

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 16/7/2006

TV news broadcast on **July 15, 2006**

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	TV PINK (18,00 hrs)	BHT 1 (19,00 hrs)
Strike ends at RHB	World News	War in Middle East
Bishop Conference ends	Davidovic on EU enlargement	No info on BiH citizens in Lebanon
Bakic on RS media	Mahatir visits BiH	Re-exhumation in Potocari
Mass held in Banja Luka	Info campaign on elections	Regional News

NTV Hayat (19,00 hrs)	FTV (19,30 hrs)	RTRS (19,30 hrs)
Algerian group friends in protests	Re-exhumation in Potocari	Woman killed by lightning strike
Malaysian delegation in BiH	ICTY on Gvero and Miletic	Re-exhumation in Potocari
Appeals to Blaskic's verdict	Israeli attacks resumed	Candidates removed from lists
Jovic on Delic allegations	Malaysian investments in BiH	Customs officers file lawsuit

Oslobodjenje	Bones exhumed from ground for third time! (on re-exhumations in Srebrenica)
Dnevni Avaz	We will single out politicians who work against workers (interview with Unions leaders Biber)
Dnevni List	I am Wahhaby, bit I am not terrorist (interview with Elviz Alicic who was suspected of planning terrorist attack)
Vecernji List	Commission on Medjugorje to be formed (BiH Bishops on alleged apparitions of Virgin Mary in Medjugorje)
Nezavisne Novine	Prisons in BiH overcrowded, convicts at large (feature story on overcrowded BiH prisons)

War Crimes	
ICTY Prosecution says documents says documents that helped reduce sentence to Blaskic were forged, Croatian Govt denies allegations	<p>Pink – For the first time in its history, ICTY published an appeal filed by ICTY Prosecution. Namely, Prosecution filed an appeal against the verdict in Tihomir Blaskic case, since the Tribunal reduced sentence to Blaskic from 45 to 9 years. The Prosecution claims that the documents, which enabled the sentence reduction, have been forged, demanding revision of the trial. According to Croatian media, new evidence showed up, proving that Blaskic himself had ordered the attacks against Ahmici and other Bosniak villages near Vitez. FTV – Former Croatian Deputy Prime Minister, who was at the time coordinating activities with the ICTY, Goran Granic, has been accused of falsifying the documents (also reported by RHB, BHT, Hayat, RTRS, Oslobodjenje, pg 3 'Goran Granic rigged report on Ahmici crimes?', <u>not signed</u>)</p> <p>Vecernji List, pg 9, mentioned on front 'Government: We did not send forgery', by <u>Silvna Perica</u> – carries (current) Croatian Assistant Justice Minister and Head for cooperation with the ICTY, Jaksa Muljadic, as denying reports that former Croatian Deputy Prime Minister, Goran Granic, forged (back in year 2000) the documents in the 'Blaskic' case.</p>
ICTY Prosecution accepts request that war crimes suspects Gvero and Miletic be on pre-trial release	FTV – ICTY Prosecution accepted the request for pre-trial release for former RS Army officers Radivoje Miletic and Milan Gvero (charged with crimes against humanity committed in Srebrenica and Zepa). They have to return to ICTY on August 29, 2006. BHT report notes they have to return to the ICTY on August 14, 2006.

