

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 6/12/2002

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)
Bairam celebration	OHR on Orao	Ceric speech/ Bairam celebration
Teacher's strike in Herzegovina	RS budgetary beneficiaries announce strike	Reconstruction of mosques in Bijeljina
OHR on Orao investigation	Israel/Palestine relations	International community dissatisfied with Orao investigation
Croatia became member of CEFTA	Ceric speech/ Bairam celebration	

Oslobodjenje	Muslims throughout BiH celebrate Ramadan's Bairam; Orao investigation – Deadline for a real report – January 3
Dnevni Avaz	Bairam address of Head of the BiH Islamic Community – Islam is a religion of bringing people together and coexistence”; Midhat Arifovic, Director of FBiH Tax Administration – 140 criminal charges filled over tax evasion
Dnevni List	USA will withdraw its troops from Balkan if situation in Iraq would be demanding it: American soldiers of SFOR are leaving BiH?
Vecernji List	Deficit in BiH Federation Pension and Disability Fund: January pensions are late?
Slobodna Dalmacija	IPTF is trying to clean up Police lines in which many “negative persons” are still hiding: Travnik policemen were trained by mujahedeens
Glas Srpski	Return of Serbs to Croatia: Mouth full of promises; Han Pijesak: Wall clock that belonged to King Alexander stolen
Nezavisne Novine	International community dissatisfied with RS authorities investigation on military equipment export to Iraq: SFOR takes over “Orao” investigation; Muslims celebrate Bairam; Donald Hays for “Nezavisne Novine”: Next year, BiH will have single customs; Trade Unions warn RS Government: Either the salaries will be increased or mass protests will take place
FRY Nacional	Pavkovic and 40 Yugoslav Army officers on The Hague list
Blic	Investigation into Orao affair must be finished by the end of year; Ceric: Do not exaggerate with religious and ethnic feelings; Ranka Masic: Either to increase salaries or strike; Djokic: I call on Dodik and Ivanic to agree; Ivanic: Situation in Kotorsko should be calmed down

