

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 23/4/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30)
BiH HoR session	Serbia abolishes SOE	Trial against Ilijasevic	Kalinic - Hayd
HR with CRO officials	Ashdown - Mesic	Mine victims in Posavina	BiH Parliament
Serbian government	Law on Citizenship	BiH CoM on Eronet	Kalinic on Spiric
	Earth Day marked	Pentagon - N. Korea	HR with CRO officials

Oslobodjenje	Nikola Spiric 'pulled out of a hat' for a deputy'; Traces of war crimes in Prijedor - around 1,700 victims exhumed; Palavric - immunity for Bicakcic; FBiH defence - the plan was not perfect; Suspicion of SARS at the airport - panic due to the arrival of Chinese to Sarajevo
Dnevni Avaz	Bond - we are not leading war against Islam; Paddy Ashdown visiting Croatia - together against crime; The state of emergency abolished - the SBSB received a list of persons banned from entering BiH; Semsudin Mehmedovic - the government has to say whether military plans have been stolen
Dnevni List	Paddy Ashdown visited Croatia yesterday; Croatia getting closer to a European model for region; Prlic - we will appeal to CRA's decision
Vecernji List	SFOR barges into mujahedin camp
Slobodna Dalmacija	Defense plans against Croatia and Serbia still in use
Glas Srpski	The RS Housing Fund - loans as before; Serb Brod oil refinery - cheaper fuel; Serbian Interior Ministry - 15 murders solved
Nezavisne Novine	Paddy Ashdown met Croatian officials - organised crime is a threat to the entire region; The RS MoI CID members sent a letter to authorities and media - Minister Djeric cleansing upon party membership; A list of 100 criminals, who may flee from Serbia to BiH, prepared
Vecernje Novosti	State of emergency lifted, the country defended
Blic	A man with his girlfriend robbed 'Telekom' and a fuel station; Rodoljub Trkulja - the government will not give money if directors are irresponsible; Predrag Radic - illegal import of beer to the detriment of the RS budget

Political Affairs

Interview with Bond	Avaz pg. 1 and 5 - again expressed his concern over the possibility of criminals attempting to take refuge in BiH once the state of emergency was abolished in Serbia, US Ambassador in BiH, Clifford Bond, called on local and international officials to join fight against organized crime. He said that real potentials for fighting crime in BiH were with entities via police forces, police commissioners MoIs. Asked whether the IC had some sort of a plan to encourage the local authorities in the fight against crime, Bond stated the IC was already doing it. Recalled that HR recently visited Belgrade where he held talks about ways of improving cooperation in fight against crime.
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HR Ashdown in Croatia	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 3 – HR Paddy Ashdown yesterday visited Zagreb where he met with Croatian President, Stipe Mesic, Foreign Minister, Tonino Picula, and Croatian government Deputy PM Goran Granic. Ashdown stated after the meeting that organized crime was acting regionally and therefore regional cooperation between countries of Eastern Europe was crucial. “Now is the moment when we have to make a final blow to organized crime. That was the main topic of talks with President Mesic.” Oslobodjenje pg. 6 ‘Sheltering borders for criminals’ – Picula stated they talked about how Croatia could help BiH in transferring state administration. He added that transition reforms were taking place in rather difficult circumstances in BiH. Vecernji List pg. 12 ‘Croatia to be advisor to other countries in getting closer to the EU’, Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3, Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 4 ‘Croatian example delights the Balkans and world’, Vjesnik pg. 1 and 3, and Jutarnji List pg. 5 ‘Croatia is role model to countries of the region that want to get closer to EU’ – carry that the role of Zagreb in encouraging of the neighboring countries to get closer to the EU faster, cooperation in the struggle against organized crime and faster economic reform in BiH were the main issues of the talks that HR led with senior CRO officials.” I expressed my belief that with its progress towards the EU Croatia represented a role model and for this reason we talked about the role of Croatia in advising other regional countries help them progress towards Europe in the same pace as Croatia did it.” Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 & 3, Glas Srpski pg. 3 ‘Crime is a threat to the region’ – HR stated that the Croatian progress towards EU represented an example, stressing that Zagreb should take the advisory role for other regional states involved in the same process.</p>
HNK government	<p>Avaz pg. 4 ‘A caucus of Serb reps will nominate minister’ – on the establishment of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNK) government. Both parties carry the burden of responsibility for the current situation in the Canton, which has been blocked for the past six months. In my opinion, the SDA is the one that displayed a greater amount of unconstructiveness,” stated OHR Spokesperson Avis Benes. Asked to explain why she recognized the SDA as more guilty, Benes said she did not want to reveal details. Josip Merdzo, President of the cantonal HDZ, emphasized the final solution must be the end product of an agreement and there should be no imposing of solutions. Elmir Jahic, SDA Vice President, said they were on a path of achieving an agreement.</p>
Mostar city Statute	<p>Avaz pg. 4 ‘The devising of the Mostar city Statute’ – the first session of the Commission for the devising of the Mostar city Statute was held yesterday in the presence of SDHR Gerhard Enver Schroembgens, Mostar OHR Head Jean-Pierre Bercot and members of the Secretariat appointed by the Mostar OHR. Ambassador Schroembgens emphasized eight principles established by HR Ashdown for the work of the Commission and added that he hoped the Commission would give good results if their members were to work in the best interest of Mostar. Slobodna Dalmacija last page ‘Session without SDP’s presence’ – the first inaugural session of the Commission that is to draft the Statute of the City of Mostar took place yesterday. Apart from members of the Commission, Schroembgens, Bercot Mostar Mayor, Hamdija Jahic, Mostar Deputy Mayor, Ljubo Beslic, President of the Mostar City Council, Ante Vidacak and members of the Secretariat attended the session. SD says that High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown addressed members of the Commission through a letter in which he referred to principles that the Commission had to respect in its work. An SDP representative, Milomir Pavlovic, did not attend the session and the SDP City Board issued a press release saying that they would not participate in the work of the Commission. Dnevni List pg. 14 ‘The SDP wants to participate equally in the work of the Commission’ – the SDP press release saying that they request Ambassador Bercot and the City Council of Mostar to keep to the previously agreed principles so that the SDP could be equally represented and take part in the work of the Commission because their positions are clear and the plans they produced have gone through a broad public discussion and can be useful in the Commission’s work.</p>

