

BiH Media Round-up, 22/10/2001

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BiH State-related Issues

Lagumdžija says five persons apprehended in connection with US and British Embassies closure According to Monday's Oslobodjenje front page report, BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija announced on Sunday that five persons had been apprehended following the temporary closure of the US and British Embassies to BiH. Lagumdžija said at a press conference he held in Sarajevo after his return from Brussels that these apprehensions and the following investigation into the links of those five persons with the international terrorism should remove reasons for the temporary closure of the Embassies. Commenting on the results of the European conference on combating terrorism held on Saturday in Brussels, Lagumdžija said that BiH seemed to be one of the first European countries having an action plan to fight terrorism.

BiH/Croatia Interstate Commission for Borders completes two-day meeting in Mostar Saturday's Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report that the BiH/Croatia Interstate Commission for Borders on Friday completed its two-day meeting in Mostar. The Commission members discussed the arrangement of border relations between the two countries including the opening of the border crossing in the area of Kostajnica and Hrvatska Kostajnica. Tomislav Mihalj, the BiH representative in the Commission, said following the meeting that he hoped the micro-location for the Kostajnica border crossing would be determined very soon. He added that, in his opinion, there was no need for raising any tension over the issue. The expert teams from both countries are expected to meet on October 29 and 30 in Kostajnica and agree opening of the border crossing. On the other side, the Head of the RS Municipality of Kostajnica Drago Bundalo said according to Monday's Jutarnje Novine that the dispute over the border crossing in the area could be resolved through an exchange of territories.

BiH and World Bank sign the agreement on \$90 million development credits Saturday's Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report that Azra Hadžiahmetović, the BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, and Joseph Ingram, the Residential Representative of the World Bank in BiH, on Friday in Sarajevo signed four agreements on development credits amounting up to \$90 million. It is about the projects to financially support the process of privatization, local initiatives, community development and the reconstruction of the electric power sector.

Decision on CIPS project to be made today

Nezavisne Novine announces a meeting of representatives of the BiH Council of Ministers, OHR and Ambassadors of Western countries in BiH, at which a final decision related to the implementation of the CIPS project will be made. The decision specifically relates to the main carriers of the project implementation: whether it will be German company "Siemens" or the new tender will be published. Nezavisne Novine writes, according to their sources, that ambassadors of some countries, after terrorist attacks on the USA, asked BiH leaders to reach consensus in order to have laws on the CIPS project passed, which would enable its implementation. These Laws are important, the newspaper writes, for establishment of central citizen's data base, which will help prevent organized crime and illegal immigration.

Federation

Filipović and Halilović send letter to Beecroft and Petritsch over situation in Stolac Sunday's Oslobodjenje reports on its front page that BiH Federation President Karlo Filipović and Vice-president Safet Halilović sent a letter to Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH Robert Beecroft and High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch concerning the current situation in Stolac. "We address you with a request to urgently, on the basis of your authorities, ensure the

implementation of the municipal election results in accordance to the law and democratically expressed will of the Stolac citizens. The continuation of such situation already causes a general insecurity and opens room for activities of extremists, whose goals are to maintain current anarchy, stop process of return of displaced Serbs and Bosniaks to Stolac, and to complete robbery of the state properties," the letter read.

Dnevni List: Bosniaks from Stolac celebrate victory in "Latinica"
(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List carries an article about the situation in Stolac. It reiterates old problems in the Municipality, such as the Head of the Municipality, Zdravko Kuzman, being in resignation for almost six months, and the Chair of the Municipal Council, Kemal Isakovic, now a Justice Minister in Canton 7, has last presided a session of the Council back on July 6, and then you get a clear picture. When it comes to Stolac, the best functioning areas are Healthcare and Education, but when it comes to Education, Zdravko Kuzman wants to remove Principles of Elementary and High Schools in Stolac and instate cadres close to the NHI, that is lead by his father-in-law, Vjekoslav Prce. On the basis of all aforementioned one should conclude that the letter sent to HR, Wolfgang Petritsch, by President and Vice President of FBiH, Karlo Filipovic and Safet Halilovic respectively, carried a lot of truth. The letter does not stress the aspiration of the Bosniak side to dominate and put the Stolac Croats on the margins, and avoid a dialogue on an equal basis. Dnevni List recorded statements of Bosniak representatives in Stolac that "they would defeat Latins more comprehensively than on Latinica (a talk show on Croatian TV)". They loudly celebrated their domination on the aforementioned show in a Stolac cafe "Palma". All in all, it would appear that the Dante's projection of the hell has found a fertile ground in Stolac, and as the time goes by, Stolac is approaching the ninth circle. We pray the God it gets better, reads Dnevni List.

