlier removed by the High Representative because of obstruction of Dayton Peace Agreement say Petritsch's Friday decision (see above) is violating their human rights. Petar Dzodan, former deputy Minister for Refugees in the RS, Djordje Umicevic, former Banja Luka mayor and Nikola Poplasen, leader of the Serb Radical Party (SRS) – all removed by the High Representative – are unanimous in criticizing Petritsch's decision, claiming that their removals were unfounded and arguing that the High Representative is putting himself above the law in BiH. "Such decisions open the way for disrespecting the interests and the will of the people," said Ognjen Tadic, secretary general of the SRS.

BiH gets 30 million dollars from World Bank for road improvements

The World Bank Thursday approved 30 million dollars in credit for Bosnia and Herzegovina to aid in rehabilitating the nation's roads. The money will be used to repair roads that are in poor condition and have a higher rate of accidents, the bank said in a statement carried by most media in BiH. By reducing road transport costs and facilitating local, regional and international commerce, this project will also support private sector-led growth and employment, and will stand as an important integration factor. Road transport accounts for 95 percent of BiH's movement of goods and passengers.

Constitutional Changes

FRY, RS officials: RS is ready to implement the agreement on constitutional changes

All media in BiH report that FRY President Vojislav Kostunica and the RS leadership termed positive on Friday in Belgrade the agreement on constitutional changes in BiH, adding that some political parties in the RS reserve the right to make minor corrections of this deal. Beta news agency reports that FRY was satisfied with the "unity of

political parties in the RS and which was best demonstrated during the talks in the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo.

Kostunica and the RS delegation led by the entity president, Mirko Sarovic, said that the agreement reached in the OHR represents a good basis for drafting constitutional amendments which would be in line with the Constitutional Court's decision on constituent peoples in BiH. "FRY, as a guarantor of the Dayton Peace Agreement genuinely wants to see BiH, with two equal entities, becoming a functional state capable of resolving its internal problems," said Kostunica's cabinet in a statement for the press.

After the meeting, Sarovic stressed that the RS is ready to implement the Constitutional Court's decision and the agreement reached in Sarajevo OHR early Thursday. However, he added, RS parties also have some reservations towards this document and will try to "fix disputed issues" in the coming days.

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic, entity's vice president Dragan Cavic and the speaker of the RS National Assembly, Dragan Kalinic, were also in the delegation which visited Belgrade on Friday.

Party for BiH: We reached our maximum with the agreement

In an interview with Nezavisne Novine, the president of the Party for BiH, Safet Halilovic, said that the S BiH is satisfied with the agreement on constitutional changes because it represents a certain maximum in constellation of political forces in both entities and the reality of the International Community in BiH. Halilovic stressed that the S BiH would have preferred securing an objective symmetry in two entities, however, because of BiH reality, it had to settle for the symmetry in substance. "In other words, we reached an instrument which will, in essence, secure equal rights of peoples in both entities," said Halilovic.

SDP says constitutional deal will end "political manipulations"

The main board of the Social Democratic Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina [SDP] has said that the agreement on the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court ruling on constituent status of the peoples represents a significant development, adding that the agreement has put an end to political manipulations surrounding the implementation of the ruling. The participants in the session concluded that by signing the agreement, the leaders of the Alliance and representatives of the international community showed readiness to find appropriate solutions – through partnership and by taking into account the current political situation and without abandoning principles – which will guarantee equality for all three constituent peoples in BiH. The first step towards building a normal BiH with two multiethnic entities has been made, the SDP said.

The party said it will insist that the agreement be implemented as soon as possible and says that it will oppose calls for a new debate on the issues defined by the agreement.

SNSD' Molorad Dodik: Agreement will create a new national homogenization

The president of the SNSD (Independent Social Democrats), Molorad Dodik told Nezavisne Novine that the agreement on constitutional changes reached last Thursday may cause new national homogenization. "I am not arguing against the constituent status of all peoples and equality, however, I believe that some solutions have been exaggerated without any basis," said Dodik, explaining that the insistence on the 1991 population census as a basis of distribution of power could lead only to new divisions. "They have been advocating a political platform which brought war to BiH, according to a system that BiH belongs to no one – it is neither Serb, nor Croat, not Bosniak. Since it belonged to no one, everyone tried to grab it for himself," said Dodik in an interview with Nezavisne Novine.

