

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 8/1/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Orthodox Xmas	Orthodox Xmas	Orthodox Xmas	Orthodox Xmas
Snow tempest in Europe	Tempest in BiH	Snow tempest in BiH	Xmas in Sarajevo
Holy See	US, Iraq and N. Korea	Dzaferovic on MP's wages	Traffic in RS
Oil prices in FBiH	'Green Card' car insurance	Tucic on hunger strike	

Oslobodjenje	Petrol in Federation more expensive for five phening; A request by OHR - state customs or BiH without 60 million Euro; Zenica penitentiary - strike halted;
Dnevni Avaz	4,4 million KM for veteran's loans; Snow storms blocked cities; Hadzipasic - FBiH government only in the second half of February; Dzaferovic - the amount of salaries determined by previous government;
Dnevni List	Toby Robinson and Miroslav Rupcic in joint operation: Municipality of Grude gets Eronet stocks
Vecernji List	If existence of depleted uranium is proved - BiH will ask compensation from NATO
Slobodna Dalmacija	OHR made a list of 'unsuitable lawyers' - lawyers from the Leutar case face suspension
Blic	Cavic's cabinet: Investigation into Orao affair is not political one; Christmas' messages in RS and Federation full of reconciliation; Damjan Krnjivic: BiH in front of breakdown

Economic Affairs	
State customs	Avaz pg. 4 'RS citizens lose most due to divided customs', Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 7, Dnevni List pg. 5 'The establishment of unified customs administration a first test for new authority' - Kevin Sullivan, OHR Spokesperson, told a press conference yesterday that HR Paddy Ashdown agreed with analysis and recommendations from a report on BiH customs system. He said that HR would send a message to leading politicians that a political agreement on joint customs would be the first big test of dedication of the new government to reforms. He singled out RS officials as being most resistant to the idea despite the fact that due to the current system RS citizens are the ones who have to lose the most. "The IC planned to give 60 million Euro to BiH this year, and a condition for the money is the implementation of the customs reform," said Sullivan. He could not say whether the money earned through customs frauds was being used to finance Karadzic's or any other war criminal's protection. Zelimir Rebac, Director of the FBiH Custom Administration, said that in six month we could have a joint customs administration if there were no obstructions to the process. The discussions on the topic should take place in the coming weeks.
Commentary in Avaz	'The Column of the Day' written by Adil Hadziarapovic in today's issue on pg. 3 and entitled 'Four critical areas'. He points out that new governments in BiH are facing a lot of hard work. "The constant warnings by IC reps on the necessity of undertaking swift and radical reforms with an aim of recovering economy, demand strict respect of two documents - IMF's 'Stand-by' arrangement and OHR's 'Job and Justice'." According to Hadziarapovic, the most demanding of all jobs would be insuring of the social security for war invalids, pensioners and unemployed because this is directly connected to the revenues of budgets and funds.
Eronet stocks	Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 - the Provisional Administrator for Hercegovacka Bank, Toby Robinson, found a way to get a license for 'Eronet' mobile phone operator. Robinson originally offered 4,48% of 'Eronet' stocks to the HPT Mostar, which HPT declined. Afterwards, Robinson had allegedly, together with the CEO of 'Hercegovina Insurance', Miroslav Rupcic, made an offer to the municipality of Grude. They offered the same package of shares for the price of 500.000 KM, the municipality's money that has been blocked in the Hercegovacka Bank, plus 1,1 million KM that should be administered in installments. Moreover, the daily claims that somebody in the municipal authorities of Grude will be well off after the operation is completed and that the current acting President of HDZ BiH, Barisa Colak, has given political guarantees for the transaction. Dnevni List notes that Toby Robinson's ultimate goal is to enable the Croatian Telekom (HT) and its share-holder Deutsche Telekom to enter the BiH market for peanut money because the HT invested only 24.000 KM into 'Eronet' when 'Eronet' was being established.

