

BiH Media Round-up, 25/10/2001

BiH State-related Issues

1. BiH House of Representatives adopts set of laws on the CIPS project
2. BiH delegation departs to Bucharest
3. Reuters: Balkan donors to pledge \$2.2 billion, urge reform

Fight against Terrorism

1. Terrorists intended to attack US military bases in the Tuzla region
2. Four foreign citizens suspected for links with international terrorism identified in Sanski Most
3. Dnevni List: **Will Mostar burn?**

Federation

1. BiH Federation Parliament adopts law on the entity television
2. BiH Federation House of Representatives adopts amendments to the law on the social contributions
3. Freed Bosnian Croats urge ethnic reconciliation
4. Jutarnji List: Secret bill of indictment against Valentin Coric?
5. Two Federation pension funds to be merged by end of the year
6. Association of Returnees to Sarajevo awards Golden Palms
7. Police fails to apprehend Jozinovic
8. Vecernji List: Deputy Minister of the Interior of the Zenica Doboje Canton, Anto Bonic, reacted to the arrest orders against 15 Zepce Croats

9. Tomic denies media speculations on his resignation
10. Dnevni List: Interview with Volker C. Schmidt, the General Manager of the Daimler Chrysler Trade Finance
11. Dnevni List: Zeljko Obradovic – new Mayor of Stolac?
12. Slobodna Dalmacija: Officials of the HDZ BiH and the Federation Ministry for Traffic and Communications visit Capljina

Republika Srpska

1. Banja Luka Kristal Bank lost payment operations license
2. RS pensioners to hold a protest rally on October 30 in Banja Luka
3. RS health workers continue their strike
4. Bijeljina authorities should approve reconstruction of mosques after OHR warning
5. RS Ministry for Urban Planning denies statement of OHR's Spokesperson Sonja Pastuovic
6. Bosnian Serb gets 10 years in jail for war crimes
7. Local authorities still tolerate construction of houses for Serbs in Kotorako

International Community

1. A Western diplomat says Klein and Russians protect Karadzic and Mladic
2. Slobodna Dalmacija: **Press conference of the International organizations in Mostar - Illegal occupants devastate other people's flats**

Editorials

1. Oslobođenje and Dnevni Avaz
2. Vecernji List: Private entrepreneurs in the HDZ
3. Dnevni List: The Kupreskics free – justice has not been served

BiH State-related Issues

BiH House of Representatives adopts set of laws on the CIPS project

Oslobodjenje reports that the BiH House of Representative adopted in the first reading at its session held on Wednesday in Sarajevo the set of laws on the CIPS project. The adopted drafts include the laws on the BiH citizen's ID card, central evidence and exchange of the data, residence of the BiH citizens and on the unique registration number. According to BiH Minister for Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic, the fifth law on the issue, which is the law on the protection of the personal data, has been returned for additional amending. Addressing the deputies, Mihajlovic expressed his hope that a compromise would be reached and that this draft would also be sent into the parliamentary procedure as soon as possible.

BiH delegation departs to Bucharest

A BiH delegation, led by Minister for European Integration Dragan Mikerevic, on Wednesday departed to Bucharest for a two-day Regional Conference for Southeast Europe, ONASA reported. Besides Mikerevic, the delegation also includes Minister for Human Rights and Refugees Kresimir Zubak and Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Azra Hadziahmetovic. The conference will be chaired by the European Commission (EC) and the World Bank (WB), which are the organizers of the gathering, along with the special coordinator of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe and the Romanian Government. Although the meeting in Bucharest is not a donors' conference, it will also discuss the ensuring of funds for the infrastructure projects. Three projects are foreseen for BiH: Reconstruction of Roads and Bridges,

Reconstruction of Railways, and Project of Reconstructing and Building Transmission Lines, the BiH Ministry for European Integration said in a press release. A part of the funds has already been ensured for these projects, but their realization requires additional source of money.