DNS leader: Constitutional deal “last nail in Serb Republic’s coffin”

SRNA news agency quotes chairman of the Democratic National Alliance (DNS), Dragan Kostic, as saying on Friday that the political agreement on constitutional changes in BiH is unacceptable for the DNS, adding that the party would reiterate these stands at the forthcoming session of the RS National Assembly. “Prior to the parliamentary session, the DNS will hold a session of its main committee in order to reach a final position on the issue,” Kostic told journalists before departing for Belgrade, where as part of the Serb delegation, he will participate in talks with Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica and Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. He said that he “sees the political agreement on constitutional changes as the last nail in the coffin, which some have been preparing for the RS for a long time”.

RS Prime Minister says RS will implement constitutional changes itself

SRNA news agency quotes RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, as saying on Thursday that he believes that there is no reason why the RS should be largely unhappy with the agreement on constitutional changes as the agreement secured a Serb majority in all governing institutions. Ivanic said that the RS would not accept any imposed solutions and that it will endorse all constitutional changes on its own through the RS National Assembly. “The Serb Republic appreciates the views of the Contact Group with regard to constitutional amendments, but it will be making decisions on its own through the RS NA which will determine the character of the constitutional amendments. We will not accept any imposed solutions”, Ivanic told journalists in Banja Luka.

Serb member of BiH Presidency fears accord could paralyse government

SRNA news agency quotes Serb member of the BiH Presidency Zivko Radisic as saying that it was not good that the process of finding a solution to constitutional changes in the entities had departed from the framework of the BiH Constitutional Court ruling on the constituent status of the BiH peoples. He told journalists that he was afraid that some solutions which were being offered would be used to block and paralyze the governing bodies. “I think that it is not good that the dialogue on the BiH constitutional concept has been imposed and accepted, as well as questions such as whether the entities and cantons were necessary and whether the RS was necessary and what the RS stands for,” Radisic said. Radisic believes that no one has the right to negotiate about these questions, adding that they relate to the “permanent constitutional and legal category of defining the Dayton peace accord which could only be dealt with and decided by the peoples and citizens of BiH”. “The Dayton concept of BiH must be preserved, as should the RS as one of its constitutive and legal parts,” Radisic said.

SDA: Alliance secured the RS position

The president of the SDA, Sulejman Tihic, said on Saturday that representatives of his party in the Federation Parliament will vote against the agreement on constitutional changes agreed in the OHR last Thursday. Tihic said that the agreement offers solutions which preserve the principle of majority decision-making and domination of the Serb people at a detriment of Croats and Bosniaks. “This agreement put yet another stamp for survival of the RS in a legal framework and it comes as no surprise that the SDS has accepted it,” said Tihic, adding that the agreement weakens the state and leads towards further divisions. (All media in the Federation quote Tihic)

SDP strongly rejected Tihic’s accusations, stressing that the SDS did not fully accept the agreement.

OHR: SDA and HDZ are misinforming the public

Commenting on the recent statements by leaders of the HDZ and SDA on the agreement on constitutional changes, OHR spokesperson Alexandra Stiglmayer told Dnevni Avaz that these parties are by and large misinforming the public. "The agreement reached on Thursday is in essence symmetrical. The only difference is the election of deputies for the Council of Peoples in the RS, because in the Federation, that is done by the cantonal assemblies, which do not exist in the RS. In the RS, this will be done by the National Assembly, that is, by the delegates in municipal assemblies. The principle in both cases is the same – representatives of one people select their deputies in the Council of Peoples," Stiglmayer stressed. She added that SDA and HDZ in their statements use incorrect facts and information thereby further politicizing this issue. "The agreement secures parity distribution of six major functions – entity prime ministers, chairmen of both chambers of entity parliaments, presidents of entity Supreme and Constitutional courts, as well as Public Prosecutors," Stiglmayer explained dismissing the allegations that the agreement will not allow for the adequate protection of vital national interests and equality of all peoples in BiH. (Front page story in Avaz on Saturday)

French ambassador in BiH: RS is becoming a multiethnic entity

In an interview with Dnevni Avaz, the French ambassador in BiH, Bernard Bajolet, labeled the agreement on constitutional changes reached among political parties last Thursday as the "greatest document for BiH since Dayton." "This agreement does not change Dayton on paper, but it certainly changes its spirit," said Bajolet, adding that the document puts an end to ethnic cleansing in both entities and leaves room for even greater symmetry. Bajolet believes that the agreement is good for all three peoples and all citizens in BiH and that it will turn the RS into a multiethnic entity. "The agreement strengthens the entities, but it also makes them multiethnic. RS is no longer the entity of Serb people. It is certain that the Serbs will retain the dominant position, but it will no longer be exclusively dominant," said Bajolet, stressing that the Federation also strengthens the position of Serbs and Croats, despite the contrary claims of the HDZ.

