

BiH Media Round-up, 29/2/2002

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Headlines

Constitutional reforms

Reactions to the agreement on constitutional reform: the agreement guarantees multi-ethnic entities

The agreement on the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's decision on the constituency of the peoples signed on Wednesday in full by presidents of SDP, NHI and Party for BiH and with two reservations by leaders of the four political parties from the RS (SDS, PDP, SNSD and SPRS) causes as was expected different reactions. According to Oslobođenje, the [summary of the reactions](#) can be that the agreement is being praised by those who signed it, as those who signed it with reservations, or those who did not sign it at all (HDZ and SDA) still stick to their positions. The basic question is whether the Republika Srpska will survive as an entity. The answer incorporated in the agreement is that it will but that it will not be ethnically clean.

The OSCE Mission to BiH welcomes the agreement on the constitutional reform

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report that the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomed the agreement reached on Wednesday on the implementation of the Constituent Peoples' decision. "The agreement is the result of the firm determination of the country's political leaders to find consensual solutions among themselves on pressing issues that have divided them so far. They must be commended for their incessant exhausting efforts. Their political maturity, which has been questioned so often in the past, bodes well for this country's future constitutional, economic and social development in the interest of all its citizens and constituent peoples. OSCE participating States have awaited this agreement eagerly. It comes very timely when Bosnia and Herzegovina is preparing to join the Council of Europe and intends to stride along towards European and Atlantic integration," the Mission's spokesman, Henning Philipp, told journalists in Sarajevo on Thursday.

Croatian President says the agreement big step forward in the organization of BiH

According to Oslobodjenje, Croatian President Stjepan Mesic attending the Summit of the Southeastern European countries' leaders in Tirana said that the agreement on the constitutional reform in BiH was guaranteeing the constituency of all three peoples in the country. "It represents a big step forward in the organization of BiH showing in a transparent way that the entities are not states, but that BiH is a single state," Mesic emphasized.

Zubak believes the agreement may be implemented with an engagement of the High Representative

In an interview with Dnevni Avaz, the President of the New Croat Initiative (NHI), Kresimir Zubak said that, regardless of a fact HDZ and SDA had not signed the agreement on the constitutional reform, as the political parties from the RS had signed it with reservations, it could be implemented with an engagement of the High Representative. "We are already aware that in the RS they are intending to convince members of the Entity parliament to change the RS Constitution in accordance to the signed agreement, but only in accordance to its part which is not disputed at all. WE will not accept such the resolution," Zubak emphasized. Dnevni list also interviewed Zubak ([interview](#) provided by OHR Mostar).

BiH State-related Issues

BiH Council of Ministers adopts design of a new ID card

According to Oslobodjenje, at the session in Sarajevo on Thursday, the BiH Council of Ministers discusses proposals for the implementation of the CIPS project concluding that the implementation had to be accelerated. Chairman of the Council Dragan Mikerevic told journalists following the session that the Council had also adopted the design of the new ID card and that it was planning to determine the text of the contract with the Siemens company on the implementation of the CIPS project next Tuesday.

Federation

BiH Federation House of Representatives discusses information on the security situation in the entity

Oslobodjenje reports that, at its session in Sarajevo on Thursday, the BiH Federation House of Representatives discussed the Interior Ministry's information on the security situation in the entity. The deputies assessed the information as failed urging the Ministry and the Federation Government to urgently undertake measures aimed at ensuring adequate protection for the citizens.

Republika Srpska

RS National Assembly Speaker meets with FRY Ambassador to BiH

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

The RS NA Speaker, Dragan Kalinic met on Thursday in Banja Luka with the FRY Ambassador to BiH, Stanimir Vukicevic. Glas srpski reports that the meeting was organized upon the request of the FRY Ambassador, who wanted to discuss developments related to the constitutional changes. According to a release, issued by Kalinic's Cabinet, the attention was focused on the reasons that made RS representatives express reservations over the Agreement on constitutional changes.

SFOR action to arrest Karadzic: false alarm in Gacko

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne novine report that the representatives of municipal authorities and police in Gacko announced that, in their knowledge, there were no attempts yesterday to arrest former RS President, Radovan Karadzic in the region of this municipality. Some media from BiH Federation reported on movement of several SFOR armored vehicles in the vicinity of the village Dulici and connected that with possible action to arrest Karadzic. According to the statements of local Gacko officials, SFOR is stationed in that area and they were carrying out their regular duties in the region.

Sinisa Djordjevic, the RS Prime Minister's advisor for relations with ICTY, says no volunteers for The Hague

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

The Advisor to the RS Prime Minister for relations with the ICTY, Sinisa Djordjevic stated for Nezavisne novine that none of the indictees for war crimes approached the Bureau for relations with the Hague and added that it was an illusion to expect that somebody would surrender voluntarily at this moment, due to the fact that the deadline expires on 1st April. Answering to the allegations of the Bosniac Liaison Officer for relations with The Hague. Amir Ahmic that the RS Government had not done enough to initiate investigations over war crimes, committed by Serbs over Croats and Bosniacs, Djordjevic said that Ahmic never addressed the RS Government about any case and therefore, no cooperation could have been established. Djordjevic added: "It is not up to the Bosniac Liaison Officer to asses whether the RS Government Bureau cooperation with the Hague was sufficient or not. However, if he needs anything and addressed us, and we are able to answer that request, we would do so." Djordjevic also emphasized that his work is not influenced with the fact that he was the author of the book "Radovan Karadzic's defense".