SBiH on Mostar city	Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'Not dividing city' – at a session of the SBiH Mostar members adopted the Resolution on the Mostar city, which firmly supports the platform for the structuring of Mostar city proposed by the SBiH Mostar City Council. The party issued an announcement saying the mentioned document plans the structuring of Mostar as a unified city that would have multi-ethnic council established on the basis of the 1991 consensus.
Spiric instead of Paravac	Avaz pg. 8 'Spiric replaced Borislav Paravac' – Nikola Spiric (SNSD) yesterday was elected the first Deputy of the BiH HoR Speaker, thus replacing Borislav Paravac who recently became a Serb Presidency member. Spiric was elected with 20 votes. Reps of the SDA, HDZ, SDS and Party of Pensioners voted against him, while Hasan Muratovic (SDA) and Jelina Djurkovic (SDP) abstained. Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 6 – Spiric this time got the support of the opposition, meaning the SBiH and Petar Kunic (PDP). Dnevni List pg. 1 and 5 – a report from yesterday's session of the BiH House of Representatives where, among other laws, reps adopted changes and amendments to the BiH Law on Citizenship, Law on Direct Foreign Investment Policy and Law on International and Inter-Entity Road Transportation. Also reported that they appointed Spiric the new Deputy Speaker. Also reported in Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 6 'Spiric replaces Paravac'. Nezavisne Novine pg. 5 'Nikola Spiric is new Co-Chairperson to House', Glas Srpski pg. 2 'Spiric instead of Paravac' – Spiric's election. Blic pg. 7 'Without BiH citizenship because of lies and terrorism' – the BiH House of Representatives adopted in an emergency procedure a Law on Amendments and Addenda to the Law on Citizenship of BiH, which regulates conditions for stripping naturalized citizens of their BiH citizenship. According to these amendments, the relevant body for stripping of citizenship is the Ministry of Civilian Affairs, and citizens who are established to have acquired citizenship through submission of false documentation or in any other illegal manner will be stripped of citizenship, as well as those persons who were engaged in activities which damage the image of BiH, such as arms trading or involvement in terrorist organisations.
Palavric	Oslobodjenje pg. 1, 4 and 5 – "Removing immunity for Edhem Bicakcic, Dragan Covic, Mehmed Alijagic, Nikola Grabovac and other former officials represents a serious breach of the Federation legal system," stated yesterday SDA Seada Palavric, and MP in the Federation parliament. Added that the FBiH Court was truly independent they would never pay attention to Ashdown's Law on immunity. "Can you imagine, the Constitutional Court halted the case explaining the HR changed the Constituion in the meantime. The Constitutional Court had to act in accordance with the law, which clearly says that there is no retroactive change of the law. Therefore, it could not have been applied to Bicakcic, Covic, Grabovac and others."
SNSD critical of Njegus and Djeric	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Djeric and Njegus protect crime', Glas Srpski pg. 2 'Police protects corruption' – a press release issued by the SNSD, which accuses RS Interior Minister, Zoran Djertic, and RS Police Director, Radomir Njegus, of protecting criminals and corruption in the RS. The SNSD questions when the RS MOI would investigate into the report of the RS Chief Public Auditor, accepted by the RS NA, which indicates the involvement of former RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, and former RS Minister of Finance, Milenko Vracar, in the illegal sale of banks.
PDP vs. Dodik	Senior PDP official, Mladjan Zaric, says that Milorad Dodik's SNSD is trying to divert the attention from the real crime and its consequences by serving the story about crime in the RS. "Special reason for Dodik's panicking is something he will have to explain – his connection with Borislav Mikelic and smuggling in Cazinska Krajina," Zaric says. Also reported in Vecernje Novosti pg. 4 'What was he doing with Mikelic'.
SNSD vs. Kalinic	Vecernje Novosti pg. 4 'Coup d'etat only in head' – the SNSD issued a statement in regard to RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic's statement that Milorad Dodik prepares coup d'etat in the RS. The SNSD in its statement defends its president saying that it would be better for Kalinic to explain to the police what happened with millions of KM foreseen for the maternity ward White Angel or what happened with missing people during the war about whom he, as then-minister, had the information. "The RS Public expects the RS Interior Ministry to call Kalinic to explain a coup d'etat that happened in his head," the SNSD's statement says.