Re-exhumations of body remains of Srebrenica victims started on Saturday	RTRS – <u>By Svjetlana Markovic</u> – Re-exhumation of partial remains of Srebrenica victims buried in Potocari Memorial Centre started on Saturday. The re-exhumed remains will be completed with bones found after the funeral and buried again. Sadik Selimovic from FBiH Commission for Missing Persons explained that many remains of one single body were found in two or three different mass graves. Therefore, the re-exhumation is necessary to complete bodies. International Commission for Missing Persons (ICMP) stated that 120 identified bodies are waiting for funeral because ICMP hopes to find the missing bones of these bodies. BHT – Families of the killed are disappointed with this action adding that this is like a torture to them. FTV – Reporter stated that the genocide is still happening to families of missing people because mass graves are hidden and mortal remains are not found. Oslobodjenje , front pg splash and pgs 4-5 ‘Bones exhumed from ground for third time!’, by <u>Avdo Avdic</u> – carries Selimovic as denying media reports that there have been mix-ups during previous burials (that mortal remains of different people got mixed up). Selimovic argues it is about pre-election tricks, stressing that mistakes when using the DNA analysis method are almost impossible. (reports also featured Nezavisne Novine , pg 3 ‘Re-exhumations of 52 bodies started’, by <u>V. R.</u> , Dnevni Avaz , pg 4 ‘Klepici: Such is destiny of these children’, by <u>A. Hadzic</u> – report focuses on individual case of one Saban Klempic).
ICTY returns Action Plan on cooperation with ICTY to Serbian Govt, identifies shortcomings	Pink – ICTY returned the Action Plan on cooperation with ICTY to the Serbian Government for further improvement, along with clear directives on which parts of this document need to be changed. According to media, ICTY refused the plan because it doesn't state names of persons directly responsible for implementation of each section of the plan. Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica is expected to present the Action Plan in Brussels on Monday. (also reported by BHT, FTV)
PDP, NGO from Bijeljina say Presidency member Tihic's request to penalize RTRS is abuse of Srebrenica commemoration	RTRS – Many officials and organisations condemned the request of BiH Presidency Chair Sulejman Tihic that the RTRS be penalized by RAK (Communications Regulatory Agency) because of violation of decision on mourning day marking the anniversary of Srebrenica tragedy. General Secretary of PDP Nevenka Tri克福vic believes that Tihic's request represents an abuse of the commemoration ceremony. Bijeljina-based “Society for modern politics” NGO expressed its support to RTRS and objective informing.