Wolfgang Petritsch: Dayton period has ended

In an interview with the Viennese Kurier, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, said that the adoption of the agreement on constitutional changes in BiH has put an end on the post-war and post-Dayton period in this country. "The population has woken up from the nationalist nightmare and realized that the nationality and identity will not win them their daily bread," said Petritsch. (Dnevni Avaz, Jutranje Novine and Oslobodjenje carried excerpts of the interview)

Miroslav Mikes: substance of the agreement must stay the same, but details can be discussed

The chairman of the RS Constitutional Commission, Miroslav Mikes, expressed hope that deputies in the RS National Assembly will, at its session scheduled for April 4, adopt amendments to the entity constitution thereby implementing the Constitutional Court's ruling on constituent peoples. "Constitutional changes are an important moment for the RS and one should not be concerned with details, but instead, focus on the implementation of the CC ruling," said Mikes, adding that political leaders in RS and the Federation must accept a compromise on this issue. "The substance of this agreement cannot be changed, however, it is possible to improve certain details," Mikes said. Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz carry reports from Mikes's press conference.

LDS: Parties that fail in implementing the CC decision should be banned from running in the elections

In a shorter interview with Dnevni Avaz on Saturday, the president of the LDS (Liberal Democratic Party) said that he is satisfied with the agreement on constitutional changes reached last Thursday and fully signed by the Alliance

parties – SDP, Party for BiH and NHI. Kadic believes that the Election Commission should include a provision which would make it binding for political parties to implement the Constitutional Court's ruling on constituent peoples in BiH, or be banned from running in the elections.

Bosniak intellectuals: RS still mostly Serb

The Council Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals (VKBI) said Friday that parts of the agreement on constitutional changes reached in the OHR are unacceptable for Bosniak people because they "legalize ethnic cleansing and the genocidal aggression against BiH." In a statement for the press, Bosniak intellectuals said the agreement offers some solutions which will secure the further existence of the RS as exclusively Serb entity which will not be shared respectively by other constituent peoples and others.

Serb Civic Council: Returnees will win the most from the Agreement on constitutional changes

At a session in Sarajevo, the members of the Serb Civic Council supported the agreement on constitutional changes reached last Thursday in the OHR and called upon the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to continue exerting pressure on entity parliament to ensure the full implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on constituent peoples by mid April. The Council conceded that the agreement is not perfect, but stressed that it secures the symmetrical equality of all three peoples in two entities. "This is the greatest gain for returnees, because there is no political party which will give them equality. Only the Constitution can do that," the SCV said in a statement carried by most media in the Federation.

"BiH - chances and perspectives for development" supports the agreement on constitutional changes

In a letter addressed to the leaders of political parties which signed the Thursday agreement on constitutional changes in the OHR, the organization "BiH - chances and perspectives for development" offered its utmost support for the signed document. The letter was signed by Profs. Mensud Sabitovic, Ljubomir Berberovic, Arif Tanovic, fra Luka Markesic and Jakob Finci.

Bijeljina based TV station: opinion poll on constitutional changes

In a telephone opinion poll carried out by Bijeljina based TV station BN, some 85% of those who participated, stated that they would like to live in an independent RS. Glas srpski reports that 3 260 viewers called to answer the question whether they would rather live with other nations in a joint, multi – ethnic BiH or in independent RS. Out of that number, 2 770 viewers or 84,9% supported the idea on independent RS, while 490 or 15,3% wanted to live in a joint state.

Republika Srpska

Mass grave containing 11 bodies found in western BiH

The remains of 11 people, believed to be Bosniak civilians killed by Bosnian Serb forces at the outbreak of the 1992-95 war, have been exhumed from a mass grave in western BiH, reports Oslobodjenje on its front page on Sunday. Jasmin Odobasic, a member of the BiH Commission for Missing Persons told the media that all the victims

had their hands tied together prior to what is thought to have been a summary execution. The victims are believed to be from three nearby Bosniak villages, and were discovered in a grave in Sipovo, some 55 kilometers south of Banja Luka. Odobasic added that exhumations in the area, where 33 Bosniaks including a 87-year old man and 12-year old boy went missing, would continue.