Aluminum bank accounts to be blocked as of Monday

Dnevni Avaz (Sunday's issue) unofficially learned that the bank accounts of the Mostar Aluminum Company would be blocked as of Monday. The BiH Federation Government has earlier announced it would make the step due to a lack of cooperation and attempt of the Aluminum managers to prevent authorized Federation financial policemen from conducting financial audit of the Company.

Syndicate warns the destruction of Aluminum might force Croats to move out from these areas In regard of announcements that the BiH Federation Government will block accounts of the Mostar Aluminum Combine, the Independent Trade Union of the Company employees said in a press release that any further destruction of Aluminum might force Croats to move out from these areas, according to Saturday's Dnevni Avaz.

Dnevni List: Mostar's Aluminum is (not) blocked
(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Despite announcements by Federation Government officials and writing of yesterday's "Dnevni Avaz" according to which "Aluminij d.d. Mostar's" account will be blocked, the Management of the Company denied that claim yesterday saying that their account was not blocked. Regarding the announced audit by the Financial Police and the blockade of the Company's account by the Federation Government, the standpoint of the Company's Management remains unchanged: they will wait for the OHR's final audit, which will be the final audit to them and they will act according to it. A remainder, last Wednesday, on October 17, Chair of CoM, Dr. Zlatko Lagumdžija and Minister (?) Ante Domazet talked in Berlin with representatives of the renowned company "Debis International Trading GmbH". It was a continuation of the last summer's talks in Sarajevo between Federation PM Behmen and "Debis" representatives during which "Debis" expressed readiness to invest one billion US\$ in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To be precise, 250 million US\$ each, will be invested in "Elektrobosna Jajce", "Tvornica sode Lukavac-Tuzla", in modernization of "Elektroprivreda BiH" and construction of a new electrolysis in "Aluminij" of Mostar. Minister Domazet announced on BH Radio 1, that the Berlin talks between Lagumdžija and "Debis" would resume on November 7 and 8 in Sarajevo. Dnevni List learns that there would be a small celebration in the "Aluminij" on October 25, on the occasion of completion of modernization process of first ten cells. It is a result of a joint venture between German companies VAW-ATG, Moller-Fuller, Debis, French company Procedair and Mostar's Aluminij, reads Dnevni List.

BiH Federation Government delivers draft law on BiH Federation TV into the urgent parliamentary procedure According to Saturday's Oslobođenje, the BiH Federation Government sent the draft law on the BiH Federation Television, in the same text as it had been imposed by the High Representative to BiH yet in 1999, to the entity parliament for consideration and adoption under the urgent procedure. The draft is expected to be considered at

the special session of both Houses of the BiH Federation Parliament scheduled for October 24 this year. The Government recommended the adoption of the draft emphasizing that the transformation of the electronic media should be carried out as soon as possible. However, it also said that the BiH Federation legislative and executive authorities should in these processes be an equal partner to the OHR and other international organizations dealing with media issues. In an interview with Monday's *Oslobodjenje*, BiH Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Dubravko Lovrenovic said that the Government had decided to into the parliamentary procedure send the same version of the draft as imposed by the High Representative in order to give a constructive contribution to the entire process of the RTV BiH transformation. He reminded that, according to this version, the responsibility for the BiH Federation TV was being transferred from the entity Parliament to the OHR.

However, Lovrenovic added that now, "the time has come for the BiH Federation Parliament to take over its responsibility" as the founder of the Television. According to Lovrenovic, the amendments to the law would therefore be drafted immediately after its adoption in the Parliament, and they would be in the spirit of a new partnership relations between the BiH authorities and OHR. Lovrenovic emphasized that this did not mean at all that the Federation Government had any ambition to establish political control over the Television. He said that the Government had proposed the Parliament to form an expert team, which would be tasked to draft the amendments and establish a partnership relation with OHR in this process.

