

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 3/4/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30)
Sarovic resigns	Sarovic resigns	Sarovic resigns	Sarovic resigns
War against Iraq	HR welcomes resignation	HR on stabilising army	HR on 'Orao' sanctions
Land slide in Bolivia	War against Iraq	US bombard kids hospital	Reactions in the RS
Powell arriving to Belgrade		Fake companies	Paravac instead of Sarovic

Oslobodjenje	Sarovic resigned, BiH did not get an army; Due to the third GSM licence – divisions within the CoM; A battle for Baghdad started
Dnevni Avaz	Armies go under the state control; Cantonal court decided – Bicakcic and Covic without immunity; Halilovic – presidential seat waiting for Silajdzic; Arms investigation – Anic's hearing
Dnevni List	Sarovic resigned, High Representative imposed reforms; NATO satisfied with Sarovic's resignation; Separate negotiations on withdrawal of frozen money from the US – where have \$600 million disappeared?
Vecernji List	Sarovic resigned; Interview with Paddy Ashdown – he was good President, Conquering of Baghdad started
Slobodna Dalmacija	Sarovic resigned only one hour before the removal; Dodik and Kalinic already had quarrel over successor; Dragan Covic on Sarovic's resignation – the BiH Presidency in stall
Glas Srpski	The end of 'Orao' affair – Mirko Sarovic resigns; The SDS Chair Board holds extraordinary session – extracted move; Reactions – elections seem redundant
Nezavisne Novine	Outcome of the 'Orao' and espionage affair – Mirko Sarovic files resignation; Paddy Ashdown repeals the RS Supreme Defence Council; Nebojsa Covic Serbian Vice President – Zemun clan was paying Vojislav Seselj
Vecernje Novosti	Ashdown 'halves' the RS
Blic	Sarovic resigned, Ashdown abolishes the RS Supreme Defence Council; Dodik – authorities protected criminals from Serbia and RS; Attack on Iraq starts

Sarovic's resignation

Sarovic resigns	<p>Avaz pg. 2 'Sarovic decided to withdraw from the Presidency' – "I am aware of the possible consequences for the RS and the party that nominated me, in an atmosphere where arguments could not be in the first plan I decided to make this move," said Sarovic. He also said that he was well aware of the enormous pressure. Sarovic informed of the decision chairmen of the HoR and HoP and HR Ashdown. Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'I am aware of the consequences' – said he did not want damaging implication to continue in the 'Orao' affair and that he was aware of the situation of an enormous pressure. Added that he preformed his duties at the BiH Presidency in a responsible, democratic and moral way.</p> <p>Vecernji List pg. 1, 2 and 3 – Chair of the BiH Presidency, Mirko Sarovic, resigned the office yesterday, thus accepting the political responsibility for the 'Orao' and espionage affairs. According to VL, Sarovic informed HR Ashdown about his resignation half an hour before the HR was about to remove him. Glas Srpski pg. 1 and Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 'Choosing an easy version' – on Sarovic's announcing his resignation. Blic pg. 2 'Sarovic resigned, Ashdown abolishes the RS Supreme Defence Council', Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 'Ashdown halved the RS', Serbian electronic media – on Sarovic resigning from the post at the BiH Presidency. Extensive reports in international media on the issue – AP, The Times, Washington Post and The Guardian.</p>
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Tihic	Avaz pg. 2 'The problem won't be resolved with a resignation' – Sulejman Tihic's comment on Sarovic's resignation was that the problems wouldn't be solved with it. "Without harmonising entity constitutions and the BiH Constitution there will be a possibility for individuals to violate constitutional rules and UN resolutions." He added that he expected more than what was done by HR. "The measures that HR opted for did not remove conditions that allow anti-Dayton behaviour and breaching of the UN resolutions." According to Tihic, this was an excellent opportunity to establish the state defence, intelligence service and full civil control of the armed forces, as outlined in the BiH Constitution. Oslobođenje pg. 5 an insert 'The causes remained' – said that nothing much has been achieved with Sarovic's resignation as the causes remain. "If the state has no control over armed forces then everything is just the same."
Terzic	Avaz pg. 2 an insert with the above statement by Tihic 'Terzic: a reasonable move' – Adnan Terzic, CoM Chair, assessed Sarovic's decision as a reasonable move that would not lead to radicalisation of the political ambient in BiH.
Ivanic	Avaz pg. 2 'Even bigger damage prevented' – Mladen Ivanic, BiH Foreign Minister, thinks that Sarovic, by resigning, prevented even bigger damage that could have been done due to the 'Orao' affair. Ivanic asked what is the point in the election system when responsible people are being removed without any solid evidence and they are being pressured into resigning. He thinks Sarovic's resignation will open a number of issues in BiH. Oslobođenje pg. 5 an insert 'Removals without any proof' – asked whether there is any need for the elections if officials can be removed without evidence. Glas Srpski pg. 1 – Ivanic opens many issues, such as the question of where the responsibility really lays.
Robertson	Avaz pg. 2 'The only decision he could have made' – according to the NATO SG, George Robertson, resignation was the only thing for Sarovic to do following the discovery of the 'Orao' affair. Vecernji List pg. 2 and 3 'M. Dodik: he practically admits guilt with the resignation' – welcomes the resignation believing it is the only possible act that could be undertaken following the illegal export of arms to Iraq. Blic pg. 2 – "The international investigation into this affair does not bring into question the responsibility of Sarovic in the entire matter," said Robertson. Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 'Robertson: only way out' – assessed it was the only right thing to do.
Cavic	Avaz pg. 4 'An extraordinary RS NA session today' – Dragan Cavic, RS President, said that the only thing Sarovic could have done in this 'take it or leave it' situation was to resign. He announced holding of an extraordinary RS NA session today where reps would discuss political and security situation in the RS in the light of the 'Orao' affair. Glas Srpski pg. 1 – Cavic said that by resigning from the post Sarovic preserved the dignity of the RS. He further stressed that the report of the 'Tiger' Team on the performance of 410 Intelligence Centre of the RS Army was brimming with contradictions and was also politically coloured.
SDS	Avaz pg. 4 'Borislav Paravac will be nominated for the Presidency' – the SDS Main Board was in session yesterday and concluded that Sarovic's resignation was forced on the basis of a report that General Ward forwarded to HR Ashdown. SDS Spokesman, Dusan Stojicic, said the party would nominate Borislav Paravac as the new Presidency candidate. Glas Srpski pg. 1, Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 'Paravac to succeed Sarovic' – "The SDS Chair Board is of the view that the SFOR report is tendentious, selective and representing continuation of pressures against institutions of the RS and SDS," said SDS Spokesperson.