Political Affairs

BiH Foreign Ministry	Avaz pg. 2 'Djindjic reviving projects of territory and people trade', Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'Zoran Djindjic wants to create new borders', Dnevni List pg. 1 and 2 - a reaction by the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a recent statement by Serbian PM, Zoran Djindjic, regarding BiH and Kosovo. In a statement for the German based 'Der Spigl', Djindjic threatened that 'Belgrade would request a new Dayton conference to determine new borders in Balkans if Kosovo Albanians continued insisting on the autonomy of the region'. The ministry warned that his statement was to the detriment of good neighbourly relations in the region, which is the key precondition for the integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. "This is not the first time that Mr. Djindjic is trying to draw attention away from his government's lack of interest and inability to arrest the war crime suspects who are freely moving throughout Serbia," the Ministry said and expressed concern over such statements coming from Serbia's senior officials. The Ministry also stated they expected all relevant international factors to condemn the statement. Vecernje Novosti pg. 2 'We will request a new Dayton' and all Yugoslav electronic media.
Comment in FRY 'DANAS' daily	FRY daily DANAS in its 'Commentary of the Day' column (no name of journalist provided) examined Djindjic's statement to 'Der Spiegel'. "Undoubted champion of the region of bombastic and funny statements, Serbian PM Djindjic, surprised the public again. This time however, the statement was not funny or metaphoric, but very serious and clear." A writer of the article first breaks down Djindjic's latest idea - first, official Belgrade and Pristina need to discuss the issue of Kosovo independence. In the first round of talks they should make their differences clear, and then, with the help of the IC mediators, a solution would be found. Djindjic counts with the EU pressuring Kosovo Albanians to give the independence idea. If, however, Kosovo Albanians, would win the fight for independence, then, according to Djindjic, BiH could be in danger. "His statement will be resented by many. Most of all by official Sarajevo. BiH politicians, officials and public are surely not clear or happy that their neighbours constantly view BiH as a monetary for settling the scores." Even though the article generally is a support to Djindjic's idea because he, unlike other Serbian politicians, has been advocating for the resolving of Kosovo status. The article however rationalises in the end that Serbia is no position to open new issue. "Serbia certainly should not forget Kosovo, but it is probably too early to approach the solving of the issue in current circumstances."
Federation government	Avaz pg. 2 'The Federation government will be established only in the second half of February' - Ahmet Hadzipasic, a candidate for the Federation President, told Avaz that it was too early to talk about names of possible candidates for the new Federation government. He said that discussions about candidates were in progress, but no final decisions had been made yet. In his opinion, the entire process should be completed by mid-February this year. An insert with the article entitled 'Desnica and Grahovac' informs that Serb nationals would head three Federation ministries - for work and social policy, culture and sport, business. Desnica Radivojevic (SDA) is a serious candidate for the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs unless he is elected Federation Vice-President. Gavril Grahovac (SBIH Vice-President) a serious candidate for the Ministry of Culture and Sport.
Lozancic	Avaz pg. 2 'HDZ awaits constituting of the Parliament' - a statement by HDZ Vice-President and a candidate for the Federation President, Niko Lozancic. He stated that his party still had not seriously considered candidates for the ministerial positions. He confirmed that the HDZ-HNZ-Demo Christian Coalition would appoint ministers in the ministries of finances, defence, agriculture, forestry, health, justice and water distribution.
Dzaferovic on MPs salaries	Avaz pg. 1 and 4, Oslobodjenje pg. 9 'No decision on the increase of MPs' salaries' - a comment by Sefik Dzaferovic, HoR Chair, regarding a decision to increase salaries of HoR reps. Dzaferovic also recently received a letter from the BiH Independent Unions asking him how could they increase the salaries while most worker are barely surviving. According to Dzaferovic, no such decision was made at the last HoR session. He said that they only confirmed previously made decision on MPs going professional. The previous government, said Dzaferovic, made the decision in July of 2001.