Kukic says BiH Federation TV to start its broadcast on October 27 In an interview with Monday's *Dnevni Avaz*, President of the BiH Federation TV Council Slavo Kukic said he expected that the Federation TV would start its broadcast with 19:30 evening news on October 27. He added that all preconditions had been created for start of the broadcast, which had been delayed for several times. Following the appointment of Television Director Jasmin Durakovic, a positive energy was strengthened in the media house, according to Kukic. He said that all associates at the Television had been accepted the new Director. Kukic emphasized that the Council had been under pressure not to appoint Durakovic, and that a Sarajevo-based lobby comprising people from various political parties had wanted to put the media under its control. "The Council and the PBS Foundation Board are determined to remain persistent in establishing a public RTV system," Kukic said.

Debts of the BiH Federation defense structures amount up to 800 million KM Saturday's *Oslobodjenje* reports that the debts of the BiH Federation Defense Ministry and the BiH Federation Army from the war and post-war period amount approximately 800 million KM. These are for now just assessments of the BiH Federation Defense Minister, Mijo Anic, who still attempts to trace financial documents of the Croat component of the BiH Federation Army (HVO), which disappeared just before the establishment of the so called Croat self-rule. However, although there are no these documents, a money mosaic will be assembled when the investigation is completed into the operation of Hercegovacka Banka, through which the Croat military financial transactions were carried out.

Dnevni List: Mijo Anic on new establishment of armed forces – one army but three components (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Speaking at the SDP-organised forum in Orasje, entitled "200 days of the Alliance in power", Mijo Anic, in an RTQ, denied integration of the present military structures into one army. He said that only the joint HQ and joint Ministry of Defence are now being mentioned at the State level. According to Anic, an idea, according to which the future BiH Army would have three components, is being worked on, but the idea of having a joint armed forces should not be disregarded. "The new establishment is important when it comes to representation of the state in the world, when one Minister of Defence would get to represent the defence policy of the BiH as a state, and not two Ministers as it is the case now. According to Anic's data, there are 220 soldiers who have not been re-signed after the first reorganisation, in other words after various security checks", reads *Dnevni List*.

Tihic says SDA political and not religious party

According to Saturday's *Oslobodjenje*, the BiH Democratic Action Party (SDA) held its first press conference following the third party's Congress on Friday in Sarajevo to present the new President, Sulejman Tihic, his Deputy Adnan Trzic and the SDA Vice-presidents: Edhem Bicakcic, Suada Palavric and Mirsad Kebo. "We are a political and not religious party," Tihic said adding that SDA priorities include the further development in the sectors of economy, social welfare, employment, health care and education. According to Tihic, the main SDA goals are the constitutional integration of BiH as a decentralized state of multi-ethnic regions, harmonization of the BiH Constitution with the European Convention on Human Rights, and the affirmation of the Bosnian nation in the civic and state-belonging sense. "The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, welcomed changes in the SDA and assessed them as positive," Tihic emphasized, adding that Petritsch had not requested removal of Bicakcic from

the office of the SDA Vice-president.

HDZ BiH's Central Board established

According to Sunday's *Oslobodjenje*, the Central Board of the BiH Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) held its constitutive session on Friday in Mostar, at which Josip Merdzo was elected General Secretary of the Party. In a press release issued following the session, the Board said that it fiercely condemned anti-constitutional and illegal decision made by BiH Federation Prime Minister Alija Behmen to provide 42 million KM from the entity Budget to the Sarajevo-based BiH Pension-Disability Fund for payment of one out of five backlog pensions. This act covered debts of 11 Bosniak enterprises towards the Fund. "And while on one side the accounts are blocked of Aluminum Combine in Mostar, which regularly pays its taxes and contributions, on the other side Alija Behmen awards B-H Steel Company and other Bosniak enterprises not fulfilling their financial obligations towards the pension fund," The release read. The HDZ Central Board also condemned guarantees provided by BiH federation Government for temporary release of Sefer Halilovic and other BiH Army Generals indicted for war crimes by The Hague Tribunal.

Dnevni List: Interview: Ivo Andric Luzanski, unrecognised Vice-president of HDZ BiH
Interview conducted by Zvonimir Banovic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Why did you again run for the Vice President of the HDZ BiH when the OHR banned you from being politically active?