International community/OHR

Orao investigation	The International Community is setting up a Task Force to monitor the investigation into the ORAO affair by the RS authorities. The Task Force will be led by SFOR, with the participation of OHR, OSCE and other relevant international authorities. It will have complete access to all relevant documentation and officials and will pursue related incidents and concerns that may occur elsewhere in BiH. "The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH Robert Beecroft, and SFOR Commander William Ward on Wednesday sent a letter to RS President Dragan Cavic, laying out the response of the International Community to the RS Supreme Defence Council's preliminary report on the ORAO affair and informing the RS president that the Task Force will be set up." Chief OHR Spokesman Julian Braithwaite said at a press conference in Sarajevo on Thursday. The letter expresses "the coordinated views, not just of our organizations, but of the wider international community" and criticizes the preliminary report for not addressing the key issues, including the issue of where individual responsibility, both military and political, for this affair lies. The fact that these issues have not been addressed is "a matter of grave concern, given worldwide attention to this matter and the damage already done to BiH's international reputation," the letter states. The key questions are: Who authorized the transactions that violated UN Sanctions, and who carried them out, who authorized the travel to Iraq, and who went to Iraq, who authorized the entry of Iraqi citizens into BiH, who were they, how long were they here, and why, who authorized the travel by the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the RS General Staff to Myanmar, who was formally responsible for oversight of Orao, who is responsible for the failure in this oversight, why did the September 2002 report on Orao fail to identify any violations, and who is responsible for that, and what actions have been taken against those responsible for the violations of UN Sanctions? The final report should be completely promptly, and no later than 3 January 2003 and should answer all the key questions. (Oslobodjenje, p 6, mentioned on the front page: "Deadline for a real report - January 3", Dnevni Avaz, p 4: "The investigation to be monitored by a task force", Dnevni List, front page and p 11. "Report on the Orao Scandal - the last OHR warning to the RS institutions", Jurnik, p 10, "Bosnian Serbs must explain the trade with Iraq by January 3", Hina report", Slobodna Dalmacija, last page, "Poor quality report of the RS on the 'Orao' case", Nezavisne Novine, p 2, Glas Srebi, p 3, Blic p 7 headline "Final report by 3 January")
Orao employees statement	Employees of Orao Aviation Institute have said they are ready to sell their newly-built houses and apartments in order to return that money to the Institute, if that is a price and condition for releasing the directors of Orao. The investigation process against three Orao directors, Milan Prica, Petar Džodan, Kecman and Goran Santarac, has been extended because they allegedly misused 9 million KM, using it for building houses to Orao employees who are mostly refugees. The lawyer of detained directors could not comment on this, because he has not received any official information that the investigation has been extended. In the meantime, the Orao employees have invited the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, to visit Orao and to see that it is an enterprise oriented to civil programmes. (Blic p 7, Vecernje Novosti p 12)
Relations between Ashdown and BiH authorities	The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, gave evidence on Wednesday to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia at The Hague, in the case against Radoslav Brdjanin and Momir Talic. Appearing as a witness for the prosecution, the High Representative described his visits to Manjaca and Trnopolje camps in early August 1992. (Oslobodjenje, p 3: "Paddy Ashdown described inhuman treatment", Dnevni Avaz, p 4: "Ashdown - Trnopolje is one of the most horrible things I have saw", Slobodna Dalmacija, p 15)
SDS' Novakovic explains Serb delegates move	"The Serb delegates from RS left the inaugural session of the BiH House of Representatives protesting against the imposition of the Law on BiH Council of Ministers by Paddy Ashdown. The move re-actualised the issue of the obstruction of the BiH bodies' work as well as relations between the High Representatives and the domestic authorities," wrote Zijā Dizdarević in the Oslobodjenje In Focus column. "All members of the BiH civil authorities are responsible (reporting) to Ashdown, as his own work is being assessed outside BiH institutions. Such a double authority has created a situation in which it is believed that the foreigners deserve credit for all the good in BiH as the domestic officials are responsible for the bad things," Dizdarević concluded.
HDZ's Colak on relations with OHR, implementation of OHR-initiated reforms	Vecernji List (page 2, by Z. Jurić) carries Kevin Sullivan, an OHR Spokesperson, as saying: "Serb representatives in the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament are gambling with destiny of their people and they bring in question payment of 10 million Dollars of the international Monetary Fund and assistance to the BiH economy." Sullivan also said: "We believe that in a period of urgent actions it is not smart to boycott the work of the authorities in this way." VL also says that, according to some announcements, Serb representatives should show up at the next session of the BiH Parliament, however it is not known yet whether they will participate in passing of any kind of decisions. Sonja Pastovic, a Spokesperson of OHR Banja Luka, stated that Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative, is intending to address representatives of the BiH House of Representative at the session, that is to take place on December 9, 2002.
