

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 4/8/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Earthquake in Herzegovina	Earthquake in Herzegovina	Serbia denies arrests	RS public survey
Vrankic on Croats status	Nikola Knezevic arrested	Incident in Kostajnica	World news
Fires in Croatia	World news	Earthquake in BiH	Weather
World News		Privatisation in Bugojno	

Oslobodjenje	Bill Clinton opening the Memorial Centre; Evictions - no life in Srebrenica
Dnevni Avaz	Presidency paying three Serb members!; Orucevic - an excellent opportunity missed; Dodik - everyone's guilt has to be established
Dnevni List	Dnevni List brings exclusively - proposal of the Mostar Statute; Strong earthquake with epicentre near Stolac registered; Ljubo Beslic - work of Aluminij must not be brought into question
Vecernji List	Black widow in Herzegovina again; Neum: fortune for accommodation
Slobodna Dalmacija	We do not lack beds but guests; Sindicic left Vis although he did not pay hotel bill
Glas Srpski	Zvornik - darkness as a faith; Due to inefficiency of the RS Courts for Minor Offences - the budget 'thinner' by 20 million
Nezavisne Novine	The police arrests Mile and Svjetlana Bojic from Knezevo/Skender-Vakuf - parents suspected of killing a new born; Unseen drought in BiH - no water in river Jasenica near Mostar; Banja Luka - the RS Telekom increases number of employees by 20 %
Blic	Cedo Volas - we do not accept Mikerevic's explanations; Shallow Sava captures ships; Ivan Lepoglavec - we prepare forms for return to Croatia

Political Affairs

Vrankic on Croats in BiH	CRHB at 18:00 hrs - a scientific conference was held in Trebizat on Sunday, titled 'The history of Trebizat and Capljina region'. The conference was opened by FBiH Finance Minister, Dragan Vrankic, who addressed the gathering warning that the existence of Croats was as threatened nowadays as it was during the war. "Than, there was war, and now we have peace and another war. Our existence and identity are threatened. I am almost not sure we have our language, I am not sure we have our educational plan and program, I am not sure we are a nation. I said that to all representatives of the international community that are present in BiH. I am not going to miss even one opportunity to say that because I am afraid it would be too late. This gathering is a continuance of our common task - the fight through culture, literature and all that makes us special," stated Vrankic.
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Ploce port	<p>BHTV at 19:00 hrs by <u>Darko Doslo</u> – Even though the recent visit of Croatian Prime Minister left impression that finally all barriers towards ratification of the Ploce port agreement were removed, it appears that this will be postponed for some time. Some authority members in BiH believe that the solution would have to be provided by the international community. BiH Minister of Civil Affairs, Safet Halilovic, opposed the signing of the changed protocol of the Ploce Agreement on the free transit through Neum prepared by the Croatian side. “What is procedurally particularly problematic is that protocol to be signed by two Prime Ministers prejudices the way of the establishment of an arbitrary commission. However, the protocol is not part of the ratification,” said Halilovic. The protocol is just a part of the agreement on the Ploce port, other important thing is that the inter-country agreements should be adopted and ratified by the BiH Presidency, following a proposal by the Council of Ministers and approval by the state Parliament. “That is a legal trick, as if somebody wants to have an alibi before the international community that they did something, while we have no guarantees or instruments for that process to be advanced,” stressed Halilovic. OHR Spokesperson, Kevin Sullivan, supported all efforts for this problem to be solved, but refused to say before the cameras that this was a problem of the two state governments. BiH Civil Affairs Minister said that his fear was that nothing would be solved until the European Commission conditions were applied in Croatia in the process of its accession to the EU in order solve this issue in accordance with the international laws.</p>
BHTV commentary on Ploce port and 5c	<p>BHTV at 19:00 hrs by <u>Gordana Simonovic</u> – Only in two months it would become known whether Croatia would condition signing of the Ploce port agreement with the international tender for the 5c corridor. Both BiH and Croatia media speculate that this agreement has become a part of the election campaign for Ivica Racan. Croatia doesn’t hide its interests for the participation in the 5C corridor construction, and Croatian Prime Minister Ivica Racan stressed this interest in both recent visit to BiH and High Representatives visit to Croatia last week. While Racan used the meeting with lord Ashdown to talk about this issue, the High Representative asked the Croatian authorities to support BiH path towards joining the EU. In two months, the latest, it will become clear whether Croatia would condition the Ploce agreement with a tender for the 5C corridor, as an election campaign for the upcoming Parliamentary elections will start. It will also be known whether the current authorities would leave these hot issues for the new government to solve, regardless whether it would be led by Racan or not.</p>
RTRS on 5c corridor	<p>RTRS at 19:30 hrs by <u>Stjepan Zlikovac</u> – A strategic investment before the BiH authorities – the construction of the 5C corridor. The Concession Commission should make a decision on the construction. It is expected that the Commission would be formed in fall, as previously announced by the Council of Ministers who accepted ‘Bosmal’s’ offer. Meanwhile, the ‘Bosmal’ has four months to secure 300 million Euros for financing the project documentation and work on the property issues. “The decision can be made only on the basis of the Law, and only by institution authorized for the concessions issues, and that is the Concession Commission. I think that the Commission would not be formed in the next three to four months because we have to respect the decision by the High Representative on the procedure of appointing members,” stated BiH Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic. The Croatian government will soon submit detailed proposal for the 5C corridor to the BiH authorities, which assumes the international competition. “We will submit that proposal in a written form within the given deadline. We did not think of entering a conflict with some agreements or interests in BiH. That was not our intention. Our intention was that in such strategic project, which connects more countries of Europe, establish cooperation in a European way,” said Croatian Prime Minister Ivica Racan.</p>