I am aware of the position of the HDZ BiH and the Croat people in BiH (...) HDZ got 90 % votes of the Croat electorate in the last elections and that gave me strength to endure and be (unrecognised) President Jelavic's candidate at the 7th Congress. I think I am not a worn-down calculating politician. I am entering the fight, the process, with all my heart and I know that the process will be hard.

What would the fight, the process be?

It is the sacred fight for equality of the Croats in BiH . HDZ will succeed.

Maybe the goal would be achieved easier if the party was not run by people who are not suitable to the IC and the HR, who has the real authority?

We did not elect ourselves. We were elected by deputies who could have proposed and elected other candidates. It is true that the HR has the power and authority in all areas, that cannot be found easily anywhere in the world. He passes laws and implements them, influences judiciary. It will have to change, and he will have to change his attitude towards the HDZ and its elected reps.

Still the HDZ, "because they were ineligible and had bad policy", went into opposition because of its leaders...

We were chased away from duties, and they want to chase us from politics too. There is no reason to think that we consciously left the power. The trust to the Croat block gave us justified reasons to fight for the power from the municipal to the state level. But we were chased away. The unnatural Alliance that has not 70 MPs in the Federation HoR, neither it has a simple majority in the State HoR came instead.

On the other hand, a big number of supporters think that the HDZ is inconsistent, indecisive in its politics, like the failed Croat self-rule.

No. The HDZ policy has continuity since 1990, and that is the equality of the Croat people in BiH. It is true that we sometime have unrealistic judgements. But the self-rule was not unrealistic because the so-called Croat issue will never end up on the IC agenda, let alone on the agenda of the BiH factors. No other party fights as consistently for the Croats as the HDZ does.

Does this sort of stalemate indicate the return of the HDZ to the Parliament? Do you talk to anyone with regards to that?

The talks never ceased in the areas where we are in power, in municipalities and cantons. HDZ will do everything to establish communication, the one that would satisfy both sides. Regarding the return to the Parliament, the HDZ is ready to return to HoRs of the Federation and State Parliament. We should make a final decision on the ways of the return these days. But the return to the HoPs is questionable. We will request that the model of election of MPs be

changed, that the model from 1998 be returned, which would provide us with the same position that other peoples have.

Time goes by, the Alliance will fortify itself, instate their people to key positions...

I do not believe that the Alliance will permeate into every pore of the public life because it has not the results and people. Basic shouldn't have been removed because he shouldn't have been appointed in the first place. People like Brigic who got worn-down in socialism cannot survive. Personally, I expected more from the Alliance, but the way they are, they cannot stay in power.

If the HDZ requests regarding the HoP are met, for example according to the Barry's formula, then the HDZ would have majority among the Croat MPs, that would be a co-habitation... Does the HDZ have a plan after the return? Will you ask for removal of, for example, Federation President and Vice President?

We have a plan, but I would not talk about it now.

Rest of the interview is about the trials in Sarajevo and Ivo Andric Luzanski reiterates the usual rhetoric such as political pursuit of the Croats and its legitimate representatives etc. Luzanski said that if the trial before the Sarajevo Cantonal Court continued, he would call 520 witnesses, meaning all the deputies from the HDZ's 3rd Congress and all the media that covered it. Luzanski believes that the other suspects in the process would do the same. "I will also call Sead Avdic, the Chair of the HoR in the BiH Parliament, who told my lawyer Tomislav Ljubic to tell Judge Kamenica to put an end to the circus", says Andric Luzanski, reads Dnevni List.

HPT Mostar urges authorized Federation bodies to sue Hercegovacka Banka, Alpina Komerc and Croherc over Eronet The HPT Mostar (Croat Posts and Telecommunications) requested the BiH Federation Transportation and Communication Ministry and the BiH federation Privatization Agency to sue the Hercegovina Osiguranje (major owner Hercegovacka Banka), Alpina Comerc and Croherc due to their refusal to return 51 percent of illegally bought Eronet shares. "The HPT Steering Board and General Director have exploited all available possibilities for reaching an agreement over the dispute, and the matter now must be taken over by the state, which owns the disputed capital, and by the judicial institutions," Slavo Kukic, the President of the HPT Steering Board, told Sunday's Dnevni Avaz. However, Spokesman for the Hercegovacka Banka Provisional Administration Johan Verheyden said that the Bank was a legal owner of a part of Eronet, and that it therefore was not obliged to return it to the HPT.