Reuters: Balkan donors to pledge \$2.2 billion, urge reform

Foreign donors plan to pledge about \$2.2 billion on Thursday towards rebuilding the Balkans, but will warn Europe's most unstable region of the need to wean itself off handouts and attract major investment.

Keen to reassure Yugoslavia and its neighbours that they remain a Western priority, the European Commission and the World Bank say fresh funding for infrastructure projects will feature prominently on the agenda of a two-day conference in Romania.

But delegates will be reminded that recovery from a decade of wars, and the goal of European Union membership, depend on governments improving cooperation, enacting reforms to lure foreign capital and cracking down on corruption and organised crime.

"Our aims are far more ambitious than those of a traditional donors conference," said Donald Kursch, the deputy coordinator of the Balkan Stability Pact, formed after the 1999 Kosovo war with the lofty goal of delivering regional

peace and prosperity.

The pact's fanfare launch, attended by 40 world leaders, has overshadowed its more modest successes in channeling aid money to infrastructure projects and the promotion of economic reform.

The Bucharest conference, held under its auspices, aims to shift the focus towards longer-term aims, notably an increase in private capital flows to the region from the \$4.5 billion last year. Donor support is vital but can only do so much, especially given the bureaucratic obstacles to getting projects started.

"One of the biggest problems we've had is the degree of expectations of immediate results," Kursch told Reuters. "To deliver meaningful infrastructure projects takes much longer."

OPEN FOR BUSINESS?

A report on Balkan economies by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank concludes commitment to market reforms has risen across the region, brightening its growth prospects — notwithstanding the potential impact of a global downturn.

Excessive generalisation is misleading given the difference between the countries of former Yugoslavia, which was ripped apart by inter-ethnic conflict still smouldering in Macedonia, and Romania and Bulgaria, which are negotiating EU membership.

But the report stresses several common themes, above all the need for stronger public institutions and swift deregulation.

"The record of attracting investment remains poor, which points to the need to further improve the overall investment climate and, more generally, to create the conditions that stimulate private sector development," the World Bank said.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which has made the Balkans a top investment target under its brief to help finance transition from communism to capitalism, says tax reforms, anti-corruption strategies and freer trade are vital.

"The region risks relying too heavily on donor support," concludes an EBRD report to be presented to the conference. "More needs to be done to promote structural reform."

COMMON AGENDA

With the exception of Macedonia, where the fallout from an uprising supplied from neighbouring Kosovo continues, political risk has significantly diminished. All seven pact countries — Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia — now have democratically elected governments.

Foreign direct investment, which like economic growth has failed to keep pace with the post-communist prosperity seen in central and eastern Europe, has become the main priority.

Nowhere is this more striking than Yugoslavia, which has made rapid progress since the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic.

The country has to bridge an external financing gap of more than \$20 billion between now and 2005. The World Bank estimates that a third of this will have to come from the private sector, making a rapid reduction in dependence on aid flows essential.

This cannot simply be achieved through privatisations and the challenge is to attract more greenfield investment along with measures to encourage small businesses, the EBRD said.

Equally important are efforts to increase cooperation in the region, which the EU insists should be seen as a prerequisite to membership of the rich Western bloc, not a second best. A basic free trade accord agreed by pact members this year is a start.

Officials want to focus on common economic priorities, not crisis management in Macedonia or the future status of

Kosovo.

"We cannot let these places become the tail that wags the dog," Kursch said. "We have 55 million people in this region and we need a regional strategy that moves things forward."

Fight against Terrorism

Terrorists intended to attack US military bases in the Tuzla region

The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday quoted the NATO officials in Brussels as saying that the terrorists attacks on the two US SFOR soldiers' bases in BiH had been prevented in the past days. According to the article carried by all BiH Federation media, the targets of the planned attacks were the Eagle military base near Tuzla and the Connor military camp near Srebrenica. The attacks were prevented thanks to a series of apprehensions conducted by the BiH police in cooperation with the IPTF and Interpol. The apprehended foreign citizens include six persons from Algeria who are still in prison, as well as three Egyptian and one Jordanian citizens, who were handed over to their countries. The WSJ concludes that the NATO officials expect further terrorism-related apprehensions. SFOR Spokesman Daryl Morrell denied that there had been any terrorist threats against SFOR or any of its bases in BiH.