Dodik	<p>Avaz pg. 5 'I pointed out relationship between crime and RS institutions' – a short interview with SNSD President Milorad Dodik. "Sarovic knew if he did not submit a resignation he would be removed and therefore he decided to resign. Everything could have been completed much earlier if the current RS authorities were cooperating with the IC on the 'Orao' affair from the beginning." Asked whether he expected any complications in terms of political situation in the RS and BiH, he said he did not expect any destabilization. Finally, on the connection between the organized crime in Serbia and RS authorities, Dodik said that everyone in the RS knew about it. Added that he pointed it out in the past. "It is, for example, well known and Momcilo Mandic is controlling certain structures within the RS Mol and has his men installed in senior posts." Vecernji List pg. 2 and 3 'M. Dodik: he practically admits guilt with the resignation' – Sarovic would have not resigned had he not felt guilty and that he would have waited for the HR to remove him. Blic pg. 2 – Dodik said that the most important issue now was to launch a procedure for filling the position of a Serb BiH Presidency member. Dodik announced that SNSD bodies would decide whether to suggest one of their members for the position. Blic pg. 2 'Dodik: authorities support criminal' – "It is tragic that the Serbian government requests the international community in BiH to help it deal with criminals because it cannot trust RS institutions and because they protect criminals. I know the names of people in the RS police who are serving crime. It is well known who is Momcilo Mandic's man in the RS Ministry of Interior, who is Milenko Vracar's man and so forth. There is an entire pyramid of crime, which I will draw if necessary," Dodik told RTRS. Glas Srpski pg. 1 – said the most important thing was for the procedure aimed at filling the position of a Serb member to the BiH Presidency commenced.</p>
Mikerevic	<p>Vecernji List pg. 2 and 3 'M. Dodik: he practically admits guilt with the resignation' – Dragan Mikerevic (PDP) supports the resignation saying it is a moral act aimed at the establishment of new standards for those who work at the public office. Blic pg. 2, Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 – welcomed the resignation of Mirko Sarovic from the post at the BiH Presidency as a personal and moral act of a politician who has taken responsibility for something he did not do himself. Mikerevic further warned that senior BiH officials should accept their responsibilities more seriously. Otherwise, some institutions would be transferred to the state level or be abolished. At the same time, he has announced an investigation of domestic competent bodies into the responsibility of individuals 'that are causing the disappearance of the entity institutions'. Glas Srpski pg. 1 – said the resignation was a moral and personal act, which set new standards in the political life of the RS.</p>
Covic	<p>Vecernji List pg. 2 and 3 'M. Dodik: he practically admits guilt with the resignation' – Dragan Covic (HDZ), speaking before the resignation was submitted, says Sarovic leaving the office could destabilize relations considering the Presidency had been working well in the past five months. "Therefore I believe there could be certain stalls in the work of the BiH Presidency," said Covic.</p>
Kalinic	<p>Vecernji List pg. 2 and 3 'M. Dodik: he practically admits guilt with the resignation' – Dragan Kalinic (SDS) says the decisions by the High Representative will cause serious consequences for the RS. Blic pg. 2 – "On behalf of the SDS I do not want to say anything until the party Main Board takes a final stand," Kalinic said. Glas Srpski pg. 1 – the same statement in CRO media.</p>