Tihic says does not understand essence of Ceric's statement "Our relations with the BiH Islamic Community are solid and correct, and I do not see any reason for this to be changed, " SDA President Sulejman Tihic told Saturday's Dnevni Avaz commenting on a statement made recently by Head of the BiH Islamic Community Mustafa Ceric. Ceric said at the session of the Ilmija Assembly (an association of the Moslem priests - Imams) that SDA had to be punished because it had not returned Vakuf properties to the Islamic Community during its mandate. "Maybe the Islamic Community is not satisfied with still unresolved restitution issues, and I can describe such dissatisfaction as justified," Tihic said but added that he did not understand the essence of the Ceric's statement that the party had to be punished in this regard.

Ceric says Islamic Community not in position to punish anybody "SDA has been informed about our dissatisfaction with a fact the restitution law has still not been adopted. One thing here is very important. In its first program's declaration, SDA had courage and understanding towards the need of the Islamic Community promising it would do it. And it gained power in order to return Vakuf property to us. Unfortunately this has not happened. And, according to our assessments, it should and could happen," Head of the BiH Islamic Community Mustafa Ceric told Free Europe Radio Station, according to Saturday's Dnevni Avaz. He also explained his statement given at the Assembly of Ilmija. "We are not in position to punish anyone, but we shall certainly make our own assessments, and only those having sense to meet legal Islamic Community's requirements will have our support," Ceric emphasized.

SDP nominates Munir Munja Alibabic for the Director of the new Federation Intelligence-Security Service Munir Munja Alibabic is the only SDP BiH candidate for the position of the acting Director of the new BiH Federation Intelligence-Security Service (FOSS), Dnevni Avaz (Saturday's issue) learns from well informed sources. It is about a well-experienced police officer, who was recently rejected by the Alliance for Changes members as the candidate for the Sarajevo Canton Police Commissioner. According to the newspaper, this nomination must be approved by the Party for BiH, according to a double-key principle. The principle means that both parties must approve, for example, candidates for the BiH Federation Interior Minister and the FOSS Director. The Party for BiH is expected to

consider Alibabic's nomination by Tuesday, so that the BiH Federation House of Representatives is in position to appoint both officials (entity Interior Minister and FOSS Director) at its next session scheduled for October 24.

A total of 8,453 cases wait to be resolved before the BiH Federation Supreme Court According to data collected by the Department for Monitoring and Implementation of the Independent Judicial Commission by September 20 this year, a total of 8,453 cases were waiting to be resolved before the BIH federation Supreme Court. Dnevni Avaz (Sunday's issue) reports that the vast majority of the cases, 7,353, are in the Court's Administrative Department as a little bit better situation is in the Criminal Department, where there are 702 unresolved cases. The best situation is in the Litigation Department with just 380 unresolved cases.

Golden Palm to Belkic, Power and Sarajevo Canton TV Sunday's Oslobođenje reports that the Steering Board of the Sarajevo Canton Association of Returnees had decided to award Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency Beriz Belkic, Head of the OHR Department for Return and Reconstruction Morris Power and Sarajevo Canton Television with the Golden Pals for their contribution to the refugee return process. The President of the Association, Marko Krstic, said on Saturday that the Golden Palms would be handed at a ceremony scheduled for October 24 in Sarajevo.

Dnevni List: There are no mujahedeens in Bocinja anymore – they went to Sarajevo and Una-Sana Canton (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Chair of the Municipal Council in Maglaj, Dzevad Galijasevic, said that there was not a larger organised group of mujahedeens in Bocinja that would represent a credible political and security threat to return of Serbs in the village. He said that the mujahedeens from Bocinja had left for Sarajevo and Unsko-sanski Canton, mostly to the areas their wives are from. Galijasevic stressed that a problem now is that six Serb houses were sold to the mujahedeens, and the legality of the deals has not been contested by either the Serbs or mujahedeens. "Municipal authorities cannot act upon their request but competent courts", said Galijasevic (...) Until September 1995, there were 856 Serb families in Bocinja with 3000 residents. Until now, 97 Serbs have returned to Bocinja, reads Dnevni List.