Four foreign citizens suspected for links with international terrorism identified in Sanski Most

Sanski Most Police Chef Nurija Jakupovic informed IPTF on Tuesday that the local police had located and identified four foreign citizens (two from Iraq, one from Libya and one from Sudan), who were suspected to have links with the international terrorism (all BiH media report on the event). UN/IPTF Spokesman for the Banja Luka and Bihac Regions Alun Roberts told journalists on Wednesday in Banja Luka that these persons had still not been apprehended but that the matter had been forwarded to the BiH Federation Interior Ministry for investigation. Roberts did not give further details but he said that BiH passports had been issued to all of the four suspects after the war.

Dnevni List: Will Mostar burn?

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List reveals that Jozo Krizanovic, the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, received a letter of intriguing contents, written in English, from Nuremberg in Germany. The letter reads: "Dear Sir, will Mostar burn, or will Mostar burn down between 8:30 and 14 hrs? Will you reconstruct all railways between Sarajevo and Ploce? Will you reconstruct all schools? Sincerely yours, B.J."

A well informed source close to the Federation Ministry of the Interior told Dnevni List that the letter was sent to the police the day after the receipt and that handwriting experts are working on it. The source, who is dealing with international correspondence, did not rule out the possibility of using the Interpol's services.

The daily says Nacional, owing to their journalist's imagination, went very far in writing about this letter and made a sensationalist conclusion (before the investigation was completed) that the contents of the letter made Krizanovic postpone his visit to Algeria.

Federation

BiH Federation Parliament adopts law on the entity television

Both Houses of the BiH Federation Parliament adopted the Law on the BiH Federation Television at a special joint session held on Wednesday in Sarajevo. All BiH Federation media report that the Law was adopted in the same version as it had been imposed by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, in September 1999. However, the deputies also passed a conclusion tasking the BiH Federation Government to prepare draft amendments to the Law in 30 days.

BiH Federation House of Representatives adopts amendments to the law on the social contributions

According to Oslobođenje, the BiH Federation House of Representatives adopted the amendments to the entity law on social contributions at its session held on Wednesday in Sarajevo. According to the amendments proposed by the SDP BiH caucus, the contributions will from now on be paid the same day as salaries.

Freed Bosnian Croats urge ethnic reconciliation

More than 1,000 BiH Croats gave a warm welcome home on Wednesday to three of their ethnic kin released from the Hague Tribunal in a landmark ruling, all BiH Federation media reported. Returning after the UN Tribunal Appeals Chamber on Tuesday overturned their convictions of crimes against humanity, Zoran, Mirjan and Vlatko Kupreskic issued a call rarely heard in the area for reconciliation between Croats, Serbs and Bosniaks in BiH. Brothers Zoran and Mirjan and their cousin Vlatko Kupreskic were initially sentenced to between six and 10 years in prison by the Tribunal for allegedly taking part in a brutal attack on Bosniaks in the central Bosnian village of Ahmici in 1993.

Jutarnji List: Secret bill of indictment against Valentin Coric?

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

According to the testimony of Vlado Santic, the crime in Ahmici was committed by around 70 members of the HVO and Military Police, out of which only Santic and Josipovic were indicted and sentenced. Only one more person is on the sealed indictment for this crime. The witnesses specially charged Military Police Commander Pasko Ljubicic with the crime. Aside from him, Valentin Coric, former Military Police Commander in Mostar is also mentioned as a possible name on the indictment.