Political Developments/Reforms

Avaz: BiH Foreign Minister Ivanic to meet senior EU officials on Monday to explain situation in BiH, focus on SAA talks, police reform and cooperation with ICTY	Dnevni Avaz , pg 2 ‘Big discussion about BiH’, mentioned on front ‘Ivanic will spend two hours with Solana and Rehn’, by <u>S. Numanovic</u> – Avaz learns from a source in the EU Council that the EU High Representative for Foreign Common and Security Policy, Javier Solana , EU Enlargement Commissioner, Ollie Rehn , and the Finnish Foreign Minister, Erkki Tuomioja , (Finland currently chairs the EU), will hold two-hour talks with the BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic , at Brussels on Monday. According to the source, the EU is interested in situation in BiH, especially when it comes to the progress related to the SAA talks and meeting European partnership pre-requisites. Avaz says the EU troika will focus on the problems in the police reform and insist that the reform must be conducted in accordance with the 3 European principles, which among other issues excludes possibility of existence of entity police structures, and on cooperation with the ICTY. Other topics include continuation of constitutional changes talks and PIC's decision to close the OHR down on June 30, 2007. Avaz's source stresses it is a rare occasion that Solana and Rehn sit and talk for two hours about one topic. <i>“BiH must have it in its mind and use the opportunity”</i> , said the source.
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NATO advisor in BiH Gregorian commends defence reform, warns war crimes support network still exists in BiH	Oslobodjenje , pg 6, mentioned on front 'Support to war criminal still exists in BiH', by <u>A. Prlend</u> – carries an interview with the political advisor to the NATO HQ in Sarajevo, Raffi Gregorian , in which he commends the defence reform process in BiH, saying the country used the opportunity to speed up the process and be faster than countries in the region when it comes to defence reform. However, Gregorian warned that a support network to war criminals still existed in BiH, explaining: <i>"Trials to Momcilo Mandic, Milovan Bjelica and Mirko Sarovic show they are connected to money laundry for Radovan Karadzic. Criminal charges have not been pressed against Karadzic's wife and son although it is very clear they are involved in all of it"</i> .
BiH Chief SAA negotiator Davidovic: UK advocates enlargement of EU	Pink, RTRS – BiH Chief Negotiator on Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU Igor Davidovic returned from a four-day visit to UK. Davidovic stated that the official stance of the UK is closer to the idea of further enlargement of the EU, which is very important for BiH. According to Davidovic, EU countries still haven't made the final decision on further enlargement, and all talks on possible exhaustion with enlargement are still based on polemical discussion.
Media reports note many candidates for October elections are removed from lists because not meeting requirements, CEC's Sehic says number of removed candidates is under 300	RTRS – By <u>Sanja Popovic</u> – Belgrade-based "Euroblic" magazine reported that BiH Central Electoral Commission (CEC) has removed some candidates from the candidate lists for October elections because of discrepancies with BiH Electoral Law. Member of CEC Vehid Sehic confirmed this information, explaining that some candidates didn't pass the verification. According to him, the media speculations on over 300 removed candidates are not true, stating that the number of removed candidates is under 300. Sehic explained that compared with 7.200 candidates, the number of removed ones is not too high. He added that some candidates would need to submit the full documentation required for registration of their candidacies. Sehic also explained the parties are required to submit names of new candidates within five days. One of the removed candidates is DEPOS' Svetlana Cenic . She explained that she read about her removal in the press, stressing that official information hasn't been sent to her yet. As she explained, she was removed because she is not registered with CIPS. Cenic claims that she couldn't register with CIPS because all her personal documents were stolen during her visit to London. She underlined that she possesses a valid confirmation of London Metropolitan Police about the robbery. Nezavisne Novine , pg 3, mentioned on front 'Election commission removed 663 candidates from lists', by <u>R. Cengic</u> – notes the number of removed candidates is in fact 663.
BHT1 feature story: Politicians will once again promise everything during re-election campaign	BHT1 – By <u>Zoran Sarenac</u> – Presenter ironically stated that launching of new construction works is something that is regularly manifested during the election year in BiH, in addition the pre-election campaign in 2006 was "enriched" by the attempt to politically manipulate the media in BiH. Reporter stated that by preparing the pre-election campaign, BiH politicians have opened two battlefields. <u>Sarenac</u> ironically stated that politicians every day get the shovels in their hands and surprise BiH citizens with additional kilometre of a highway or with electrification of a village. Report features Nebojsa Radmanovic from SNSD who stated <i>"we start with you because you are important to us"</i> during the electrification of a village. <u>Sarenac</u> stated that in order to secure the victory in the elections, politicians need the support of media especially of PBS, which the reason for their constant attempts to put it under their control. Thus, reporter continued, RTRS is a target of SDS for which they claim that is SNSD-oriented. <i>"We do not consider this to be exercising pressure on media. We deem it is a freedom of expressing opinion"</i> said SDS Leader Dragan Cavic. <u>Sarenac</u> added that this freedom of expressing opinion is requested by journalists in SRNA news agency who claim that Editorial Board is changing the content of the news under the pressure of PDP and SNSD. Milorad Milojevic , from the Association of Young RS Journalists, stated <i>"the influence can be seen in the news content by which the dignity of a journalist is damaged. The news is under censorship"</i> . Reporter stated that another "tool" is rising of nationalistic tensions, adding that after the elections are over and coalitions are formed, it will be clear that the aim justifies the means. Miodrag Zivanovic from Philosophical faculty in Banja Luka calls on "people not to vote in October elections because the evil is just augmented by it".

Serbia Govt's Coordinator for Kosovo: We will not accept any form of independence of Kosovo	Nezavisne Novine , pgs 8-9 'Serbia will not accept independence of Kosovo', by <u>Divna Vidakovic</u> – carries an interview with the Serbian Government's Head of Coordination Centre for Kosovo and Metohija, Sanda Raskovic-Ivic , in which she noted, whilst speaking about the future status of Kosovo, that the UN Security Council will decide about the status, arguing that any decision cannot be taken without consulting the Serbian authorities. <i>"We will not accept any type of independence (of Kosovo). Postponed, un-postponed, conditioned...Serbia will not accept any kind of independence"</i> , said Raskovic-Ivic. She was also asked to comment on the nexus between statuses of Kosovo and RS to which she replied: <i>"The best thing is that BiH stays single in the same measure as Serbia. I think it is impossible to apply two standards in these two cases and I think it is very clear"</i> . She also noted that everyone must take into consideration the fact, especially when it comes to the Balkans, <i>"that borders cannot be changed without difficult issues and painful consequences"</i> .
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Economy/Social Issues