Vecernji List: Mujahedeens move from Bocinja to Klis (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Fear is again hanging over the homes of the few Croat families living in Klis, Konjic Municipality, reads Vecernji List. They are fearful more than they were back in 1993 when the extremist members of the BiH Army Muslim units, with the help of mujahedeens, committed mass-scale massacres of Croat civilians and soldiers in the villages of Orliste, Trusina, Buscak, Mrkosovice, Vrci, Jukici, etc. Most of those living were ousted from their houses, which were then looted and burned down.

Vecernji List says those same mujahedeens who first found a new home in Bocinje, in the surroundings of Tuzla after the war, settled in the village of Falanovo Brdo, in the heart of Klis during this summer, according to a source close to the Ministry of Interior of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

They set up a camp where bearded men could be seen, but since recently there is only one big tent in the place of the earlier 20 small ones. However, Croats are still not at ease because they think the mujahedeens have withdrawn to the hills and Croat villages abandoned during the war in the Municipality of Konjic.

The 200 Croat returnees in Klis (of the 5,000 Croats that used to live there before the war) are thinking of leaving their homes, and the very possibility of mujahedeens residing there presents an obstacle to returns. Many residents of Klis believe they chose this location because it is in the vicinity of Pogorelica, where an illegal training center for mujahedeens was established right after the signing of the Dayton Agreement.

Residents of Klis do not believe the most recent press release from the Cantonal Ministry of Interior, which says that it is about a humanitarian organization that supports Bosniak children from poor families by allowing them to live in the camp, says Vecernji List.

Republika Srpska

RS health workers go on strike

Glas Srpski announces that this is the first day of strike of the RS health workers since the requirements of the RS Health Workers Trade Unions were not met. The Trade Union requested payment of one salary to all health workers by October 17th, payment of another three outstanding salaries by the end of the year, and the improvement of working conditions.

Election of SRNA News Agency's General Manager

Nezavisne Novine reports on the session of SRNA news agency's Board of Directors, which was held last Friday. According to the daily, the Board proposed Republika Srpska Government to appoint Mladen Krsmanovic, who already acts as acting General Manager of the agency, as the new SRNA General Manager. The decision would not be disputable hadn't Krsmanovic been late to apply for this position (he applied two days after the advertisement was closed), as said by one of SRNA Board of Directors members. Nezavisne Novine's source claims that favorite for this position Branislav Ribar was not appointed due to fear of reactions of the International community, whose officials are aware that Ribar is an SDS candidate. It is up to the RS Government to decide if it will support proposal of the Board (Krsmanovic) or annul the advertisement for the position and start a new process.

International Community

Petritsch to urge imposition of a more liberal visa regime for BiH citizens as soon as the CIPS project implementation starts The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, told Saturday's Dnevni Avaz that, as soon as the implementation of the CIPS (Citizen's Identification Protection System) project starts, he would personally urge western countries to begin serious negotiations on the visa regime liberalization with the BiH authorities. It is about a system, which puts together the evidence about the citizen's registration numbers, places of their residence and personal identification documents (cards). However, Petritsch added that his voice would be more effective once when BiH shows that it has a credible system of the personal document issuance made under the world standards. "Five laws on the issue should be adopted in the Parliament and that the system should be put in place in practical terms. The imposition of CIPS will be an evidence for the world that BiH is prepared to combat terrorism very seriously. If this does not happen, this country will be more away from the integration flows and will be more discriminated," Petritsch said. He added that advantages for ordinary citizens were obvious. "By CIPS, we will show Schengen countries, as well as other countries in the world that BiH has an arranged system of issuance of documents, which are valid and credible," Petritsch told Dnevni Avaz.

European conference on combating terrorism held in Brussels

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report on Sunday that BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija, Head of the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism Ivica Misić and BiH Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Refugees Vladislav Vladoić attended on Saturday in Brussels a conference of ministers of the countries of Europe, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine dedicated to joint efforts in combating international terrorism. The Ministers adopted a declaration on the issue. During the conference, BiH was not at all brought into any connection with the international terrorism. In his address, Lagumdžija called on ministers in the region to express more courage and mutual confidence. He emphasized that the terrorism did not have its religion or nation, and that the terrorists were living throughout the united Europe.