Two Federation pension funds to be merged by end of the year

The accounts of the two currently existing pension funds – the Pension and Disability Fund Mostar (MIO) and the Sarajevo-based Pension and Disability Fund (PIO) – will be closed on December 31, 2001, BiH Federation Deputy Prime Minister and Treasury Minister Nikola Grabovac stated during a working meeting on Wednesday in Sarajevo, BiH Federation Information Office said in a press release. The meeting, also attended by Deputy Federation Minister for Social Affairs Mijat Tuka, provisional head of the newly established BiH Federation Pension and Disability Fund Bozo Misura, chairman of the management board of that institution Ismet Rizamulic and chairman of the supervisory board Ivan Mihaljevic, focused on the manner of speeding up the operations left to be done prior to the start of the functioning of a single BiH Federation Pension and Disability Fund. This merger should be seen as a move in line with the publicly stated policies of the BiH Federation officials concerning the start of the treasury

operations in the Federation, scheduled for January 1, 2002.

Association of Returnees to Sarajevo awards Golden Palms

At a ceremony held on Wednesday, the Association of Citizens-Returnees to the Sarajevo Canton handed Golden Palms to Member of the BiH Presidency Beriz Belkic, Morris Power of the Office of the High Representative in BiH, and to the public company Television Sarajevo for their outstanding contribution to the sustainable return process.

"This is the most distinguished award that this Association awards as recognition to others people contribution to its efforts. Beriz Belkic is being honored with this award for his services while he was Premier of the Sarajevo Canton, Power for his contribution while he was responsible for the return process within the OHR, and the Television Sarajevo for creating a climate, through its broadcast, for a faster return," Association's Executive Manager Marko Krstic said at the ceremony.

Police fails to apprehend Jozinovic

The situation in Zepce is peaceful and no gatherings or protests were registered, the Zenica-Doboj Canton Interior Ministry said on Wednesday. It was also said, during the day, the police had failed to apprehend Niko Jozinovic from the "Zepce's Group" because he was not on the given address. According to Oslobođenje, the Coordination Board for Protection of Zepce Croats announced it would hold a protest rally in the town on Friday due to a difficult political-security situation and attempts to apprehend 15 Zepce Croats.

Vecernji List: Deputy Minister of the Interior of the Zenica Doboj Canton, Anto Bonic, reacted to the arrest orders against 15 Zepce Croats

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Anto Bonic, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, made a public protest on the occasion of the arrest of 15 Zepce Croats: "Excluding the Deputy Minister from the measures and actions undertaken by the Ministry of Interior in the Zepce area, in the context of the activities of the Co-ordination board for the protection of Croats in Zepce area, and in relation to the court processes that are to take place at the Cantonal Court in Zenica, sending a special unit for the keeping of public peace and order in Zepce, about which the Deputy Minister finds out from the citizens only, excluding the Deputy Minister from all relevant activities of the Ministry of the Interior, one-sided evaluation of the situation and measures in Zepce after the attempt of the Ministry of the Interior to realize the order of the Cantonal court for the arrest of Zepce Croats, are only some of my reason to launch this public protest."

Tomic denies media speculations on his resignation

Mostar Mayor Neven Tomic denied media speculations about his resignation from the office. "I was not even think about it. Such stories are coming from the same kitchen which was once linking Jadranko Prlic and myself to the Montenegrin tobacco Mafia," Tomic told Dnevni Avaz.

Dnevni List: Interview with Volker C. Schmidt, the General

Manager of the Daimler Chrysler Trade Finance

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

In an interview for Dnevni List, Volker C. Schmidt, the General Manager of the Daimler Chrysler Trade Finance, stated that their engagement in BiH started in 1996 with the establishment of cooperation between Aluminij and Debis.

Speaking of the visit of Zlatko Lagumdzija, the BiH Foreign Minister and Chair of the BiH Council of Ministers, to Germany, he said that representatives of the Daimler Chrysler Services met with Lagumdzija in Berlin on 17 October and that they discussed the strategic partnership between the BiH Government and the Daimler Chrysler Services in the key industrial branches: electric power and aluminum.

"We stated on that occasion that a prerequisite to this partnership is stability of our partner companies Elektroprivreda BiH and Aluminij Mostar. Unless there is stability, our company will withdraw from the region. Our plans of cooperation are to be intensified in the next 15 years, and the talks at the highest level will be resumed in Sarajevo on 8 and 9 November this year. Objective and professional media reporting of this matter would be desirable," stated Schmidt.