CRO press on 5c	With regard to the issue construction of the 5c, Vecernji List pg. 5 'Mostar junction in solutions' and Jutarnji List pg. 2 'Completed offer for Corridor through BiH at beginning of week' – carry respective articles. VL says that according to unofficial information, the Croatian offer for the construction of the 5c corridor through BiH has been completed and it went for additional stylization of Croatian Prime Minister, Ivica Racan. JL says the offer will be completed at the beginning of this week. JL says that in its offer Croatia proposes announcing of an international tender. VL also says that the competent ones in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton want to be informed about everything related to the construction of the Corridor 5c through Herzegovina. According to VL, the Mostar junction is one of the most important and most demanding traffic projects that open Mostar towards West and it should be incorporated in the corridor 5c and connected with the Adriatic-Ionian highway.
RS survey	RTRS at 19:30 hrs by <u>Sasa</u> Rajacic – the main topic of the news is the recently conducted public survey by the NDC company entitled 'Responsibilities and Readiness of Individuals to Act', which gave worrying results. Seventy-five percents of the RS citizens estimated that social and political situation in the RS was bad, while the same number did not believe they were responsible for such conditions. The survey conducted with 850 subjects indicated that only less than 2% of citizens were very satisfied with the situation. On the question how the individual could best realize his/her interests, more than half of questioned answered 'through the affiliation with a political party'. Only few believe that they could do that through syndicates or NGOs. According to the survey, citizens believe that for an individual to engage in public work he/she must have money or political party affiliation. Very small percentages think that would be courage, support of NGOs or education. The judiciary also received very bad marks – 76% of participants think that judiciary verdicts were influenced by the social status of individual and 73% believe that judges take account of the political affiliation of the party in the process. The RS citizens expect the biggest support from their families, while they do not communicate with the authorities. Aleksandar Tomic, an NDC programme consultant, explains that the only communication with the authorities happens during the election campaigns. Majority of citizens also think that there is nothing they could do nothing to change the present situation.
Gadzic	Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Mila Gadzic, is leaving this position and she is going to take over a new duty as a member of the BiH Central Bank Steering Board. DL reminds that Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, has stated recently that Gadzic will submit resignation to her current position and expressed dissatisfaction over the work of this Ministry. Gadzic has also stated recently that she would decide whether she would remain at the current position or go to the BiH Central Bank soon. She added that in case that she decided to leave the BiH CoM it would be because she did not want to be held accountable for the insufficient work of the Ministry and bad decisions of the BiH CoM. DL says that the most serious candidates who might replace Gadzic in the BiH CoM are President of the Federation Economic Chamber, Jago Lasic, and Chairman of the House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament, Velimir Jukic, however, DL believes that the list of the possible successors is much longer.