Petritsch visits German SFOR contingent

The High representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, on Friday visited the German SFOR contingent stationed in the military base Rajlovac near Sarajevo. The German soldiers commander, General Bernd Kiesheyer, informed Petritsch about the contingent capabilities and tasks. The German SFOR contingent has been contributing to the stabilization of peace in BiH since June this year, according to Saturday's Oslobodjenje.

Hartman says Izetbegovic not under investigation According to Saturday's Sarajevo dailies, Florence Hartman, the spokesperson for The Hague Tribunal Chief Prosecutor, on Friday denied Montenegrin media speculations that the Hague investigation against the wartime Bosniak leader Alija Izetbegovic was underway.

AFP: US, British embassies reopen after arrests

The US and British embassies in Bosnia reopened Monday following a five-day shutdown due to credible security

threats, but embassy officials would not link the incident to the arrest of five people accused of having ties with terrorist groups. A Western diplomat who requested anonymity said the embassies were reopened after security was improved after the arrest of the five. The US embassy's press office said the embassy had reopened after "the security situation had sufficiently improved," but refused to comment on whether there was any connection with the arrests. British Embassy officials meanwhile said only that the temporary closure had been connected to the US-led military operations in Afghanistan. BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija said Sunday that five people had been arrested following the closure of the two embassies on Wednesday, but refused to disclose the suspects' nationalities.

FRY General Pavle Strugar surrendered to The Hague Tribunal FRY General accused of war crimes committed in Dubrovnik in 1991 surrendered to The Hague Tribunal on Sunday, as confirmed by The Tribunal's Spokesperson Jim Landle. Strugar is the first officer of Former JNA (Yugoslav People's Army) who surrendered to The Hague. Before leaving for The Hague, General Strugar stated that he was not a war criminal and that he would prove his innocence before the Tribunal.

The Hague's Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte to visit Belgrade today Chief Prosecutor of the Hague Tribunal Carla Del Ponte will travel to Belgrade and Podgorica for a working visit to discuss cooperation with the Tribunal. BETA news agency learns from the sources close to the Serbian Government, Nezavisne Novine carries, that she will meet with Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic and Interior Minister Dusan Mihajlovic.

Slobodna Dalmacija: International Conference on Regional Cooperation ends in Dubrovnik (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Slobodna Dalmacija reports on the Dubrovnik session of the International Conference on Regional and Trans-border Cooperation in Southeast Europe that finished on Sunday.

Aleksandar Popov, the President of the non-governmental Regionalism Center in Novi Sad, said "There will be no true normalization of relations among Croatia, BiH and the FRY until a free trade zone is established in this region. Since there are no open societies with closed borders, one should work on abolishing the existing restrictive visa regime, and our expert teams will in future be actively engaged in realizing these goals." The conference in Dubrovnik hosted over a 100 participants, divided into four work groups, who deplored the fact that many of the already reached agreements among the states of the so called Dayton triangle have not been ratified yet.

Vecernji List: Dishonorable role of Britain in the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Provided by OHR Mostar)

In a new book, Brendan Simms, a prominent British academic revealed the so far unseen documents to substantiate his claim that the British Government had the most negative role in BiH. They sided with Serbs, supported ethnic cleansing and sabotaged the international efforts aimed at stopping the Serb aggression, reads Vecernji List.

Brendan Simms is a reputable political scientist at the International Studies Center in Cambridge. Professor Simms spent years studying the British policy and actions in the process of Yugoslavia's disintegration. He compiled his research results in a book published not long ago: 'Most Dishonest Hour.' This is an allusion to the Churchill's famous statement about the 'Finest Hour,' the most honest hour of British soldiers in the World War II. Simms claims the behavior of the British Government as far as Croatia and BiH are concerned, is the "most dishonest act" ever since 1938 and the signature of a pact with Hitler.