Ashdown moves Central Bosnian Canton Court from Travnik to Novi Travnik	President of the SDS delegates' club in the BiH Parliament's House of Representatives, Momcilo Novakovic, told a press conference on Thursday that the reason for the Serb Delegates' walking out of the inaugural session of the BiH Parliament was a wish to show that delegates' will must be respected no matter which party or nation they are coming from. "It is not true that we wanted to obstruct the session. We expect there will be less impositions by the High Representative, because we think that we need to agree on laws. We do not challenge the fact that the High Representative can impose laws, but it should be done only when all other means are exhausted. Due to that we thought we should warn that such a work of the Parliament would not bring any good to BiH and its citizens," Novakovic said. He added that he had expected that other delegates would support the stand of Serb delegates. Novakovic also said that the SDS proposed Borislav Paravac as a chairman of the HoR. He added the SDS is also interested in the position of the Foreign Minister, underlining they will also support other parties from the RS that have quality suggestions. (Blic p 3, Nacional p 11)
US troops might withdraw from BiH	Dnevni List (front and page 7) carries an interview with Barisa Colak, an acting President of HDZ BiH. Commenting on the fact that Serb representatives left the constituting session of the BiH Parliament, Colak says that he believes that, perhaps, this move is about taking of certain better positions before the Law on Ministries is passed. Asked whether the information that OHR exerted pressure against SDA in order to make SDA supports Colak's candidacy is correct, Colak denied such claims and added: "Frankly, lately, our cooperation with OHR has been correct and we have had very frequent contacts and we attend the meetings regularly, however, we did not talk about this issue and we did not talk with OHR." With regard to signing of the agreement on strategic cooperation between HDZ BiH and Croat Rightist Block, Colak says that "he welcomes every kind of approaching of parties on the Croat political scene and that he would like to see these two parties, as well as other parties with a Croat presence, in one wider coalition gathered around HDZ, in order to achieve equality of the Croat people in BiH."
Nezavisne Novine interview with PDHR Hays	Vecernji List (front and page 5, title "We shall introduce VAT by mid of our mandate") also carries the interview with Colak, who says that it is important that a Croat is a Prime Minister designate in the next four years, and that SDA will support the candidacy of Haris Silajdzic only in case that this position belongs to Bosniaks, while Mirko Sarovic, a Chairman of the BiH Presidency, openly stated that he is supporting a proposal of HDZ BiH. Colak also denied for VL that OHR intervened and made SDA to support Colak's candidacy. With regard to the introduction of value added tax (VAT), Colak said: "HDZ stand is clear: if we want a unique economic space we have to work seriously on the issue of reorganization of tax and customs system in BiH. I believe that VAT might be introduced by mid of our mandate."
Croatian Serbs dissatisfied with Schwartz-Schilling's statement	Dnevni List (page 5) and Slobodna Dalmacija (page 19) carry that Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative, passed a decision on moving of the Central Bosnia Cantonal Court from Travnik to neighboring Novi Travnik. The realization of this decision will start after the end of procedure for the election and appointment of judges in Municipal and Cantonal Courts in the BiH Federation, for which vacancies have already been published.
	Dnevni List (page 4) carries an SDP press release, which says that this party appreciates efforts that Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative in BiH, exerts in the implementation of the Framework Peace Agreement in BiH. However, SDP is more than concerned about the influence of the HR's personal impressions and political stands on the process of passing of the HR's decisions. SDP BiH believes that by his superficial and haste judgments, the HR can negatively influence BiH and international public, devalue the results of domestic reformers' forces and make difficult the work of the HR and International Community in BiH.
	Dnevni List (front and page 3, title "USA will withdraw its troops from Balkan if situation in Iraq would be demanding it: American soldiers of SFOR are leaving BiH?") carries that Reuters reported that James Sensenbrenner, a leading American Congressman, warned that the USA might withdraw its troops from Balkan if the situation in Iraq gets complicated and this would increase pressure against Europe, especially Germany, to send more troops to former Yugoslavia.
	Even though the headline of Nezavisne Novine's (p 4) interview with PDHR Donald Hays, indicates that the story is about customs reform, the interview is focused on introduction of VAT. The PDHR, Donald Hays, stated that BiH is not far away from introduction of VAT. Hays stated that prior to the introduction of VAT, mechanisms will have to be created that will ensure that after VAT is collected, it is properly distributed. The PDHR said that after many talks he had with BiH politicians on VAT, he realized that RS institutions were skeptical to the introduction of VAT on the state level. Hays added he believes that next year, BiH will have single customs service.
