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BiH State-related Issues

High Representative, presidency to hold regular meetings

Onasa news agency reports, and most dailies in Sarajevo carry, that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the BiH Presidency members agreed on Wednesday to hold regular monthly meetings, similar to the Partnership Forum which has been established to foster cooperation between the Council of Ministers and the International Community in BiH. Petritsch told reporters after the meeting that he discussed with Presidency Chairman Jozo Krizanovic and members Beriz Belkic and Zivko Radisic the actual political and economic issues in the country. The participants at the meeting also discussed the implementation of a set of laws from the Citizens' Identity Protection System (CIPS) project. "I have asked for the Presidency's support in the implementation of the CIPS project, because I think the project is a central issue of security in BiH. The project's implementation is a central part of the fight against terrorism in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and globally," the High Representative said.

Petritsch also told the Presidency members that he was concerned over the establishment of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) of BiH. "The service must clearly be different from the former BiH public television and there should be no kind of state control," Petritsch stressed. The High Representative told the Presidency members he will inform the political directors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board about the slow progress in the implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on the constituent status of all peoples in BiH. "At the next meeting of the Steering Board political directors I will say the process is slow and that our re-engagement in the matter should be considered," he said, adding that local institutions are obliged to implement the decision.

(Oslobodjenje carried the actual OHR press release, while all other media in the Federation had their own reports about the event. RS dailies carried the statement and report, while Dnevni List carried only the [press release](#).)

Chairman of the BiH House of Peoples starts initiative to remove Jadranko Prlic from the post of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade

All Federation media report that the chairman of the BiH Parliament's House of Peoples, Sejfudin Tokic, initiated a procedure for the removal of Jadranko Prlic, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations in the

Council of Ministers following a financial audit report of the Ministry of Foreign Relations for the year 2000, when Prlic was heading this ministry. According to Tokic, the report indicated that a number of illegal actions have taken place in that period. "As Prlic was the head of the Ministry, it is not appropriate that he keeps his important post in the present government," Tokic said. His initiative will be discussed at a session of the BiH Parliament's House of Peoples which is scheduled for October 23.

Jadranko Prlic dismisses request for his removal as groundless

BiH Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Jadranko Prlic told ONASA on Thursday that a request for his removal was groundless. He dismissed claims about the illegal activities in the Foreign Ministry during his mandate as the minister.

Prlic told ONASA that he "expected the recognition for leading the Ministry given the difficult working conditions in the body during his mandate," adding that "there were no illegal activities committed." "The audit should be understood positively. The problem is in the misunderstanding of the audit itself, because its function is to point at the things that need to be arranged. We must not forget and BiH is still a country under construction," Prlic said.

SDP: Public sector should be placed under control of local authorities

At yesterday's press conference, the vice president of the SDP (Social-Democratic Party), Ivo Komsic, said that the BiH state wants to take full control over the public sector, from media to public companies. "The International Community makes numerous decisions in this field and bears no responsibility if anything goes wrong," said Komsic, adding that BiH is not in the same situation as two years ago when the IC formed a number of institutions which "are ruling over our public wealth and resources." Komsic said that present authorities would like to, in a spirit of partnership, define the further role of International Community in this sector and will initiate this discussion at an extraordinary session of both chamber of the BiH Parliament which is to be held within a few days.

RS police deployed in Srpska Kostajnica after Croatia indicated it may take over the town

RS police was deployed late Wednesday into a border town after neighboring Croatia said it might try to take it over in line with an as-yet-unimplemented agreement, RTRS reported. RS Interior Minister Dragomir Jovicic told the station that special police units took up position in and around Kostajnica and will remain there until a political resolution of the matter. He said Croatian authorities indicated that they intended to take over the town and surrounding territory which had been awarded to Croatia under an arbitration agreement signed last year about the exact demarcation of the border. Jovicic explained that the agreement had not yet been ratified by either the Croatian or BiH Parliament. He said that, thus far, no incidents had been reported.

"The decision changes nothing. We just want to preserve the current border according to the Dayton Peace Accords until the state of BiH ratifies the agreement on borders, signed by BiH and Croatia," said the RS Prime Minister, Ivanic in Prijedor, and added that he has informed the OHR about his decision.

Federation

Federation Police arrest two Algerians connected with threats to US, British embassies

The Federation police have arrested in Sarajevo two Algerians believed to have made the telephone threats that caused the closure of the US and British Embassies in BiH, Habena learned from sources close to the Federation Ministry of Interior. One of them is reported to have BiH citizenship.