Kotorsko	Avaz pg. 9 'Serb refugees started reconstructing electric distribution network' – on the illegal construction in Kotorsko. According to the daily, if Serb refugees did obey a decision by OHR to stop further illegal construction on Bosniak land in Kotorsko, then they received a green light from Doboj authorities for fixing electric distribution network in Trnovo Poljuce I and II where they started constructing 126 houses. This indicates, reads the article that they have no intention of leaving Bosniak land. President of the Kotorsko local community, Muhamed Spahic said he expected Doboj municipality head Obren Petrovic and OHR to fulfil the made promises in this year. Asim Djuheric, a member of the Commission for Implementation of Property-Legal Relations, said that the new municipality head Petrovic is the kind of person who thinks one thing, promises the other and does something totally different.
'Orao' affair	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Orao report still not submitted' – the BiH Presidency member still have not received the 'Orao' report. The SG of the Permanent Committee, Stjepan Pocrnja, also has not received the report yet for Military Issues in BiH. Oslobodjenje on pg. 6 entitled 'The report protects SDS heads' carries a statement by the Federation Deputy Defence Minister Buljubasic. "Everything is put in the context of a period when Biljana Plavsic was the RS President, meaning when the RS PM was Milorad Dodik. Even if it's all true, what happened then in a period when Mladen Ivanic was the PM and when the embargo was seriously violated," said Buljubasic. Blic pg. 6 'Embargo violated, investigation is not political' – a press release from Cavic's Office. Reads that Cavic knew that the report would be disliked by many, but that at this moment the RS had an obligation to acquaint the IC with the results of the investigation. The results indicated and proved that a serious approach and measures had been taken and would be taken because the RS would face serious consequences if such an approach had not been taken. "If the investigation had been conducted in order to conceal someone's role in violating the UN resolutions, and if it had not been carried out energetically and without exceptions, the RS would have certainly been labelled as a country which supported the regime of Saddam Hussein," the press release said. Finally, the press release concludes that the RS President knows that Milovanovic and Dodik do not like the truth stated in the report, but that his constitutional obligation was not to be liked, but to speak the truth and be able to prove it.
SDP	Oslobodjenje pg. 7 'The started reform endangered', Dnevni List pg. 4 'SDP – the implementation process is taking too long' – on an announcement by the SDP regarding the process of the elections implementation. According to the party, the process has been taking too long. "This endangers reforms and changes the relations between the local authorities and international community, putting the local institutions in the position of a simple executor of HR's decisions," reads the announcement.
SD editorial	Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 15 an editorial by <u>Petar Milos</u> 'Referendum for Karadzic's arrest' – the author renders a statement by HR Paddy Ashdown that Radovan Karadzic 'will be arrested once he loses the support of the local population'. Firstly, Milos says that these words bring disbelief and disappointment among well-intentioned BiH citizens and raises a question 'how is Ashdown planning to re-educate shepherds that Karadzic is hiding amongst so they can extradite their hero as a traitor and criminal to The Hague'. "And how long will this process last. Beside that, Paddy Ashdown grants amnesty to the RS authorities for not arresting Karadzic because he puts all the blame on the ignorance of Serb shepherds and local population (...) Police and court must not be guided with 'the popular support' to the suspects, but with laws. That's what Paddy Ashdown was telling when he arrived to BiH. It is amazing that he treats Karadzic differently, as an exception. It's possible that the former British intelligence officer is on Radovan's trail and that he will arrest him soon so he could thank 'the local population' for co-operation and political maturity (...) If a support of his people is a pre-requisite for Radovan Karadzic arrest, why doesn't that rule apply for all the suspects in BiH, ncluding Muamer Topalovic. Is it going to be necessary to organize referendums for arresting of criminals?", says Milos.

Editorial in Nacional	Nacional pg. 18 – an editorial dealing with the Kostajnica murders, signed by Mate Granic, a representative in the Croatian Parliament and President of the Democratic Center, who says that none of the high-ranked Croatian officials reacted to the crime in Kostajnica. “Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative, reacted in a proper and resolute way. Only in this way, with a resolute investigation, processing and sanctioning of perpetrators of the crime and those who encouraged them to commit the crime, it is possible to encourage Croat refugees to return to BiH and to build a modern and democratic BiH in which the rule of law will be established.” The editorial also says that Croatia should fight against the Islamic fundamentalism together with the IC and legitimate BiH authorities. Granic says that the Croatian government should demand the arrest of Radovan Karadzic more resolutely, especially from the IC since it is clear that there is not enough will and consent among the most influential countries of the IC, NATO and SFOR with regard to this issue. “This is a great shame. Jacques Paul Klein talked about it on his departure from Sarajevo. For this reason the last statement of the HR, that Karadzic will be arrested when the political support of the local population weakens is discouraging. It is also hypocritical and it will not contribute to the stabilization and building of BiH as a democratic state, and especially not to the return of refugees, that is Croats and Bosniaks to the RS.”
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Police Affairs	
Financial Police	Avaz pg. 3 ‘The Financial Police started an investigation against Behmen, Matic and Mujic’, Vecernji List pg. 2 ‘The Financial Police checks Sarajevo Office for pension Funds’, Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 14 – that inspectors of the FBiH Financial Police yesterday afternoon started an investigation of the Federation PIO Institute. The investigation was ordered by the cantonal Prosecutor Mustafa Bisic who was forwarded documents on the case by the Federation Prosecutor’s Office. Once the FP completes their investigation, documents will be forwarded to Prosecutor Bisic who will then decide whether there are elements for raising criminal charges.
Frederiksen in Srebrenica today	Avaz pg. 10 ‘Police must earn the trust of returnees’ – a short article on today’s of EUPM Commissioner, Sven Frederiksen, to Srebrenica. There, he will meet with municipality heads and local police heads. EUPM Spokesperson, Jan Oskar Solnes, stated that the aim of the visit was to encourage the participation of police in the regular meetings with other municipality officials. Such exchange of information will help build trust and stability in areas where the return process has been taking place.
Kostajnica murders	Vecernji List pg. 2 by L. Kaleb ‘Police knew about Topalovic’s activities’ – an article dealing with the Kostajnica murder. It reads that there is no doubt that the Konjic authorities and police knew about mujahedins’ and Muamer Topalovic’s activities. They, however, had a benevolent attitude towards them and the like minded persons at higher authority levels did not prevent them in these activities. The article also mentions a mujahedin camp at Jablanica Lake, which was inspected in summer of 2001 after the Croat side insisted on it and after Vahid Alagic, the Head of the Konjic Police Administration, went to the camp first to prepare the ground. VL says that after the police inspection was conducted, Sefkija Dziho, Governor of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, sent an official reply to his Deputy Dragan Vrankic, Josip Merdzo, President of the cantonal Government, Wolfgang Petritsch, former High Representative, OHR, OSCE and the US Embassy. It rejected claims that activities resembling the principles of work of the Islamic terrorist organizations were being carried out in this camp. VL says that for this reason the extremely harsh condemnation of murder given by Sefkija Dziho sounds unnatural and pharisaic. Dnevni List on pg. 3 reports that hearing of witnesses in the Topalovic case should be finished by end of this week.
Another incident near Prijedor	ONASA, Oslobođenje pg. 8 – during a regular Muslim prayer in Donja Ljubija in Prijedor, the Bosniaks were on Monday night once again disturbed. Imam Redzo Sekic said a group of Serb residents gathered in front of a store and shouted paroles based on national and religious intolerance. Sekic said those were displaced persons who were still using Bosniak property in Donja Ljubija. He added that bad language and verbal threats were yet another sign that the returnees to Donja Ljubija cannot feel safe. “Bosniaks have not provoked such behavior of their neighbors,” Sekic claims. He added that the local police in Donja Ljubija and Prijedor, and the OHR have been informed of the incident.