He said that Aluminij, together with its management, was and still is a positive pledge of a successful cooperation. "Having said that, I must stress that our contractual partner is the management of the Aluminij, and our contracts were not closed with the owners," said Schmidt.

Dnevni List: Zeljko Obradovic - new Mayor of Stolac?

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Zeljko Obradovic is the candidate of the HDZ BiH for the position of Stolac Municipal Mayor. Dnevni List claims to have found out that the OHR is supposed to approve Obradovic's appointment today. The Municipal Council of Stolac is to elect both the new Mayor and Municipal Council President in the session scheduled for Wednesday, 31 October.

Dnevni List found out that it is still uncertain whether or not the session will be held on Wednesday because the Bosniak side is deliberately stalling the procedure of putting forward their candidate for the position of Municipal Council President. A source told the daily that they are doing it to preserve the present state of non-functioning municipal authorities as an argument to be used with the International Community with the aim of bringing about a supervisor for Stolac.

Zeljko Obradovic is known as an experienced and moderate politician. Ludvik Skobene, the Spokesperson for the OSCE Regional Center in Mostar, stated at a press conference yesterday that the OSCE would support the candidacy of Zeljko Obradovic. In his words, Obradovic gave the OSCE a statement in which he says that he did not participate in the initiative of declaring Croat self-rule.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Officials of the HDZ BiH and the Federation Ministry for Traffic and Communications visit Capljina

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Officials of the HDZ BiH, representatives of the Federation Ministry for Traffic and Communications and officials of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, paid a visit to Capljina on Wednesday. Their hosts were their party colleagues from the Capljina HDZ and the Mayor Stjepan Sutalo.

They took the opportunity to visit the Capljina bridge, walked all the 400 meters of its length and paid credit to the constructors – GIP Neretva from Capljina and ZGP Sarajevo.

Ante Jelavic, whom the daily refers to as the HDZ BiH President, who laid the foundation stone for the bridge exactly a year ago, said that many, at the time, doubted it would be possible to cross the bridge within as little time as one year. It will take a few more months before the bridge is completed and opened to traffic.

“I take this opportunity to say that we, despite being the absolute election winners who were given plebiscite-like support, are not in the positions of authority at the State and Federation levels. This promise that we have realized inspires our hope to solve the Croat issue and the accumulated economic and social problems and our hope that at the next elections there will be no actions behind the scene aimed at trampling on the Croat political will. In that case, economic and social results will be much more considerable,” said Jelavic on that occasion.

Dragan Covic, (unrecognized) Vice President of the HDZ BiH, and Dragan Vrankic, the Deputy Governor of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, said that the reconstruction of the bridge was preceded by a lengthy negotiating process.

Republika Srpska

Banja Luka Kristal Bank lost payment operations license

Glas Srpski, on the cover page, carries a press release of the RS Banking Agency suggesting that the agency has temporarily taken away license to Kristal Bank from Banja Luka for carrying out payment operations. Due to a fear that the bank could be liquidated in case of failed privatization, additional withdrawal of funds from this bank by the clients occurred and it jeopardized liquidity of the bank.

RS pensioners to hold a protest rally on October 30 in Banja Luka

Both Banja Luka dailies report that a protest rally of the Republika Srpska Pensioners is to take place on October 30 in Banja Luka, as confirmed by President of Association of the RS Pensioners Novak Dojcinovic. According to Dojcinovic, the pensioners would cancel the protest just in case the RS Government pays out four outstanding pensions from the last year, provides regular payments of this year's pensions and provides health care free of charge for this category of citizens.

RS health workers continue their strike

Both Banja Luka dailies report on the third day of strike of the Republika Srpska health workers. According to Milenko Garnulic, President of RS Health Workers' Trade Union, 95% of the health workers joined the strike, although directors of certain health institutions have been trying to obstruct the legal protest. The RS Government is expected to discuss the situation in the sector and offer solutions at its Thursday session.