PDHR Hays	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Firms from the Federation also traded with Iraq' – PDHR Donald Hays yesterday confirmed that some firms from the Federation, producing armament and military equipment, were also engaged in the illicit trade. By confirming this, Hays refused to disclose the names of those firms. According to PDHR, 'during talks he had with people from the 'Jugomimport', which mediated trade with Iraq, this firm was engaged in business dealings with firms from both the RS and Federation'. Accordingly, Hays noted that the Federation authorities were expected to launch an investigation into these claims. Speaking of Mirko Sarovic's resignation, Hays explained the reasons why Mladen Ivanic and Dragan Cavic were not removed from the positions. "The sole person bearing political responsibility, because he could have prevented it, was the President of the RS who was also the Chair of the RS Supreme Defence Council."
Osmanovic	Glas Srpski pg. 1 – Adil Osmanovic, RS Vice President, stated that Sarovic's resignation was a wise act, bearing in mind the pressures of the international community.
Djokic	Glas Srpski pg. 1 – Petar Djokic, President of the RS Socialist Party, stated that 'although his responsibility in the affair is disputable, the fact is that Sarovic was RS president at the time, when the illicit trade with Iraq could have been stopped'.
NN editorial	Nezavisne Novine by Dragan Jerinic 'A fall is part of flight' – according to the author, the resignation by Mirko Sarovic represents his confession that he is indeed responsible for the 'Orao' affair. The fact that the confession was extracted upon pressures from the OHR says that his political mental composition has not still apprehended and acknowledged the term of responsibility. According to Jerinic, Sarovic did not withdraw from position to spare the RS citizens of international community's sanctions, but to be able to survive in politics. Furthermore, the author claims that spinelessness and irresponsibility, brought up by the system of Slobodan Milosevic, has become the basis on which the SDS and PDP are ruling.
Trifkovic	Blic pg. 2 – PDP Secretary General, Nevenka Trifkovic, thinks there will be enough cleverness in the RS and BiH to avoid the crisis. She says that the PDP's stand is that Sarovic's resignation is a moral act and there are no arguments that confirm his political responsibility.
Osmic	Blic pg. 2 – Zekerijah Osmic of the SDP said that by his resignation Sarovic confirmed his political responsibility.
RS NA	Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 – the RS National Assembly will hold an extraordinary session today with only one item on the agenda – Sarovic's resignation and the High Representative's decisions. Milorad Dodik was against holding this session, saying that since Sarovic resigned by his own will, without anyone's pressure, there is no need for an extraordinary session. Reacting on this Dodik's statement, RS NA Speaker Dragan Kalinic said the following. "I presume Mr. Dodik that you are happy because of the resignation and hope to fill Sarovic's post by your man – Nikola Spiric, but I assure you that a fight will be fought for this post." Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 15 – that Dodik and Kalinic have already quarreled over Sarovic's successor. During a session of the RS NA, Dodik stated that if Sarovic was really responsible then how come the SDS nominated such a man to such an important office. Kalinic replied that the SNSD obviously believes that Sarovic's replacement would be SNSD's Nikola Spiric. "I assure you there will be a battle for the post," said Kalinic.