No construction in Kotorsko until the OHR revokes the ban

Despite the recent decision by the BiH Human Rights Chamber, the construction of houses for Serb refugees on land in Kotorsko cannot resume until the High Representative does not revoke the temporary ban on construction, OHR spokesman Oleg Milisic told ONASA news agency. Last week, the Chamber rejected the appeal by 26 Kotorsko refugees who claimed that their basic human rights and freedoms were curtailed or violated by continued construction on "their" land in Kotorsko, because they failed to process the case before lower local courts. "OHR respects the HRC decision and will revise the ban on construction in light of this ruling, but the ban will stay in force until it is revoked by the High Representative," Milisic said.

However, immediately after the decision was announced, Stevan Savic, RS representative in the HR Chamber said that Serb refugees in Kotorsko may resume construction of all 125 pieces of land which was granted to them by Doboj municipality. Other RS officials, including Nikola Gavric, the head of Doboj municipality and his deputy, Mirko Stojcinovic, also interpreted the HRC ruling in similar manner. They claim that the temporary ban is effectively lifted by this decision and that the construction may resume. "We hope that the OHR will also comply with the ruling and approve the exceptions for construction in Kotorsko," Stojcinovic said.

Former FRY intelligence officer says RS will extradite Mladic

Weekend edition of Nezavisne novine quotes former FRY intelligence officer, Bozidar Spasic, as saying that Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic are not currently in Serbia, but if they are somewhere in the border area they will be extradited to the RS authorities, who will further extradite them to the ICTY in line with their legal obligations. "There are two choppers at the Belgrade airport as well as two airplanes, one in Sarajevo and one in Tuzla" waiting for their extradition. The two plains in BiH (in Tuzla and Sarajevo) are ready to transfer Mladic to The Hague. Spasic told papers that 24 hours ago the Serbian Police launched an operation aimed to identify all persons wanted by the ICTY and that the Police is thoroughly checking the addresses where these persons might be living. He also said that the FRY Justice Ministry served the FRY Interior Minister, Dusan Mihajlovic, with the arrest warrants for all persons publicly indicted by the ICTY and that it is up to Mihajlovic to sign the arrest warrants. According to him, it is possible that the arrests and extradition be carried out on Friday night or Sunday or on March 31 st at latest. "If the extradition are not carried out, it is possible that the IC introduce sanctions to Serbia but also to the RS on which the US deadline also applies.

International Community

Wolfgang Petritsch most responsible for good results in process of return

At a session of the Serb Civic Council (SGV) on Saturday, the secretary general of the organization, Veljko Drece, said that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is the most responsible person for the achieved results in the process of return. Drece said that the property law amendments which were imposed by Petritsch accelerated the return of refugees. "In order to achieve even greater results, it is necessary to secure funds which would make the return more sustainable," said Drece at a SGV session on Saturday.

ICG: Misrule of laws in BiH

"The law does not yet rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina. What prevail instead are nationally defined politics, inconsistency in the application of law, corrupt and incompetent courts, a fragmented judicial space, half-baked or half-implemented reforms, and sheer negligence. Bosnia is, in short, a land where respect for and confidence in the law and its defenders is weak," the ICG said in its latest report carried by all Sarajevo dailies (Nearly all media in the Federation carry excerpts of the report. For more information visit ICG web page at <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/>).

AFP: Belgrade misses deadline for improving cooperation with ICTY

The authorities in Belgrade missed a deadline at midnight March 31 set by the United States to improve its cooperation with the UN war crimes court. No suspects had been handed over by the deadline. A meeting of top leaders of the ruling DOS coalition ended in Belgrade just before midnight without any concrete results.

Justice Minister Vladan Batic told journalists after the meeting that the DOS leaders would try to exert pressure on President Vojislav Kostunica to obtain "a clear reply" on his attitude toward the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Editorials

RS leadership in Belgrade - Sarovic, Ivanic and Co. go to consultations in Belgrade?!