	Glas Srebi (cover page) carries the statement of the Chairman of Association of Serbs from Croatia, Petar Džodan, that the Association expects the international mediator for BiH, Christian Schwartz Schilling to explain and clarify his statement that 3500 houses and apartments in Croatia were vacated and given back to their pre-war owners - Serbs. The RS Assistant Minister for refugees and DP's, Mato Majstorovic, stated that RS and Croatian authorities and the international community have not done enough when it comes to the repossession of Serb property in Croatia. Petar Džodan believes that the representatives of the international community made a catastrophic mistake and enormous injustice with their constant pressure on RS to implement property laws as soon as possible, while on the other hand, the same method was not applied in Croatia.
	This week's Slobodna Bosna "MIH MARKET" column carried three articles involving HR Paddy Ashdown. The first entitled 'Del Ponte and Ashdown disagree over Alibabic' reported that it was not known whether Ashdown met during his last stay in The Hague (trial against Brdjanin) met with Carla Del Ponte. However, it is known that during Del Ponte's last visit to Sarajevo the two mainly talked about Ashdown's decision to remove Alibabic. Del Ponte apparently was shocked with the decision and requested that it be annulled because, as she pointed out, "the cooperation with Alibabic was excellent". HR Ashdown offered Del Ponte a compromise - to annul the second part of his decision that is to allow Alibabic to perform other public duties so he could continue cooperating with The Hague. But even 20 days after he made the promise, Ashdown failed to fulfill it, which is why Del Ponte started an extensive diplomatic activity first of all with the US diplomats in BiH and with the UN SC. The second article is entitled 'Ashdown and Hays protecting Hasib Salkic who is facing criminal charges'. During his last visit to Bihac, HR Ashdown spent most of his time with the Deputy Director of the Federation Customs Administration and his friend, Hasib Salkic. Ashdown raised the 'Am Speed' issue forgetting that he was with one of the most responsible officials who took part in covering up for criminal business dealings of the mentioned firm. Next to Ashdown, reads the article, Salkic is also being supported by Ashdown's Deputy Hays and the FBIH Deputy Finance Minister Sefika Hafizovic. During the recent visit to the Customs Administration, Hays apparently suggested discreetly to few associates that "the guy should not be bothered". Minister Hafizovic is also cautious about making statements on the issue and even the CFAO Chief Allen Jensen and the Federation Customs Administration Director, Zelimir Rebac. The third article is entitled 'War between Avaz and Ashdown expected'. The article examines the 'noble' behavior of OHR officials towards the local officials. The magazine illustrates the claim with the recent article in 'Avaz' daily about Behmen 'supporting criminals and corrupted politicians', which quoted as a source an OHR official and carried Braithwaite picture. According to the magazine, Braithwaite is known for close relations with the journalist who wrote the mentioned article (Sead Numanovic). After Behmen requested the explanation, Braithwaite apologized and claimed that he had nothing to do with the text and that it was a lie. Behmen was not happy with that, so HR Ashdown denied the Avaz writing at a press conference. Behmen was still not satisfied and requested that one of the OHR heads make public announcement about Avaz's manipulations and lies. Apparently, OHR Principal Deputy Hays should do that in a near future. The article concludes with a question - is Avaz ready to go against their sponsor stumbling and lost Paddy Ashdown.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ceric's address, Bairam celebration	Leader of the Islamic community in BiH Reis ul-Ulema Mustafa Efendi Ceric called BiH Muslims in a traditional address following the Muslim festival of Id al-Fitr on Thursday to help moral and spiritual revival of the BiH society and to show that Islam is a religion pledging for tolerance. "Without moral and spiritual revival of the BiH society it is not possible to fully recover from war sufferings," Ceric said at Begova mosque in Sarajevo. He stressed the believers should show that Islam is a religion calling for tolerance and competing in good.
Interview with Cardinal Vinko Puljic	Ceric condemned those pledging for and executing terrorism in the name of Islam (Ceric's Bairam address, Bairam celebration in BiH: Oslobodjenje, front page, pages 4-5, Dnevni Avaz, front page, pages 2-3). In his interview to Slobodna Dalmacija, Cardinal Vinko Puljic refers to his visit to London where he had talks at the UK Foreign Ministry. Cardinal Puljic says one of the topics that the talks focused on was the problems Croat returnees face, particularly in Bosnian Posavina and Banja Luka region. He is of the opinion that there is too little political will on all sides to make returns sustainable in those areas, NGOs mostly exclude Croats from their projects. The Cardinal says he presents accurate and specific data to IC and domestic officials he has meetings with, but has the impression they are not interested. In London, he also presented the view that those who have power and authority - IC representatives in particular - often use double standards: they are very refined to the stronger and bigger in number ones, and very arrogant to the weaker ones. The solution in BiH as it is is neither stable nor just as it does not ensure equality of all the 3 peoples throughout the country. This should be the country where Croats are also equal to others and there should be no outvoting mechanism, the mechanism which causes the feeling of insecurity. He also adds there are attempts of manipulating Croat identity and that, in relation to that, no decisions on Croat should be made without Croats being involved. As for the notion the Church should not deal with politics, the Cardinal says too many things are in too light a way labeled as politics and the Church's clear position on human rights and human dignity bother those who are involved in dirty political games.