Interview with Beslic	<p>Dnevni List pg. 1 and 5 – an interview with Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Ljubo Beslic, prior to visits of the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, and Director of the World Bank for BiH, Joseph Ingram, to take place tomorrow and day after tomorrow respectively. Commenting on the situation surrounding the 'Alumini' company, Beslic says the issue is very serious stressing that the survival of the company must not be brought into question. "All the participants must find a solution, and I send a message that the 'Alumini' must remain a healthy company to continue working successfully." Asked what he expected from the High Representative's visit to Mostar, Beslic said the media had followed the work of the Mostar Commission very well and that some members of the Commission eventually presented a proposal of the statute. In this context, Beslic says the SDA were not sensitive enough to nominate new candidates (for the Mostar Commission) or to reach a common solution that would satisfy all citizens of Mostar through talks within the Commission. "The High Representative is coming to Mostar tomorrow and will talk to me and Mayor Jahic. The talks will certainly be led about the statute of the City of Mostar. I think he will voice his opinion about the problem of solid waste, because the World Bank and OHR have also taken part in solving of issues of the city utility company," says Beslic. Deputy Mayor goes on to say that the World Bank has left another brief deadline for the issue of the establishment of a city utility company. "On the basis of the World Bank's statement, the Croat caucus has requested an extraordinary session of the (Mostar) City Council with one topic on the agenda, that is the establishment of the city public utility company. Director of the World Bank is coming to Mostar on Wednesday, and will be talking to us and I believe it will be a good introduction for the extraordinary session of the City Council. Personally, I hope the outcome will be good, but I cannot be absolutely sure," concludes Beslic. It's worth to note that today's Dnevni List carries a proposal of the Statute of City of Mostar on pages 21-26.</p>
RS inmates request referendum	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg.2 'Concentration camp inmates want referendum on the RS independence', Glas Srpske pg. 2 'The time of delusions is over'- the Association of the RS Concentration Camp Inmates announced that it would request the RS authorities to schedule a referendum on the RS independence and a secession from BiH, if the Bosniak caucus in the RS Council of Peoples keeps insisting on the changing of the official insignia of the RS. Vice President of the Association, Slavko Jovicic, believes that this initiative represents a strike against the BiH Constitution. According to Jovicic, the Bosniak caucus should abandon its anti-Serb ideas. Chairman of the Bosniak caucus to the Council of Peoples, Ramiz Salkic, assessed the idea of the referendum as ridiculous and ungrounded.</p>
BiH Presidency paying three Serb reps	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 3 – the biggest front-page story in today's issue of Avaz is on the BiH Presidency paying three Serb reps – Borislav Paravac, Mirko Sarovic and Zivko Radisic. Sarovic should continue to receive the salary until April 2004, while Radisic should continue receiving it until October this year.</p>
Interview with Orucevic	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 9 – an interview with Safet Orucevic who thinks that the current situation, where the SDA is rejecting unified Mostar, is a bad dream. He said that he was especially disappointed in Hamdija Jahic, as he betrayed all principles that Orucevic handed him over the mandate three years ago. Furthermore, Orucevic thinks Mostar should be imposed as a model for other cities. "The special importance lies with the election rules that would give back rights to Bosniaks in Stolac and Croats in Travnik and the rest of the country." He also thinks that Serb reps in the Mostar Commission failed to recognize their chance and allowed to be included in the HDZ and SDA blocks.</p>
Oslobodjenje commentary	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'What is there to be done' by <u>Ramo Kolar</u> – the main message in Kolar's commentary is that the HR knows best what is to be done – he does not do his job and therefore he should stop receiving salary. Because, writes Kolar, instead of putting BiH together he is tearing it apart. To support his claims, Kolar gives examples of the HR deciding to place the Taxation Administration in Banja Luka, the Mostar re-organization and the delayed introduction of the VAT.</p>