HDZ on SDA	Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 15 'SDA takes even what does not belong to it' – regarding a statement by SDA Vice President, Seada Palavric, that the SDA 'let the Croat side appoint five ministers in the government (of Central Bosnia Canton – CBK) even though Bosniaks are in majority there, so the minority (Croats) in the Canton should have a better protection', the daily carries a reaction by Secretary of the Central Bosnia Canton HDZ, Zdravko Batinic, as saying that Palavric's statement has nothing to do with reality. Batinic says the SDA never made any concessions to the HDZ stressing that both parties have an equal number of MPs in the cantonal assembly (10 each). Batinic explains that talks preceding the formation of the CBK government were very difficult and lasted for three months and in the end resulted in two 'packages' that were on offer. The first package was the position of the cantonal PM plus three ministries and the second package being four ministries plus a right to nominate a Serb Justice Minister with mandatory consent of the SDA. According to Batinic, the SDA had the first choice pick and opted for the first package.
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Police / Military Issues

BiH SBS	Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – the BiH SBS is currently in the state of some sort of special alert following the abolishment of the state of emergency in Serbia. Due to the fear that hundreds of people should be released from Serbian prisons, the BiH SBS, via IC channels, was forwarded a list of unwanted persons from Serbia. The SBS will therefore in the next days be extra cautious while guarding the borders. Also, a meeting amongst heads of the Security Minister, SIPA, EUPM and entity Mol's is to take place today in Sarajevo to discuss the matter.
A list of 100 criminals	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 3 – s source close to the OHR yesterday told NN that HR Paddy Ashdown and most senior security and safety officials of BiH would meet today in Sarajevo to discuss possible measures, which should be implemented following the lifting of the state of emergency in Serbia. It is believed that many Serbian criminals may seek shelter somewhere in BiH. NN source also confirmed that a list with the names of around 100 criminals has already been prepared. Today's meeting in Sarajevo, chaired by HR, will be attended by BiH Minister of Security, Barisa Colak, the FBiH and RS ministers of Internal Affairs respectively, Mevludin Halilovic and Zoran Djeric, Director of the State Border Service, Slavisa Vukovic, and EUPM Commissioner, Sven Frederiksen.
Mehmedovic on FBiH defence plan	Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – Semsudin Mehmedovic, Head of the SDA caucus in the Federation HoR, stated they would request at today's session information on the possible theft of an FBiH defence plan. "We do not want to be informed of such important issues via media," said Mehmedovic. He also said he thought there were two ways the document got out – someone from inside sold it to the RS intelligence or, more likely option, someone handed them over to certain IC circles who are trying to balance everything following the removals in the RS.
OHR and SFOR on a defence plan	Avaz pg. 2 'SFOR and OHR have no information on the existence of FBiH defence plan' – at yesterday's press conference SFOR Spokesperson, Dale MacEachern, said they had no information on an FBiH defence plan and whether it was stolen. Oleg Milisic, OHR Spokesperson, refused to comment on the plan, but added BiH urgently needed the defence reform. He further emphasized the necessity of having a command and control of armed forces at the state level as well as transparency of all BiH armed structures. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 2 – that SFOR and OHR yesterday could not confirm claims about the existence of the Federation defense plan and the alleged theft of it. Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Armies under surveillance' – Milisic's statement. Blic pg. 6 'SFOR does not know anything about the theft' – also the statements by SFOR and OHR spokespeople.
Delic on a defence plan	Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 9 – retired FBiH Army General, Rasim Delic, who was Commander of the joint FBiH Army Command after the war and currently performs duty of the Military Advisor to Bosniak Presidency member, denied that a defence plan was devised after the war. Added that by 2000 the plan was not defined, and it was nothing but assessments.