Ashdown's decisions

Ashdown announces new set of decisions	<p>Avaz pg. 1, 2 and 3 – HR Paddy Ashdown yesterday announced his decisions according to which the RS Supreme Defence Council is to be abolished and the command over army would be transferred, for the time being, to the RS president. Furthermore, from the RS Constitution, Law on the RS Army, Law on the RS Defence and Law on Defence of the Federation the following words have been removed – state, statehood, sovereignty and independence. HR Ashdown explained that the measures would strengthen the mechanisms of control and command over the armed BiH forces at the state level. Added that the measures represented the start of the process of changes that should be finalised by January 1 next year. He expects that far-reaching reforms in the area of military issues be completed by the end of the year. He also welcomed a decision by Mirko Sarovic to resign from the Presidency post. Vecernji List pg. 1, 2 and 3, Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 15, Dnevni List pg. 1 and 5, Vjesnik pg. 1 and 2 and Jutarnji List pg. 1 and 3 – “The ‘Orao’ affair has done more damage to the BiH international reputation than any other event since the war ended. With the war under way in Iraq, possibly involving weaponry BiH sold to that country, I cannot overstate the seriousness of the affair,” said HR Ashdown. The daily goes on to report that in order to prevent similar events in the future, the HR enacted several decisions in order to rectify systematic failures that had led to the violation of the UN sanctions, thus opening a path for the creation of a state-level system of defense. HR also sent a message to the RS citizens saying the decisions were not aimed against the Serbs and the RS. Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 ‘Paddy Ashdown repeals the RS Supreme Defence Council’ – NN reports on yesterday’s presser by the HR where he passed a set of decisions following the ‘Orao’ and espionage affairs. According to NN, the set of decisions completely restructure the existing armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also abolish provisions in the RS Law on Defence, which gave references of statehood to the RS. Blic pg. 2 ‘Sarovic resigned, Ashdown abolishes the RS Supreme Defence Council’, Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 ‘Ashdown halved the RS’, Serbian electronic media – “In the face of the gravity of these matters I had no option but to act as I did. The RS is entitled to look to me to uphold the Dayton competencies for their entity. But they are not entitled to expect me to stand by while entities put in jeopardy the Dayton competencies of the state,” said HR Ashdown.</p>
Stankovic	Blic pg. 2 – RS Minister of Defence, Milorad Stankovic, has refused to comment the abolishment of the RS Supreme Defence Council.
Straw	Avaz pg. 3 ‘It is important that the army is controlled by the state’ – Jack Straw, British State Secretary of Foreign affairs, yesterday supported a set of measures announced by the HR. “I also support Sarovic’s decision to accept the responsibility for his role in the case.” Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 ‘Robertson: only way out’ – welcomed Sarovic’s resignation.
US embassy	Avaz pg. 3 ‘The key measures for the BiH international credibility’ – an announcement from the US embassy in BiH welcoming the decisions imposed by the HR in conclusion of the ‘Orao’ affair. “Sarovic’s decision to submit a resignation to the post in BiH presidency represents a positive move. By doing so he is admitting political responsibilities for activities that represented the violation of the UN SC resolutions.”
Commentary in Avaz	Avaz pg. 3 ‘Destruction of dreams about Karadzic’s RS’ by <u>Fadil Mandal</u> – the author thinks that after yesterday’s decisions by the HR officials from the smaller entity have not been left with much choice – they can either turn towards the building of BiH and its institutions to take the path of parallel life that might lead the RS to the disappearance. He claims that Ashdown’s decision should not be taken as a temporary solution to put the fire out. “In essence, this is about capital changes that are clearing the path for normal BiH like a bulldozer and destroying the dreams of changing borders in Balkans.”

Commentary in Oslobodjenje	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'A state in sight' by <u>Edin Krehic</u> – the opening line says that 'BiH can never be a normal state unless it has a control over the money, army, police'. According to Krehic, local and international officials have known this fact ever since the war ended but it seems that something really big, like the weapons affair and eavesdropping on the IC, had to happen before something was done. "Ashdown has made a significant move and shook the basis of the RS if the same could not have been done with the exhumation of bones from mass graves in many locations in that entity." He goes on to quote SDS President Dragan Kalinic who said that 'the HR's decision will cause serious consequences for the RS'. "They should. Ashdown made the first step. And he should not stop. There is a long road ahead of him. But at least you can see a road – to go ahead."
Oslobodjenje interview with HR	Oslobodjenje pg. 4 and 5 'SFOR will decide whether there are more people responsible' – the daily carries a short interview with HR Paddy Ashdown. Asked what has changed in terms of the BiH's position as a state following yesterday's decisions, HR replied that the state is today where it was yesterday. Explained that it has to be so according to the DPA, and that he had no power to make changes to the same. Ashdown however added that the state was in a very different position in some other ways since the RS Constitution no longer contained wording such as sovereignty. "We made it clear that the IC and myself are not ready to tolerate an entity to be treated as a state." As for the role of the BiH Presidency and Permanent Military Committee until January 2004, Ashdown said it would be the same as now. He added they sped up the process and removed ambiguities when it came to the issue of responsibility. As for not asking Ivanic's responsibility in the case, Ashdown said the SFOR report was about overall responsibility and the one was not on shoulders of Ivanic, but Sarovic. Asked whether he thought Sarovic took an easy way out, Ashdown replied that it was not up to him to make such judgments, but to make sure justice was satisfied. Asked whether it could be expected from SFOR to remove someone due to the espionage affair, HR replied they should ask SFOR. Finally, asked whether the RS Army spied him on, Ashdown said he did know and even if he did he would not say.
VL interview with HR	Vecernji List pg. 1 – an interview with High Representative Paddy Ashdown. The HR said that Sarovic was a good President for BiH and that he was sorry because Sarovic had to resign. "Nevertheless, he realized, just like an increasing number of people in this country started to realize, that if you were at the political top you have to bear the responsibility." The HR also said that BiH was in a difficult economic situation and that there was only one possibility, and that was to continue with economic reforms and secure inflow of investments. Asked how it was possible that the espionage and 'Orao' affair took place in the country, which is under the strict control of the IC in terms of its politics and army, the HR said that he did not think the IC could know everything that took place in the country.