VL commentary on Croats' position	Vecernji List pg. 4 by <u>Robert Bubalo</u> 'Less than 15% of Croats in state institutions' – says there is a poor representation of Croats in institutions at the state and Federation level. VL comments that the first reason for this situation is the fact that the number of Croats is constantly dropping in BiH. The second reason is that Croats do not like to go to work in Sarajevo because of the negative attitude towards them in this city, the third reason is an inherited structure from the previous system and the fourth reason are constant attempts of Bosniaks and Serbs to deprive Croats of their constituency. VL also says that according to some estimation, there are no more than 15% of the Croats in any relevant institution at the state or the FBiH level.
FT commentary on HR	Feral Tribune pg. 34 and 35 by <u>Ivan Lovrenovic</u> 'Years of Raspaddy' (N.B. The author played with words in the title, 'raspad' means 'decay' in local languages) carries an editorial dealing with the work of High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, and the International Crises Group (ICG) report on the HR's work. "It is not the most important in such and for such BiH whether the HR rules in a protectorate like manner or not, but it is important that he rules efficiently." The editorial also says that it would be better if the HR's mandate was more clearly defined in the direction of protectorate because his responsibility would be better determined and the steps taken in the direction of real implementation of the reforms would be more concrete and productive. "Exactly the fact that the OHR and the HR's mandates have not been defined enough has represented the biggest obstacle and the strongest source of suspicion in the ultimate and meaningful goals of the IC in this country." The conclusion reads as follows. "The Ashdown's mandate will also come to its end, and there is a fear that the IC will have to conclude again that it is at the beginning. ICG analysts are right when they say in their report – the IC does not have to feel guilty because of neo-colonialism, but because of the fact that it did not prevent or stop the war in BiH and because of the years during which it missed to make a stabile state out of BiH."
DL commentary	Dnevni List pg. 2 by <u>Slobodan Kuzman</u> 'Removals, give us removals' – the author writes that the new authority, its ministers and MPs, is trying to trick the OHR and IC by reshuffling cadres behind their backs. DL cites an example of Semso Mehmedovic, an MP in the Federation Parliament, who has allegedly started a media campaign in order to have Director of the FBiH Police, Zlatko Miletic, removed. According to DL, Mehmedovic uses the suspension of Zoran Cegar, Commander of the FBiH Ministry of Interior's special unit, as an excuse to tear apart the special unit down the ethnic line and return to times of national conflicts. The author goes on to say that removals in steering and supervisory boards have started and that announcements and requests of new removals are circulating and says if the ordinary people were asked, they would give their votes to honest people. "People are odd. In a way the OHR is odd too, in other words the High Representative, as the only merit and interpreter of the laws and regulations of civilised society, of Europe. It seems someone clipped their wings too. Or we are mistaken. May this be the case," says Kuzman.

Property Affairs

Law on Constructive Land	BHTV at 19:00 hrs by <u>Sanita Lisica</u> – two months after the High Representative imposed the Law on Constructive Land numerous issues have been left unclear in regard to the Law. For that reason, a series of seminars were organized in BiH to present the Law in details to authorized ministries and municipality officials, which should ensure its fast implementation. This Law cuts the possibility of discrimination in local institutions in the process of transferring land, ensures solution to the disputes around land allocation from 1992 to 2003. RS Minister of Urban Planning and Environment, Mensur Sehagic, explains that all those who gained the construction land to use for free, and meanwhile they claimed their property, will have to pay certain fee in the upcoming period for the use of that land. The Law also allows previous owners to claim their property registered current as the state owned. Ramiz Mehmedagic, FBiH Minister of Urban Planning and Environment, was also present at the seminar.
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Return Affairs

Bratunac	FTV at 19:30 hrs by <u>Zvonko Maric</u> – some individuals earned fortunes while abusing the process of return to villages near Bratunac. Returnees are unsatisfied with the living conditions where several household members live in small cabins without water, power, road access and medical assistance. They blame institutions in charge of return and CARE who provided cattle they do not need. Returnees explain several cases of manipulation with the construction material and sick cattle, which were smuggled from Serbia. Over 70% houses in nearby villages are used only as weekend houses, since the owners live somewhere in the Federation.
Interview with Marinovic	Dnevni List pg. 9 'During 4 year mandates we shall draw a line and realize Annex 7' – an interview with Deputy BiH Minister for Human Rights and Refugees Ivica Marinovic. He says that in case that they manage to unify the funds that they have with favorable loans, first of all from the Development Bank with the Council of Europe, then this Ministry could realize what they had planned and that was to draw a line and realize the Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement within their four years mandate. When the City of Mostar is in question, Marinovic stressed that the re-organization of the city was necessary. "We have one joint project worth 3 million KM. It is about merging of funds of four municipalities, city, canton and BiH Council of Ministers. Two implementation offers came up and it cannot be decided who to choose. Duality that we have to resolve still exists." Marinovic added that for them it is important to make an agreement and start with the realization of the project that includes 200 houses. Commenting on the fact that the Herzegovina-Neretva and Posavina cantons did not get the construction material given by the Federation Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons, Marinovic says that these two cantons received the funds earlier, thus they have no right to receive donors funds from the FBiH budget this year.
Interview with Mehmedagic	Dnevni List pg. 8 'There will be no new deadlines for submitting claims on return of flats' – an interview with Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Minister for Urbanism Ramiz Mehmedagic. Talking about the Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Accord, Mehmedagic stresses the difference between the actual return and statistics that speak about it. "I am afraid there's nothing much to be done, because the IC wants to complete the Annex 7 as soon as possible, through the return of property. I think that all the efforts of Minister for Refugees and DPs Kebo to change things at the last moment do not have a realistic chance and that in the end the result will be three ethnically pure areas in BiH, which will be rounded up and confirmed with the first census," says Mehmedagic. Minister Mehmedagic also claimed there would be no new deadlines for submitting claims on flats because it would create a 'legal chaos'.