CRO press on a defence plan	Vecernji List pg. 3 'Defence plan divides Federation officials' – the Joint HQ of the Federation Army has denied information published by the Sarajevo-based daily 'Dnevni Avaz' that parts of the Federation defence plans were stolen. The information was denied by Deputy Chief of Staff of the Joint HQ, General Ramiz Drekovic, who said there was no evidence to back up the media claims. The daily also reads that the Federation Defence Minister, Miroslav Nikolic, is not aware that parts of the defence plan have gone missing. Nikolic also ruled out a possibility that the defence plan treats the RS and Serbia as enemies or aggressors. VL's comment of the whole situation is that the RS, after being shaken with a series of affairs, will try to use the opportunity to have a showdown with the IC. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 15 by Zlatko Tulic – "The whole affair shows the need for the urgent establishment of a joint Ministry of Defense at the state level. Especially because the circumstances in which the 'Train and Equip' program in the Federation was carried out have changed in the last three years. Still, it is evident the fear does exist."
General Ward	Avaz pg. 10 'Talks on restructuring the BiH military forces' – SFOR Commander, General William Ward, met yesterday with BiH military officials to discuss the defence reforms and the restructuring of the BiH defence forces. Ward met with FBiH Defence Minister, Miroslav Nikolic, generals Atif Dudakovic, Ivica Zeko and Cvjetko Savic. RS Defence Minister, Milovan Stankovic, did not turn up for the meeting. The goal of the meeting was to harmonize new structures of armed BiH forces due to the realization of the project in January of 2004.
Second CID letter	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 4 – the RS Mol CID members wrote another, which contains some information incriminating RS Minister of Internal Affairs Zoran Djeric. Namely, CID officials accuse Minister of cleansing the personnel of the RS Ministry of Internal Affairs by removing all unfit staff and replacing them with criminals. The letter concludes that SARS virus got a hold of the Ministry since Djeric assumed the position of the Interior Minister. The letter was forwarded to all institutions of the RS, to the OHR and EUPM.
Suspension of Banja Luka PSC policemen	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Policemen were suspended, but not over the letter' – according to a press release issued by the Banja Luka Public Security Centre, the five policemen from the Banja Luka CID were not suspended over their involvement in 'letter affair', but because of their violations of the code of conduct. According to the PSC PR, 'such inappropriate articles represent a strong pressure against police and its work'.
410 Intelligence Centre	Blic pg. 6 'They are waiting for SFOR's report' – although RS Army Chief of Staff, Cvjetko Savic, on Monday disbanded the 410 th Intelligence Centre of the RS Army, none of RS officials wanted to name those responsible for the spying affair. Also, no one knows or want to say who was receiving the information on the anti-Dayton activities of the Intelligence Centre as well as names of those who were spied on. The Military Cabinet of RS President says those are questions for the RS Army HQ, but no one from the HQ has given any answer. Ten days ago when he ordered the disbanding of the 410 th Intelligence Centre, RS President Dragan Cavic said that when SFOR sent the report those info would be known.