Dubravko Lovrenovic: No one is taking over the Television

The Deputy Federation Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, Dubravko Lovrenovic, criticized Sarajevo daily Oslobođenje for taking his statements about the transformation process of electronic media in BiH out of context and accused its editors of using “bombastic headlines,” obviously referring to Wednesday’s front page story titled “Federation and the State taking over the television”. “I don’t know how you got that, but I am not a person who would ever advocate solutions of this sort. I clearly said that the mutual responsibilities of all those involved in the transformation process of television needs to be determined, which means that this issue will be a topic of a discussion, including the parliamentary one scheduled for October 24,” said Lovrenovic. He categorically rejected any possibility of anyone taking over the television. “Television needs to be independent, in particular in its editorial policy,” he stressed at the end.

Party for BiH agrees on the candidate for the new Federation Minister of Interior

Oslobođenje reports that the Party for BiH nominated on Wednesday Ramo Maslesa as a candidate for the new Federation Minister of Interior after all other candidates selected on Tuesday refused the candidacy. Maslesa is the head of the Security Studies School at the Sarajevo Faculty of Criminal Science. His candidacy was further forwarded for review to the Federation President, Vice President, the Prime Minister and to the IPTF.

Federation government freezes Aluminij Factory’s bank account

Dnevni List reports about speculations that Kuwaiti company KIA is planning to enter Aluminij with its capital, and that Haris Silajdzic and Safet Drucevic are supposed to help this process. The daily claims their reward for a job well done would be a portion of the future profit. The Kuwaiti company is the owner of the BH Steel in Zenica and has already prepared dismissals for 2,500 of its employees.

Because of that The Party for BiH is conditioning its partners in the Alliance, including the Lagumdžija’s SDP. In the same time the Federation PM has written off debts of 11 companies from the Bosniak part of the FBiH damaging the state for more than 41 million KM. In the same time, Kresimir Zubak confirmed, whilst being a guest on a local TV, that the Arab capital should enter the “Aluminij” saying that he assumes that the Arab capital is in the game. Nikola Grabovac, Finance Minister in the Federation Government, has done almost nothing to protect the “Aluminij” from the plunder. Still, Dnevni List finds out that Grabovac, who is in charge of the Financial Police, did not sign a warrant that would enable the Financial Police to start working in the “Aluminij”. The same warrant was signed by the PM Alija Behmen, who has not such authority

Dnevni List also reports that the Federation Government froze the Aluminij’s bank account on Wednesday. The Independent Trade Union of Aluminij employees are, reportedly, planning to hold a protest rally and block all the roads leading to and from Mostar later today. Croat Homeland War associations, who will joint the workers, have already called upon all Croats in the area to support their efforts.

OHR concerned about the election of Edhem Bicakcic for the leadership of the SDA

OHR spokesman Oleg Milisic told Dnevni Avaz that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is very concerned about the election of Edhem Bicakcic to one of the post in the leadership of the SDA (Party for Democratic Action). "SDA is presenting itself as a modern, democratic and civic party, and at the same time, chooses Edhem Bicakcic for one of its leaders," said Milisic. He once again repeated that Bicakcic was removed in the February of this year by the High Representative because of abuse of office and various illegal activities during his time as the Federation Prime Minister. "As long as such people are at the top of the party leadership, the intention (of the SDA to be a modern and democratic party" is questionable," Milisic stressed at the end.

Ante Jelavic unexpectedly claims: Mostar should be a single city

Slobodna Dalmacija reads Ante Jelavic stated on Tuesday night for the HTV Oscar-C in Mostar that his party advocates the idea of "Mostar as a single city."

This is the first time any of the HDZ BiH leaders has stood up in public for integration of Mostar. So far, HDZ BiH officials, in their statements about overcoming the difficulties in Mostar, have most often used the phrase "functional unit," says Slobodna Dalmacija.

The daily says that the High Representative had been warning prior to Jelavic's re-election as the HDZ BiH President (since there had been public announcements of his re-election at that time) that it could only weaken the position of both the party and the Croat people in BiH. It seems that this advocating of a single Mostar speaks of yet another attempt of the HDZ to get out of political isolation, says Slobodna Dalmacija.