Political Affairs

CRO press on espionage affair	Vecernji List pg. 15 by <u>Deana Knezevic</u> and <u>Darko Djuretek</u> 'State top is not concerned about spies' – sources from the Croatian authority stated that the RS espionage affair did not concern too much the Croatian state top because the Croatian intelligence structures already had this information. VL says that people from the Croatian political circles estimate that the aforementioned affair just slightly refers to Croatia and that the activities of the IC, which revealed the affair are, first of all, directed at dismantling of the of the RS intelligence and military organization and even the RS itself. Vjesnik pg. 2 'The RS espionage service is not able to cover Croatia' – carries its sources close to the Croatian authority as saying that that the whole affair actually did not exist and that the whole story is a part of the IC pressure exerted in order to make Chairman of the BiH Presidency Mirko Sarovic resign just like before the IC exerted pressure against Ante Jelavic and the HDZ BiH. The dailies also wonder whether the meeting of the Inter-state Council of BiH and Croatia, scheduled for April 11, will take place due to the fact that Sarovic resigned. Globus pg. 16 'Army of Bosnian Serbs did not send its agents to Croatia'.
SFOR continues to investigate	Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 'SFOR continues investigation' – Dale MacEachern, SFOR Spokesperson, yesterday stated that only a part of document, disclosed during the search of the RS Army 410 th Intelligence Service, was presented in public. He stressed that the analysis of the found documents continues.
IC press conf in Mostar	Vecernji List pg. 5 'Return premises to institutions', Dnevni List pg. 11 'Initiative to return "Abrasevic" premises to young people of Mostar welcomed' and Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 18 'Return Abrasevic to all citizens' – yesterday's press conference of the international organizations seated in Mostar. OHR Spokesperson, Avis Benes, stated that Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Jean-Pierre Bercot, welcomed the proposal initiated by 'Centre', the network of Mostar NGOs. This project appeals to the City of Mostar to return the premises of former RKUD Abrasevic to its pre-war function as a cultural and educational center available to all Mostar people. The OSCE Spokesperson, Richard Medic, called on the Mostar City Administration to seriously reconsider a proposal on the return of the RKUD Abrasevic to its pre-war function.

Economic Affairs	
Third GSM	Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'Due to the third GSM licence divisions within the CoM' – Adnan Terzic, CoM Chair, said the process of issuing the third GSM licence to Eronet would be stopped until the Ministry for Communication and Traffic submitted to the state government conditions for issuing the third GSM licence. As for the CRA sending recommendations that Eronet should pay 21 million KM for the licence, as devised by the 'Price Waterhouse' company, Terzic said they never requested the procedure or supported the issuing of a tender for an independent consultant to the price evaluation. Terzic further confirmed that the relationship between the CRA and CoM have been tense for a while and confirmed that they warned before CRA officials of an inappropriate way of communicating. Terzic thinks that CRA Head wants to end the matter because his mandate is expiring in a month. A source close to Oslobodjenje stated that Croat ministers and deputies were determined to give the licence to Eronet.
Hadzipasic talks to businessmen	Dnevni List pg. 22 'Government ready for initiatives of BiH businessmen' – on a visit that Federation Prime Minister, Ahmet Hadzipasic, paid to the Federation Chamber of Economy where he talked to businesspersons. Hadzipasic stated that the Federation government would consider all the ideas and initiatives submitted by businessmen saying that businessmen were the ones who should be launching such ideas. Furthermore, Hadzipasic believes that foreign investments to neighboring countries could lead to BiH getting isolated, something that could lead to foreign investors losing interest in BiH even more.