Bijeljina authorities should approve reconstruction of mosques after OHR warning

Nezavisne Novine carries a statement of Ibrahim Imsirovic, the Secretary of Mejlis of Islamic Community in Bijeljina, in which he said: “OHR has mechanisms to implement the decision of the Human Rights Chamber so we believe that the authorities of RS will issue the approval for reconstruction of 5 mosques in Bijeljina.” Imsirovic gave this statement as a comment to OHR's statement that the RS and Bijeljina municipality would face sanctions

if they do not implement decisions of the Human Rights Chamber.

RS Ministry for Urban Planning denies statement of OHR's Spokesperson Sonja Pastuovic

The Banja Luka dailies carry a press release issued by the RS Ministry for Urban Planning on Wednesday denying a statement of OHR Spokesperson Sonja Pastuovic that the Ministry had upheld the decision of the Bijeljina municipal authorities not to issue necessary permits for reconstruction of five mosques in Bijeljina.

Bosnian Serb gets 10 years in jail for war crimes

A Bosnian Serb was sentenced on Wednesday by a local court to 10 years in prison for raping Bosniak women in the eastern town of Foca early in the Balkan country's 1992-5 war, all BiH media reported. Dragan Stankovic, arrested by local police just over a year ago, was convicted by the Sarajevo Cantonal Court because "he committed several criminal acts". "He raped Muslim women and girls," the media quoted presiding judge Davorin Jukic as saying in the verdict. "He is also charged with grave breaches of a Geneva convention on the protection of civilians during the war as well as of breaching the additional protocol of the convention on the protection of victims of international conflict," Jukic said.

Local authorities still tolerate construction of houses for Serbs in Kotorsko

UN/IPTF Spokesman for the Banja Luka and Bihac Regions Alun Roberts told journalists on Wednesday in Banja Luka that the local authorities were tolerating construction of houses for the displaced Serbs in Kotorsko in spite of the OHR decision banning such activities. He added that the IPTF and SFOR patrols were still increased in the area due to a possibility of eventual conflicts between Serbs and Bosniaks.

International Community

A Western diplomat says Klein and Russians protect Karadzic and Mladic

According to Jutarnje Novine, an unnamed Western diplomat told Bijeljina Extra Magazine that the apprehension of the Republika Srpska wartime leader Radovan Karadzic had never been priority of the international community, particularly now when BiH under a strong threat of the Islamic terrorism. The diplomat said that Head of the UN Mission to BiH Jacques Paul Klein was tasked with the "issue of Karadzic." Klein is, according to the diplomat, the Karadzic protector and persecutor at the same time. The diplomat said he doubted the international community would even try to apprehend Karadzic. He added that, on the other side, the Russian diplomats and intelligence officers on the ground had been very interested in the case of RS wartime military commander Ratko Mladic ever since the Hague indictment against him had been raised. "I would not been surprised if Russians protect Mladic in a way Americans protect Karadzic," the diplomat said.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Press conference of the International organizations in Mostar - Illegal occupants devastate other people's flats

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Avis Benes, an OHR Spokesperson, stated at the press conference of the international organizations seated in Mostar, which was held on Wednesday, that an increased number of cases of devastation and looting of flats by the illegal occupants, who are leaving the flats, has been noted recently. 'Such behavior is unacceptable and the IC has warned the competent municipal bodies, the Herzegovina Neretva Canton Ministry for Construction, Urban Planning and the Environment that they are obliged to make a report on the condition of the flat that an illegal occupant is obliged to leave, and hand it to the owner when they issue the decision on the flat repossession. '

She stressed that this problem is especially present in the Municipalities Mostar-Stari Grad and Mostar-Southwest. She called on competent bodies to file criminal charges against the persons, who took or destroyed other people's property on leaving the flats. She reiterated that within the PLIP Funding System the IC will suspend granting of funds to the persons who are destroying or looting the property that they are leaving. Using the suspended funds they will cover the damage which was caused to the property of the families who are returning to their housing units.