Economic Affairs

Terzic	Avaz pg. 2 'In six years BiH has to be a self-sustainable state' – addressing members of the AmCham in BiH (US Commercial Chamber), CoM Chair, Adnan Terzic, stated the BiH's future was questionable unless it became self-sustainable in the next six years. Added that it was therefore important to support the Development Strategy (PRSP) and make a contribution to improve it. Oslobođenje pg. 5 'The establishment of economic courts' – he stated the CoM will, by the end of the year the latest, establish economy courts that will operate within municipality courts with an aim of efficiently solving economy-related disputes. Dnevni List pg. 4 'Economic courts by end of year' – Terzic said that the BiH CoM would, in the next three months, remove all obstacles to export and after that the CoM, in co-operation with the entity prime ministers, would try to identify companies that could offer their products to the world market. Furthermore, he said the key goal of the current composition of the BiH CoM was to create an adequate environment for business-people announcing that the CoM would establish economic chambers with municipal courts by end of the year.
HT to appeals against the CRA decision	Following the news that the CRA is not going to issue the third GSM license to the HT Mostar (Croat Telecommunications Mostar) but to a company that is already in the mobile phones business, today's Dnevni List pg. 1 and 5 carries a statement by General Manager of the HT, Stipe Prlic, that the HT Mostar will appeal to the CRA's decision. According to Prlic, the only hope for the HT Mostar is that the company is returned the 51% ownership stake in the 'Eronet' adding that the ongoing litigation should resume in mid-June. The same paper on page 11 announces a press conference that the HT Mostar is going to organize on its premises tomorrow at 12:00 hrs.
PDHR in Banja Luka	Glas Srpski pg. 2 'To step on the gas towards reforms' – RS NA senior officials and heads of caucuses to the RS NA yesterday in Banja Luka met with PDHR Donald Hays. According to Dragan Kalinic, RS Parliament Speaker, the meeting discussed the set of laws related to reforms within the fields of economy and judiciary. Kalinic announced that two 'ad hoc' commissions would be formed to monitor the implementation of these two reform processes. Hays said that one thing is to pass the law, and another is how to implement it. Hays further expressed satisfaction over the fact that the RS government adopted recommendations of the Bulldozer Commission and worked out a set of laws, which had been forwarded to the RS NA for a procedure.
Preventing phantom companies	Dnevni List pg. 4 – a ceremony, which marked the end of the taxpayers' re-registration process, took place yesterday. Head of the Federation Tax Administration, Midhat Arifovic, stated that the allocating of thirteen-digit registration number and a receipt on tax registration of taxpayers is one of the first steps in the implementation of the tax system reform in the Federation. Arifovic stressed that this is the ground for the application of the Law on Tax Administration of Federation of BiH.

International Community Affairs	
Ashdown's column in Guardian	Oslobođenje pg. 2 'We paid a high price in BiH' – an excerpt from an article HR Paddy Ashdown wrote for the British Guardian. "BiH, Kosovo and Afghanistan have demonstrated that what happens after the fighting is every bit as important as the military campaign. Arguable more important. We have become all too good at wining these wars. But far less good at winning the peace that follows them. As in Bosnia, in Iraq too everything depends on the establishment of an early establishment of that important precondition for starting the economy, creating a free and fair political structure, development of civil society and people's trust in police and judiciary." Dnevni List pg. 3 – a warning by Ashdown that the same mistake, which was made in BiH and Kosovo, must not be made again in Iraq and it must not be late with the establishment of the rule of the law. DL also says that the HR warns of corruption, which was the result of the poor distribution of the first influx of the financial assistance for the reconstruction, of unemployment and the poor economic development.

Media Affairs

Journalists react to Njegus' statement

Blic pg. 7 'Journalists angry with Njegus and SDS', Vecernje Novosti pg. 19 'Journalists' reaction' - "We are shocked with RS Police Chief Radomir Njegus's and SDS officials' statements that independent media acts unprofessionally," Director of the Independent Journalist Association Dragan Jerinic said. According to him, such statements represent a pressure on journalists' work due to which the Association asks the international organisations in BiH to undertake necessary measures in order to protect the media and citizens from pressures from the SDS and Interior Ministry. "It is obvious that for the ruling coalition journalists are not a problem, but unwillingness to fight the organised crime," Jerinic says. OHR spokesman Vedran Persic says the OHR can not accept any pressure on the media that has a duty to report professionally. "It would be better for the RS authorities to fight organised crime," Persic said. Blic pg. 7 'Fear of media' - the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights is worried because of the intolerable pressures of the RS authorities on the media. "Interior Minister, Zoran Djeric, is afraid of journalists so it is not a wonder he is afraid of criminals he should arrest. Police Chief Radomir Njegus deals with politics instead of doing his job. They blame journalists and citizens, especially opposition parties, and only criminals are not to be blamed," the SNSD said.