In an editorial in Saturday's issue of *Dnevni Avaz*, **Almasa Bajric** strongly criticized the move of the RS leadership which on Friday interrupted the session of the RS National Assembly and went to Belgrade to discuss the agreement on constitutional changes with the FRY president, Vojislav Kostunica. Bajric notes, however, that Ivanic and Sarovic cannot get more than a mere verbal support and a sympathetic ear from their friends in Belgrade, who, at this time, have more important problems on their mind, namely, the cooperation with the ICTY and the future loans from the West. "RS politicians will have to resolve the issue of constitutional changes at home, not in the FRY."

Senka Kurtovic of **Oslobodjenje** (also Saturday) was of similar opinion, noting that this is already the fourth generation of RS politicians who go to Belgrade for consultation before they make any important decisions at home. Kurtovic argues that the RS delegation returned from Belgrade with reinforced position on constitutional changes - their position was quite clear when they refused to put their signature on the document on the implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on constituent peoples.

Jutarnje Novine on Monday carries a similar commentary on the visit of the RS delegation to the FRY.

Constitutional Changes - a progress towards stabilization of BiH

In an editorial on Sunday, *Oslobodjenje's* **Mirko Sagolj** argues that the agreement on constitutional changes reached among party leaders in OHR on Thursday represents a certain progress, most notably because it was agreed domestically, rather than imposed by the High Representative. Sagolj notes that the different reactions of political parties which signed the agreement and those that did not is a clear picture of political reality in BiH. "Still, this move in the resolution of the difficult political crisis in BiH deserves its place among the few positive developments in efforts to help this country make a small step out of the quick sand in which it is presently squirming." According to

Sagolj, despite the criticism of some political parties which claim that the agreement is detrimental for some peoples, the fact remains that it clearly marked a progress in BiH. "The agreement provides for a consistent implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on constituent peoples and substantive equality of peoples on the whole territory of BiH, thereby allowing the entities to become multinational," Sagolj writes. "Who could have imagined only yesterday that Bosniaks and Croats would sit on all legislative, judicial and executive bodies in the RS?!" The only problem with this agreement, according to him, is the fact that BiH still remains a Dayton state, that is a divided state made up of two entities. Despite their efforts, political parties from the Federation could not realistically achieve a new ZAVNOBIH (political gathering which established BiH as multinational republic of Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats during the World War II) state, however, this was the optimal solution at this time and given the circumstances. The application of the Agreement would in the least improve the Dayton Peace Agreement and mark a progress, albeit a small one, towards the full normalization of the situation in BiH.

In Sunday's *Oslobodjenje*, Zija Dizdarevic echoes Sagolj's position, writing that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, scored most important political points at the end of his mandate by securing the agreement on constitutional changes. The agreement, although not the optimal solution, represents a political triumph and the greatest step forward in direction of stabilization of BiH as a democratic state, he notes. According to Dizdarevic, the most important achievements of the documents signed in the OHR are the establishment of the Council of Peoples and the parity distribution of power for leading posts in the executive, legislative and judicial power in the RS and the Federation. He argues that the Alliance parties, NHI, Party for BiH and SDP have also scored an ultimate victory by signing this agreement and demonstrated their willingness to transform BiH into a democratic and multinational state. Political parties from the RS, although they had some reservations, also signed the agreement thereby saving their own political future and the future of their entity. In this process, writes Dizdarevic, SDA and HDZ made a capital mistake - one by not participating in the debate and the other by refusing to sign the final agreement.

"All in all," concludes Dizdarevic, "BiH is undergoing a political catharsis on its way from the pre-Dayton to post-Dayton phase."

In a commentary in Monday's *Oslobodjenje*, Ibrahim Prohic was slightly more critical about the agreement. He did not object to the substance of the signed document, but to the farce surrounding its signing. Was it signed, was it not, by whom, with or without reservations....are but a few questions which remained unclear after the end of the marathon talks in the OHR. Prohic, however, also agrees that local political leaders this time demonstrated at least a minimum of political maturity and the readiness to accept a new constitutional structure in BiH.

In a lengthy commentary in *Pogled* section in *Oslobodjenje*, Azhar Kalamujic writes that the Council of Europe and its institutions will make a thorough analysis of constitutional changes in BiH and, in a case it determines that the recently signed agreement between political parties is not in line with the European Convention on protection of human rights, BiH may be asked to revise the plan of implementation of CC decision on constituent peoples. According to BiH Constitution, the Convention has a primacy over all other laws and regulations in BiH. Although some political parties and the International Community hail the agreement as historic, Kalamujic notes that it still keeps alive the concept of asymmetry and it has elements of recognizing the discriminating status quo.