Republika Srpska

New Announcements on Arrest of Radovan Karadzic

Nezavisne novine writes, quoting a source close to the International Community in BiH, that arrest of the indicted war criminals Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic are soon to take place. The daily's source further explains that "the determination of the SFOR and the US Administration after September events in the USA increased, since the elimination of terrorist and other radical organizations was considered important for elimination of environment susceptible to terrorist actions.

The RS Law on Cooperation with The Hague Tribunal To become effective in Two Weeks

Nezavisne novine write that the RS Law on Cooperation with The Hague Tribunal will be published in the next, 52nd, edition of the RS Official Gazette, as confirmed by editor of the gazette Veljko Knezevic. He added that this issue was being prepared, and that it would be published in a few weeks.

International Community

US, British embassies, consulates close in BiH due to security threat

Yesterday's (Wednesday) closure of US and British embassies and consulates in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka was by far the top story in all media in BiH. The embassies, consulates and all affiliated American and British organizations were closed early Wednesday morning because of a "credible security threat." Embassy officials refused to provide any further details about the threat, and added that their offices will reopen once the conditions for this have been secured. The BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zlatko Lagumdžija, said that the Ministry has been informed about the threat and has increased security around a number of embassies and consulates in BiH.

Despite this, Sarajevo dailies say, other international organizations in BiH, including the UN, OSCE and the OHR, have not introduced additional security measures and are operating normally.

In a message to BiH citizens, the chairman of the BiH Presidency, Jozo Krizanovic, said that there is no reason for concern in BiH and added that all additional security measures that have been taken are of merely preventive nature.

High Representative names international members of BiH Elections Commission

Dnevni Avaz reports that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, named international members of the BiH elections Commission – the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, his deputy and the Senior Deputy High Representative. "The rest of the job should be done by local authorities. I would like to say that, in the spirit of partnership, this procedure should be implemented and if appropriate activities related to the election are not realized, I think we will have to intervene," said Petritsch. The daily also noted that local members of this Commission are to be elected by the Commission for the appointment of judges of the State Court, which is headed by Snjezana Savic. Savic conceded that the deadline for naming local members to the Commission was October 15, but stressed that process of selection is underway.

Croatian Parliament delegates preoccupied with Croatia's role in BiH war

The role of Croatia in the war in BiH on Wednesday became the main topic of discussion at the Croatian Parliament. It started with a statement by Radimir Čačić, the Minister for Reconstruction, about the HDZ's aggressive policy in the neighboring BiH, so that the delegates, instead of discussing legal acts, got caught up in a severe polemic about the cause of the war in BiH.

Ivo Sanader, on behalf of the HDZ, said it was a disgraceful and monstrous slander, a lie and a fabrication. He wanted the Croatian Prime Minister Ivica Račić to take the floor and say if it was the general view of the entire Government, and if it was not, he wanted Račić to replace Čačić. Damir Kajin of the IDS (Istrian Democratic Alliance) said what Minister Čačić said was true: HDZ did send Croatian Army to BiH.

Editorials

Dnevni List: Croats in BiH could dearly pay for the war in Afghanistan

Nur Saleh

Dnevni List carries an editorial about implications of the war in Afghanistan. It reads that regardless of the Muslim casualties in Afghanistan, Arabs and Islamic people would be the greatest beneficiaries because the West will force the autocratic regimes in those countries to start democratization processes. "Who will pay the price of this global war?", asks the editorial. Americans have to justify themselves before the Arab and Islamic world that the US is not launching the war against Islam. That's why the US will use the card they have up the sleeve, which will be thrown on the table and confirm that the war is against terrorism only, like Tony Blair had said during talks with Arafat when the West launched attacks against Yugoslavia to protect Muslims from Kosovo. One can hint from the Blair's statement that someone else is going to pay for the attacks on Afghanistan, foremost the countries from the ex-Yugoslavia. In that context, when it comes to BiH, the BiH Croats will pay the dearest price, because the US will satisfy the Bosniaks at the expense of the Croats, who are their Federation partners, just to show the Islamic world that BiH has remained an undivided country to delight of the Bosniaks-Muslims and to prove that the US are protecting Muslims. Croats in BiH, being the smallest in numbers in BiH, pay the dearest price in the game because the Serbs in the RS are untouchable and have their own state within a state, which is a forbidden fruit for the Croats. If the world goes through with such policy, the Croats will be the greatest losers of the war in Afghanistan, reads Dnevni List.