Former Malaysian PM Mahatir, Malaysian business people visiting BiH: Talks on possible investments in BiH	Pink – A Malaysian delegation lead by former Malaysian PM Mohammad Mahatir arrived to BiH. Mahatir stated that Malaysian businessmen are interested in investing in BiH, and especially in projects, which will create new jobs. He intends to boost the interest of Malaysian businessmen to invest in construction of Corridor Vc and Visoko Airport. FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic stated that local authorities should show the Malaysian investors that projects in BiH could be carried out successfully and increase their interest in investment in both private and public sector. Hadzipasic stressed the need for increase of trade exchange between Malaysia and BiH. Mahatir underlined that Malaysian businessmen are especially interested in water production, electricity power production, as well as construction of Vc Corridor. FTV – Mahatir stated that Malaysian businessmen were interested in investing in new airport near Visoko and opening of a new airline company (also reported by BHT1, Hayat, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz , pg 3 'Mahatir brought along group of prominent business people', mentioned on front 'Malaysians mention corridor Vc again', by <u>L. Sinanovic</u> , Nezavisne Novine , pg 3, mentioned on front 'Products from BiH will find place on Malaysian market', by <u>R. Cengic</u>)
Presidency Chairman Tihic with fmr Malaysian PM Mahatir: Talks on Corridor Vc	RHB, RTRS, FTV – BiH Presidency President Sulejman Tihic was a host to Malaysian delegation lead by former PM Mohammad Mahatir . Oslobodjenje , pg 2, mentioned on front 'Make Malaysian business people interested in highway', <u>not signed</u> – reports that Mahatir is keen on making Malaysian business people interested in investing into the Corridor Vc project and Visoko airport. (also reported by Dnevni List , pg 5 'Interest for airport', <u>not signed</u>)
RS Minister Brkic regrets RS companies did not use opportunity to present potential to possible Malaysian investors	RTRS – Around 20 companies from BiH presented themselves to the businessmen from Malaysia. Among them were only two companies from RS – "Birac" from Zvornik and "Unis" from Derventa. RS Minister for Economic Relations Jasna Brkic stated that she regrets the fact that only two RS companies were presented. She stressed that RS companies have many things to show, but the time for preparations this time was simply too short. She announced a possible visit of a future Malaysian delegation to RS, where more RS companies could present their work.
BiH Unions leader Biber: We will single out politicians that work against interests of workers	Dnevni Avaz , front pg splash and pg 5 'We will single out politicians who work against workers', by <u>Enes Plecic</u> – carries an interview with the leader of BiH Trade Unions, Edhem Biber , in which he warns politicians and parliamentarians they will be facing 'wrath of oppressed' prior to the October elections. Biber says the Unions will single out politicians who work against interests of common workers, criticizing latest developments in BiH parliaments, when parliamentarians increased their benefits via the Law on rights and duties of elected officials, and in the same time are planning to enact some laws (such as law on minimum hourly wages) that will put in jeopardy many workers and their families.