Answering to the question whether Colin Munro, the Head of the OHR Mostar, held the announced meeting with the Mostar City Councilors regarding the Action Plan, Avis Benes stated the following: 'The OHR has never disputed the contents of the proposed Action Plan on the Continuation of the Mostar Reintegration, but the procedure by which they tried to vote it in at the session of the Mostar City Council. The meeting was held a few days ago and representatives of all parties that are members of the City Council (the Alliance for a Single and Democratic BiH, SDP BiH and HDZ) attended it.'

She added that the OHR representatives left this meeting having judged from the discussion that it would be easier for the Councilors' Caucuses to pass conclusions regarding the Action Plan without the OHR presence.

She stressed that the OHR 'does not agree with the way that they tried to pass the Action Plan at the session of the City Council', adding that according to the OHR stand, there is a series of issues within this Plan that competent City Authorities should discuss'.

Editorials

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz

In the Oslobodjenje In Focus column, Zija Dizdarevic commented on the Hague Tribunal's Appeals Chamber decision to free three Croats initially convicted for the Ahmici massacre. According to Dizdarevic, this decision has much wider implications since the Hague rulings are not representing just the execution of justice, but they also have their political dimension. What will happen if, for example, the same Chamber determines that indictment against Slobodan Milosevic was not enough grounded. Gojko Beric also wrote in the second editorial on the Oslobodjenje second page about the work of The Hague Tribunal but from a little bit different point of view. Beric actually doubts that all the culprits for horrible war crimes committed in Bosnia will ever be brought before justice. Faruk Cardzic wrote in the Avaz Commentary of the Day that Zepce was again put in the media and political focus through the dispute over the war crimes-related investigation against the 15 Zepce Croats. According to Cardzic, the most unpleasant thing is a fact certain political parties belonging to the Alliance for Changes have different views concerning the issue. A reaction to resolve the issue must therefore be fast or almost retired nationalist political structures could benefit from the dispute, Cardzic concludes.

Vecernji List: Private entrepreneurs in the HDZ

Written by Zdenko Cosic, Director of Narodne Novine

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

It is hard to accept the rule that those who are not with us anymore are always guilty. I guess that in the HDZ BiH they realized that with such practice they indirectly incriminate their own party as a fortress in which you can do whatever you want, the only condition being that you are formally a member of that party.

Maybe the biggest turning point in the mentality of that policy is written in one sentence of the preamble of the party declaration, which expresses hope that the interest in finding a solution to the Croat issue in BiH will not be considered as a "tendency for any exclusiveness" or as "narrowing the horizon of the political reflections." Sticking to such declared principle will truly narrow the space for accusations at the account of identifying the interests of the party with the interests of the people, but it will also open space for different and more tolerant attitudes toward other parties of the Croat prefix. It can mean the end to the "war" for national exclusivism and opening up the dialogue, and that could significantly increase the chances for the Croat people in its fight for equality.

The agreement of the warring Croat parties in BiH about the vital interests and national goals is a precondition for different views of that problem, even in the circles of the International Community and the current authorities in Croatia.

The statement of Martin Raguz on the eve of the HDZ BiH Congress that HDZ will no longer serve to the implementation of private politics is also a precondition for a real political progress. Still, it remains undefined, to whom this party served for the implementation of private policy and can these "private entrepreneurs" overnight start serving the people that elected them, says Cosic in his commentary for Vecernji List.

Dnevni List: The Kupreskics free - justice has not been served

Written by Zvonko Dragic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List says the brothers Zoran and Mirjan Kupreskic and their cousin Vlatko Kupreskic have been released, but if justice ruled the world, they would not have been arrested in the first place.

The author agrees all those who committed or ordered crimes must be brought to justice, but, according to the author, this does not apply on the war crime in Trusina near Konjic where a war crime was committed on the same day as Ahmici, 16 April 1993. The crime in Trusina, unlike that in Ahmici, was not in the focus of the ICTY's attention, says the paper and adds that the example of Trusina and Ahmici is the best evidence of how biased the ICTY is.