International Community

Petritsch issues decisions on eligibility of candidates to run for elected office

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, on Wednesday issued three Decisions amending Entity and State laws. They ban officials who have been dismissed by the High Representative from running in elections; define eligibility to hold party office; and bar parties whose statutory officials have been dismissed by the High Representative from registering in court. (All media carried either the [press release](#) or OHR Spokesman Patrik Volf's address on the issue at Thursday's press conference in Sarajevo)

The fifth Summit of Southeast Europe's countries opened in Tirana

Dnevni Avaz reports that the fifth Summit of the leaders of the countries belonging to the Process for the Cooperation in the Southeast Europe opened in Tirana on Thursday. In the course of the day, Chairman of the BiH Presidency Beriz Belkic heading the BiH delegation addressed the participants at the two-day gathering. "The image of the region as a whole has been totally changed in the past few years," Belkic said expressing his full support to the initiatives leading to the integration of the area into Europe.

OSCE, Council of Europe launch the BiH edition of the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Municipal and Regional Life"

According to Oslobođenje, the Council of Europe office in Sarajevo and the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on Thursday launched the Bosnia and Herzegovina edition of the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Municipal and Regional Life." "The charter outlines the ways in which young people can participate in public life, and urges the authorities to provide the necessary conditions for integrating youth into public life and thus have them participate in shaping present and future of the society. This charter was launched already in several European countries and in some of them became the basis for respective legislation. In the coming weeks, OSCE field offices and Political Resource Centres will strengthen their ongoing efforts to encourage young people to bring their unique experience with specific problems to the solution-finding process at all levels, but particularly at the municipal and regional levels," OSCE Spokesman told a press conference in Sarajevo.

Caliber 7.62 pistols temporarily excluded from the list of illegal weapons

According to Oslobođenje, SFOR Spokesman Scott Lundy told a press conference on the Harvest operation in Sarajevo on Thursday that "the Stabilization Force recently developed a new list of military weapons as part of its ongoing effort to maintain a safe and secure environment throughout BiH." "This list was presented to the Federation and Republika Srpska Ministries of the Interior some weeks ago. In issuing its new list of military weapons, SFOR is trying to better define what constitutes a military weapon. It is hoped that the list will give everyone in Bosnia and Herzegovina a clearer understanding of the sorts of weapons that should be turned in during Operation HARVEST. While there is agreement by the Entities on everything else on the list, SFOR understands that provisions concerning pistols of the calibre 7.62 mm and above has caused some concern and conflict with existing policies. Therefore, the Commander of SFOR has directed that Serial 4 to the Definition of Military Weapons, which states "Revolvers and self-loading pistols with a calibre 7.62 mm and above" is suspended while our discussions with the Interior Ministries continue. This means that SFOR will not consider revolvers and

self-loading pistols in the strict definition of military weapons and will not include them as part of Operation HARVEST,” Lundy said.

Reuters: Dutch slammed for not stopping Srebrenica slaughter

The Dutch could probably have prevented the 1995 Srebrenica massacre but failed miserably on every level, according to a damning new report into Europe’s worst atrocity since World War Two. The report, released by Dutch peace group IKV on Thursday, said Dutch U.N. troops and politicians bore responsibility for failing to protect up to 8,000 Bosniak men and boys murdered after Serb forces overran the U.N. “safe area” in eastern Bosnia. “The Srebrenica genocide could probably have been prevented if the Dutch government and the Dutch battalion had reacted differently,” the IKV (Interchurch Peace Council) said in its report called “Srebrenica: The genocide that was not prevented”. Some 110 lightly armed Dutch soldiers were stationed in the town when it fell to Bosnian Serb forces in July 1995 without a single shot being fired. “There were blunders, there was a lack of concern, there was a single focus — on the Dutch only — but they knew Bosniaks would be killed,” said IKV chief Mient Jan Faber, accusing the Dutch of caring only about the safety of their troops.

Headlines

Oslobodjenje

- The agreement guarantees multi-ethnic entities

Dnevni Avaz

- Uncertain payment of three backlog pensions

Jutarnje Novine

- Nothing new in the BiH Federation Army: the dismissal of soldiers is late

Nezavisne Novine

- Israel military leadership discussing answer to Palestinian attack in which 21 person was killed: A bloody Passover in Israel
- Which BiH officials cannot run at the elections

Glas Srpski

- Zeljko Janjetovic on struggle against terrorism: Federation hiding information
- In mid April: Robertson is coming

Vecernji List

- Removed officials cannot put forward their candidacy ever again: Jelavic excluded from politics for good
- Stjepan Kljucic on constitutional changes: Betray of principles of equality
- Leutar case: Investigative Judge Spoljaric testified: Disputable tapes with talks of protected witness

Dnevni List

- Interview with Kresimir Zubak, President of NHI, party which signed the Agreement on constitutional changes: Why I signed the Agreement?By decision of Wolfgang Petritsch: Ante Jelavic – a mere member of HDZ