Judiciary Affairs

Balijagic on the story of 26 lawyers	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Ahmed Zilic emphasises that no one can touch him' – another story on the alleged last minute change of mind by HR Ashdown on sacking 26 lawyers from BiH. Even though OHR Spokespeople denied the story, Oslobodjenje today carried a statement by lawyer Faruk Balijagic on the issue. He stated that he never said that Ashdown made the decision, but he only commented on a story written recently in Vecernji List that HR gave in to pressures from the World Bar Association and decided not to remove 26 lawyers in BiH. He further stated that the story was circling among local lawyers in the past month or so because the information leaked from the OHR. Balijagic compared the situation with 'a decision on banning the publishing of Slobodna Bosna because they kept writing about HR'. Balijagic claims that if such decision exists, then it could not have been made without help of Ahmed Zilic and Zoran Pajic. He also stated that both Zilic and OHR should have denied articles on the issue in Vecernji List. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 13 – carries a statement by Josip Muselimovic, the President of the Federation Bar Association, whose name is allegedly also on this list. "I believe that no one reasonable would think to do something like that, including High Representative Paddy Ashdown. However, I do not exclude a possibility that someone has interest to do that since, as far as I know, there are forces that would like to destroy people who only do their job."</p>
Criminal Law	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'Announcements from OHR – the checking of the implementation of the criminal law' – a statement by Zoran Pajic, OHR Chief of Justice Reform department. He stated that after the OHR unit for justice reform in co-operation with the local legal experts shaped the BiH Criminal law, they would not monitor the implementation process. "I think this is a very important thing to do because we can be sure in a way that we did a good job. Soon we will establish a commission of 10 to 15 people who will monitor the implementation of the Criminal Law," said Pajic.</p>

International Affairs

Djindjic on Balkans	<p>Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic told Brazilian daily 'O Estado de Sao Paulo' that before Serbia's integration into the EU 'it is necessary to form a regional block with the Balkans' countries". He said that the goal of Serbia and Montenegro was to integrate the Balkans into a single market. "We think it is not logical to waste time and have some firm borders, if we are going to enter the EU without borders in few years time," Djindjic said.</p>
US interest in Balkans	<p>Damjan Krnjevic, editor of the 'National Interest' magazine, one of the most outstanding magazines in a field of international policy in America, speaks for Blic pg. 3 about the US interests in the Balkans. Among other things, he said that the US wants to withdraw from the Balkans. "In Clinton's time it was thought that the Balkans were of vital interest to America. That was a wrong assessment, and such a stand, since George Bush's arrival, has been changed. The Republicans could help more than the Democrats, because they are not interested. I hardly hear any American expert say that the survival of the Dayton Peace Accord is possible after the withdrawal of the international community, which will occur in five years. That means that Bosnia will either break up or a new agreement will be made," Krnjevic said. He said he did not know which of these two options would happen because no one in America speaks about it. "If all think that only possible solution is breakdown of BiH then everything will be done in order not to do it through a war, but in a way in which Slovakia and Czech solved it – by splitting. For the Republicans the most important is the stability in region," Krnjevic said.</p>