Judicial Issues/Security

Protestors in front of BiH institutions request releasing of Bi citizens from Guantanamo	<p>BHT1 – A group of people headed by Nadja Dizdarevic organised a protest in front of BiH Joint Institutions in Sarajevo on Saturday. The protest was a sign of support to the filed request for closing Guantanamo prison and releasing the prisoners. Dizdarevic, whose husband is in Guantanamo prison, stated that the same protests had been organised worldwide on Saturday. Hayat By <u>Zumra Arnautovic</u> – Attorney of the Algerian Group (group of 6 naturalized BiH citizens kept at Guantanamo prison) in USA Stephen H. Oleskey stated over the telephone that it seems that the Guantanamo prison will be closed and most of the prisoners sent home. Oleskey stressed that BiH authorities need to negotiate with USA in order for members of the group be returned. Oleskey claims that in order for the members of Algerian group to be released BiH authorities need to react as soon as possible. Oslobodjenje, pg 3, mentioned on front 'Among detainees is 10-year old boy', by E. Kamenica – reports on protests, saying it only gathered about 50 protesters. The daily carries Dizdarevic as criticizing treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo, underlining that a 10-year old boy has been a prisoner at Guantanamo for 4 years already. (also reported by Dnevni Avaz, pg 8 'We do not know if they are alive at all', by <u>S. Skuletic</u></p>
RTRS: RS Supreme Court rejects appeal of Bosniaks from Kotorsko, confirms land belongs to Municipality	<p>RTRS – By <u>Milica Djurdjevic</u> – RS Supreme Court rejected the requests of Bosniaks from Kotorsko for revision of verdict passed by Doboj District Court. According to this verdict, the land given to Serbs for construction of houses is not property of Bosniaks, but property of Municipality. Reporter stated that the latest verdict represents a burden for both Bosniaks and Serbs. Featured dwellers of Kotorsko didn't want to comment the verdict, but they talked about the difficult life conditions in this village. Legal representative of Bosniaks announced lodging of a new appeal.</p>
Former RS Customs officers claim employments conducted by ITA were illegal	<p>RTRS – By <u>Vesna Vukovic Duric</u> – About 200 dismissed officers of former RS Customs Offices have filed lawsuit against Indirect Taxation Administration (ITA). They claim that the process of employing new staff by ITA was illegal. Pero Simic, Head of Association of former RS Customs Officers, claims that many documents prove the irregularities of employment process. Simic also accused ITA of fraud, claiming that there are 16 cases where transports of construction material were registered as coffee transport. Head of ITA Kemal Causevic claims that there is only one such case in Brcko District, stressing that it has been reported to the Prosecutor's Office three months ago. The ITA officers who were on duty when this case occurred have been suspended and replaced by former officers of RS Customs Office. Causevic underlined that 130 persons who were not employed in the initial process have started working in the meantime. Simic claims that the court proceeding in lawsuits against ITA are too slow, claiming that BiH Court acts in solidarity with ITA. Causevic claims that 9 verdicts in lawsuits against ITA have been passed so far, and they all showed that ITA wasn't involved in any irregularities. He stated that he feels sorry for people who were manipulated and who now have to pay for attorneys. According to Causevic, ITA has managed to establish some kind of partnership relation with the Association of former RS Customs Officers. The Association members agree that the dialogue with ITA and Causevic has improved.</p>
Alleged terrorist suspect from Blagaj near Mostar questioned and released, denies involvement in any terrorism activities	<p>Dnevni Avaz, pg 4, mentioned on front 'Elviz Alicic questioned and released home', by <u>A. Malagic</u> – following reports that police arrested one Elviz Alicic from Blagaj near Mostar under suspicion that he was preparing terrorist attacks on religious facilities in the Mostar area (see OHR Media Round-up, July 15), Avaz reports that Alicic was questioned by police and subsequently released. Alicic denies his involvement in any such activities, stressing that he is not a member of Wahhaby movement (radical Islamists). Dnevni List, front pg splash and pg 5 'I am Wahhaby, bit I am not terrorist', by <u>I. Culina</u>, <u>G. Leko</u> – carries an interview with Alicic in which he denies his involvement in any terrorism activities. He further notes that he is not hiding that he was with members of Wahhaby movement, however he stresses he is a believer and as such he would never attack any religious facilities.</p>

Miscellaneous

Marking of 125th anniversary of Banja Luka Diocese: Bishops appeal to Croats to return to Banja Luka

BHT1 - By Zorica Medjedovic - Banja Luka Diocese has marked the 125th anniversary of its establishment on Saturday. On the occasion, the focus was on the poor return of Croats to RS. Most of the citizens who live as refugees somewhere abroad stated that they would either not return because of the situation or return when they retire. Cardinal **Vinko Puljic** appealed to Croats to return to their homeland while Banja Luka Bishop **Franjo Komarica** confirmed that not many people are returning to RS. On the other hand, BiH Presidency member **Ivo Miro Jovic** praised the opportunity to mark the anniversary because "this shows that a normal life can be led in Banja Luka". **Oslobodjenje**, pg 4 'Bozanic called on BiH Croats not to sell their property', not signed - Croatian Cardinal **Josip Bozanic** sent a message to BiH Croats currently living abroad not to sell their pre-war property, instead to save it for future generations. (also reported by **RHB, Hayat, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz**, pg 9 'Encouragement to people to return to their city', by D. Tomic, **Dnevni List**, g 4 'Call for unity of Catholics', not signed, **Nezavisne Novine**, pg 2, mentioned on front 'Holy mass for refugees and all people of good will', by N. Moraca)