Humanitarian Affairs

Potocari memorial	Avaz pg. 4 'The official opening on September 20' – the Steering Board of the Foundation for the Potocari Memorial today will hold a press conf in Sarajevo with an aim of informing the public of its further activities. They will talk about collection of funds, extending of the campaign with the BH Telecom and preparations for the official opening of the Centre on September 20 this year. The press conf will be chaired by HR Paddy Ashdown, and also attended by reis Cerić and Beriz Belkic. Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 5 – the biggest front-page story in today's issue carries that former US President Bill Clinton will open the Memorial Centre. According to daily's sources, there has not been an official confirmation yet.
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Economic Affairs

Banja Luka Free Zone	RTRS at 19:30 hrs by <u>Danijela Ristic</u> – For Free Zone in Banja Luka to function, there is a need to introduce amendment to the existing Tax Law. However, the conditions for changing entity's Law are to launch the VAT on the state level. The Law on Free Zones in BiH foresees that a user of the free zones pay taxes in accordance with the entity regulations. But, the RS Tax Law doesn't regulate this issue. Acting Director of the Free Zone company, Mihajlo Crnadak, said that the essence of the free zone functioning was to offer its users certain tax benefits, but the current conditions of the work in the free zone regime and regime outside of the free zone were almost the same. As the RS Tax Administration through its regulations doesn't regulate the issue, the Free Zone Banja Luka company submitted to the RS Finance Ministry two proposals for amending the Law, which would define the tax benefits. So far, proposals were not accepted. Reporter said that the Finance Ministry did not answer their question on when this would be done, but added that unofficially they found out that these amendments would follow introduction of the VAT in BiH.
Third GSM licence	Dnevni List pg. 7 'Shutting down threatens the HT Mostar without Eronet' – dealing with the issue of the third GSM license. DL says that when the BiH Council of Ministers stated that they would resolve this issue in a short period of time BiH Minister of Traffic and Communications, Branko Dokic, stated that two GSM operators were enough for BiH. DL wonders whether such statements have for its purpose the destroying of competition (since the HT Zagreb, behind which one of the biggest operators Deutsche Telecom stands, has its shares in HT Mostar) and making possible further expansion of the BH Telecom and Telekom Srpske. DL also carries that according to their information, the Croat ministers in the BiH CoM stand for the issuing of the license to Eronet while ministers from the line of the other two peoples are against this decision. DL wonders as to what will happen now when the Federation government passed the decision on the removal of the Steering Boards and the HT Mostar Steering Board, which launched an initiative for the return of Eronet, is also among them. DL says that in case that the HT Mostar loses to Eronet, it will not be able to survive and this company will be shut down. DL adds that this brings in question the destiny of 2,000 peoples employed in the HT Mostar and HP Mostar.
RS Telecom audit	Nezavisne Novine pg.5 'Telecom increased a number of employees by 20%', Glas Srpske pg. 3 'Cash-box full of satisfaction'- Nezavisne Novine has learnt that three main objections of the international auditor regarding the work of the RS Telekom are related to the huge marketing expenses, signing of contracts without tenders and the increase of employees. At the time when Zeljko Jungic took over the position of RS Telekom Director, the company had 2,283 employees and in June 2003, the number of employees almost reached 2,700. According to the Telecom employees, the only way to get a job in the RS Telekom and MOBI is to have good family connections. Director of RS Telekom, Zeljko Jungic, stated on Saturday in Trebinje, which orchestrated media campaign against the Telecom is ongoing exactly at the time when the company is in the pre-privatisation process. Glas Srpske article on a Telecom press conference held in Trebinje, is quite affirmative for the Company and its Director, Zeljko Jungic.
Komos to OHR	Avaz pg. 3 'We will not give in to pressures and blackmails' – on an open letter by 'Komos' company to the OHR. Workers of the company will not accept any sort of 'behind the scene' actions that the OHR, World Bank and HDZ are using in an attempt to endanger the destiny of around 240 employees. "For those who do not know or refuse to accept the facts, we repeat that the 'Komos' is in mixed ownership – most of which is controlled by its workers. Considering the fact that the private ownership is the most sacred thing everywhere in the world, we don't see what kind of the law the World Bank, OHR or the HDZ could use to make us give up our ownership."