Editorials

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz

In the Saturday's Oslobodjenje In Focus Column, Emir Habul comments on the recent statements given by Serb member of the BiH Presidency Zivko Radisic to the Belgrade newspaper Glas Javnosti, in which he claimed that mujahedeen had been called by the Bosniak leadership to come to BiH during the war. According to Habul, Radisic manipulates with the public in the manner of the wartime Serb hard-liners, particularly when saying that the

mujahedeen committed some of the most horrible crimes, including the 1995 massacre at the Sarajevo market Markale. In the second editorial on the Saturday's *Oslobodjenje* second page, Mirko Sagolj once again emphasized the significance of the November 25, The Day of ZAVNOBIH, in the BiH's history. In the Sunday's *Oslobodjenje* second page editorial, Zija Dizdarevic analyzes current BiH's position between the United States and Saudi Arabia following the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington and recent closure of the US and British Embassies in BiH. Dizdarevic wonders whether the Alliance for Changes will find a stabilizing response on the international perspective of BiH and its peoples in the context of global radicalization with unforeseeable effects. In the Saturday's *Dnevni Avaz* Commentary of the Day, Edina Sarac reminds in a factual way on the recent High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch's address to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. In his speech, Petritsch sent a clear message to the BiH politicians that it was high time to start implementing on the ground what they had promised while assuming the duties. Armin Zeba concludes in the Sunday's *Avaz* Commentary of the day that the World Bank's approval of the new credit of \$90 million represents a clear signal that BiH is still not a "lost case." In the Monday's *Oslobodjenje* second page editorials Ibrahim Prohic wrote about pretty bad plays of the famous BiH international soccer stars in the BiH national team, as Ramo Kolar commented in a critical manner on how danger from Anthrax was being used to turn public attention away from the resolution of ordinary problems. In the Monday's *Dnevni Avaz* Commentary of the Day, Husein Orahovac reminds that today a session of the entity Constitutional Commission will be held in Sarajevo, as a round table on the constitutional reforms is scheduled for Tuesday in Sarajevo. Orahovac concludes that it is important all involved in the constitutional reforms agree that it is high time to complete these processes.

Dnevni Avaz: The Constitutional Reforms

Written by Husein Orahovac (Full translation)

Before he said at the recent session of the Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board that the "constitutional reforms in BiH should be accelerated," the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, had, during the meeting with the new and the former SDA leader, Tihic and Izetbegovic, asserted that the mentioned reforms did not go by a wanted tempo. A joint session of the Constitutional Commissions of the both entities has been scheduled for today in Sarajevo. Moreover, a round-table should be held tomorrow in the BiH Federation Parliament's building, which has been prepared by the Commission for the Constitutional Matters of the BiH federation House of Peoples. The issue to be discussed is: "The Constitutional Changes - Implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's Decision on the Equal Constituent Status of peoples in the Entire BiH territory." Sixty five eminent legal experts, politicians, economists, historians, and heads of the all relevant organizations of the international community in BiH will take part at the round table, of course, if they accepted the invitation. Connection between the recent statements of the High Representative and two upcoming meetings in Sarajevo is more than obvious. It is of less importance whether someone did his best to harmonize times when the statements were made with times when the vents are to take place. The important is that, finally, all those actively involved in the BiH constitutional reforms agree that the time has come for the started processes to be completed. It has been realized that the destiny of the state of BiH, no matter how dramatically it can sound, depends on the speed of the constitutional reform implementation. Because, there is no constitutional equality of the peoples in the entire BiH territory even six years after signing of the Dayton agreement, because, the state is partitioned on at least two pretty independent economic, legal and military spaces.

It is therefore predictable that, primarily, the Office of the High Representative will accelerate the constitutional reforms through the mechanisms available to it, as it is quite clear from his addresses to the Peace Implementation Council that Ambassador Petritsch will focus his future engagement exactly on the resolution of these issues.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Two armies, one command, but no sign of salaries!

Written by Emir Felic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

The OSCE Mission in BiH

last week raised an initiative for furthering public awareness of the high military expenses in BiH. The initiative is supposed to encourage the people to demand transparency in the fiscal process and to keep reminding the political leadership that they are accountable to the tax-payers, says Slobodna Dalmacija. The initiative coincided with the visit of an IMF (International Monetary Fund) mission to BiH, who are negotiating with the BiH authorities about a new stand-by arrangement. In an interview for Slobodna Dalmacija, OSCE Spokesperson Urdur Gunnarsdottir, said according to the information they had, allocation of money from the BiH budget for the army stands at 6% of the Gross Domestic Product.

In conclusion, Slobodna Dalmacija says what the OSCE initiative does not provide for, is how to take care of the 14,000 people more who will remain jobless in the next four years.