Nezavisne novine: Others disappeared

By Branko Morait

Weekend edition of Nezavisne novine carries an editorial in which member of the RS National Assembly's Constitutional Commission, Branko Morait says that the Agreement on constitutional amendments, which is nothing but a ultimatum of the High Representative, is incredibly anti-European, anti-civilization and non-democratic document. It is unbelievable that it comes from the High Representative, the very same person who formed constitutional commissions in both entities' parliaments and decided that Others should have the same number of representatives as other constituent peoples in the Constitutional Commission. Morait says that

according to the 1991 population Census, there were 7,53% BiH citizens, who lived in the territory of what is now called the RS, who declared themselves as Others. Also, according to the same population census, 9,39% BiH citizens declared themselves as Croats. During the talks on constitutional amendments, the parties involved in the talks advocated that the 1991 population census should be taken as a basis for power distribution in both entities. However, the Agreement, signed by the Alliance parties and leading parties from the RS, marginalized the category of Others. This volte-face happened thanks to parties from the BiH Federation and especially thanks to the Lagumdžija's SDP BiH and Zubak's NHI. These two "democrats" should be reminded of a fact that it was not only national minorities who declared themselves as Others back in 1991 but also many other autochthonous BiH citizens who, at the time, declared themselves as Yugoslavs or who did not attach great importance to their national affiliation. Article 34, paragraph 2 of the RS Constitution reads that "no one shall be obliged to declare national affiliation". Moreover, Article 33 of the RS Constitution reads that "citizens shall have the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs and have access to public service under equal conditions". If we compare these two articles with the Agreement on constitutional changes which does not include the category of Others, then we have to ask ourselves how is it possible that the Agreement is at variance with the RS Constitution and how is it possible that the Agreement is below European standards and below the concept of political democracy as a constitutional principle of the state of BiH? The Agreement on constitutional changes, which is nothing but a High Representative's ultimatum, is incredibly anti-European, anti-civilization and non-democratic document. It is unbelievable that it comes from the High Representative, the very same person who formed constitutional commissions in both entities' parliaments and decided that Others should have the same number of representatives as other constituent peoples in the Constitutional Commission. It is also very worrying that the RS president's advisor for national minorities did not say anything about this. All masks are off when it comes to the SDP BiH, a party which declares itself as a multi-ethnic party. It is unbelievable that some representatives of Others in the constitutional commissions of both entities' parliaments are SDP BiH members. I wonder whether they intend to step out of the party or, maybe, the Commission. Or maybe they agree with views of their leader who thinks that they are not politically equal to other SDP BiH members. However, "the greatest" of all these "miracles" is a miracle called BiH minister for human rights and refugees, a person who is a experienced nationalist leader battle-hardened during the war. This person still is a minister. He does not even think of resignation and, in a very original way, he still "protects" human rights of BiH citizens.

Headlines

Weekend

Glas srpski

1. RS Health Ministry dissatisfied with disbursement of additional funds – Money on a wrong address;

Nezavisne novine

1. US deadline for extradition of ICTY indictees is expiring – Belgrade ready for extradition?

Dnevni List

- August Mestrovic, Head of Public Company 'Herceg Bosna Forests', comments on new Law on Forestry: Alliance has deceived International Community
- Zeljko Matic, President of Municipal HDZ Board Banja Luka on the position of Croats in the RS: Drina, Una and Sava - economic basis of future European regions

Vecernji List

- Cardinal Puljic, Vrhosna Archbishop: Croatia has done too little for us
- After Easter a great inspection of business operations of greatest Herzegovinian companies: Tax officers are coming to Herzegovina
- Mostar hill called Hum: Thousands of people on Way of the Cross

Oslobodjenje

- New mass grave in western BiH: 11 Bosniaks found

Dnevni Avaz

- SDA and HDZ misinform the public
- Pensions by April 5?

Monday

Glas srpski

- What was concluded by BiH Presidency: Joint command, new division
- Unseen tragedy in Novi Grad: A boy died in fire

Nezavisne novine

- Catholics celebrated Easter: Celebration of life, love and forgiveness
- Commission for missing persons in BiH: The Hague oversees exhumations in Kotor Varos

Dnevni Avaz

- Mijo Anic: Lay off of soldiers to begin today

Oslobodjenje

- ICG: Misrule of law in BiH