Republika Srpska

Draft RS Budget for 2003, reactions	At a session held on Thursday in Banja Luka, the RS Government adopted draft budget for the next year amounting one billion KM (999 700 00). The RS Finance Minister, Simeun Vilendecic, stated that the budget was adopted with some minor corrections and expressed hope that the IMF will accept those changes (Glas Srpski, p 3, Nezavisne Novine, p 2, Blic, p 7).
RS Vice-president Osmanovic on budgetary funding of religious facilities reconstruction	Five trade unions – education, police, health workers, judiciary and public administration, requested the RS Government yesterday to add funds to the next years budget that would help improve position of some 40 000 people. Otherwise, trade unions warned from an urgent session held yesterday, more than 40 000 teachers, doctors, policemen and others will protest in front of the RS Government building on 25 th December. The chairperson of the education trade union, Ranka Mistic, stated that the Government offered no acceptable answer as to why the salaries cannot be increased and added that if employees go out on streets to protest, somebody will answer for that (Glas Srpski, p 2, Nezavisne Novine, p 2, Blic, p 7). The RS Finance Minister, Simeun Vilendecic, stated that there will not be enough money available for the next year to meet the requests of the trade unions.
Banja Luka Mufti condemns incidents in Prijedor	The RS Vice President, Adil Osmanovic, stated on Thursday that he would advocate allocation of funds by RS Government for reconstruction of destroyed religious facilities in the RS territory. “In my capacity of RS Vice President, I will try to spread tolerance between all religious communities,” Osmanovic told journalists at the Bajram gathering in Banja Luka. (Blic p 6)
RS PM designate still not known	The Banja Luka Mufti, Edhem Camdzic, condemned recent incidents in Prijedor area, where in the last ten days, two explosive devices were thrown – one at the mosque in the village of Mujkanovici and the other on the medzlis facilities in Donja Puharska (Nezavisne Novine, p 5). The Mufti said that such incidents “are aimed to intimidate Bosniaks and prevent them from return and reconstruct religious facilities.” The RS Vice President, Adil Osmanovic, stated yesterday that he will advocate allocation of funds by RS Government for reconstruction of destroyed religious facilities in RS territory. The daily quotes Osmanovic: “In my capacity of RS Vice President, I will try to spread tolerance between all religious communities.”
SDS comment on Dodik statement	Apart from Vice President Osmanovic, the RS Minister for religions, Dusan Antelj and RS Minister for economic relations with abroad, Fuad Turalic, also attended the traditional Bairam gathering.
Ivanic on Kotorsko	The leaders of PDP and SNSD, Mladen Ivanic and Milorad Dodik were supposed to meet late last night and discuss the issue of the RS PM designate. Nezavisne Novine (p 7) spoke with PDP’s Dragan Mikerevic, who said that few options are to be discussed and these are as follows: PM designate should be from PDP and three names are in the game – Mladen Ivanic, Dragan Mikerevic and Zoran Djeric, the other option is that the PM designate is from SNSD and supported by PDP and SDS. Milorad Dodik stated yesterday that he will meet Ivanic again in order to find solution acceptable for both parties. He also firmly believes that the PM seat belongs to SNSD. The President of the RS Socialist Party, Petar Djokic, stated yesterday that he is trying to establish dialogue between PDP and SNSD, meaning between Mladen Ivanic and Milorad Dodik (Glas Srpski, p 2, Nezavisne Novine, p 7, Blic, p 3). The daily quotes Djokic as saying: “That dialogue will not be possible without the participation of the RS President, Dragan Cavic, and I believe that three of them should agree on establishment of RS authorities, which would be supported by other Serb parties.” The Executive Board of the Serb Radical Party decided yesterday unanimously to exclude Pantelija Damjanovic, Jovo Gelic and Cedo Markelic from the party because of their “immoral activities that are not in line with the party politics” (Nezavisne Novine, p 7, Glas Srpski, p 2).
Slobodna Bosna on Ivanic	The SDS thinks that last statement of SNSD leader Milorad Dodik given to Banja Luka’s BEL TV basically rejected the offer of RS President Dragan Cavic that three strongest political parties form the parliamentary majority in the RS National Assembly. Dodik refused any kind of cooperation with the SDS accusing it for tying flags with the SDA and in that way betraying the Serb national interest as well as victims fallen for the RS. Dodik said that in that way the SDS “bring to an absurd all reasons because of which four-year war in BiH was waged”. Answering on Dodik’s accusations, calling them “a bunch of lies and primitivism”, the SDS accused Dodik for dividing the RS no eastern and western part. The party says it could not share the authority with a guy who sold Jasenovac’s archive for a bunch of dollars, who damaged the RS budget during his PM mandate and who during the war traded fuel with Milosevic’s regime and Serb Krajina’s officials. (Nacional p 11)

BiH Federation

Mostar unification	Dnevni List (front and page 9) carries an interview with Neven Tomic, the Mostar Deputy Mayor. Asked about the process of unification of Mostar, Tomic said: "Prerequisites for building the city do exist, but what is missing is the building of the city institutions and the city administration that would be more efficient and stronger, but we cannot do that without the cooperation with the Canton and FBiH as legislative activities are in their hands. " With regard to a huge administration system in the city, Tomic says: "In 3 to 4 months, there will be a collapse of municipalities, which will inevitably affect the City too. What can make the situation even more absurd is the fact that we are now in the phase of the implementation of the Constitutional Changes on the constituency of peoples. Serb people representatives can now say they are not constituent in Mostar as there are no Serb-majority municipalities. The fact that many other towns function better and that Mostar cannot speaks that the problem is in our organization." Asked about the prospects for Mostar to become the FBiH capital, Tomic says: "The project is a huge economic project. I see it exclusively as such. Chances for that do exist and the idea is clearly defined in the Madrid Declaration. But, to realize that, we must have a functional city that must offer all services. A good basis for that is envisaged in the Constitution as we already have 4 or 5 Ministries seated in Mostar. Next year, Mostar will become a genuine center of the FBiH, i.e. of various institutions if the reform of the city functions. Unfortunately, Mostar has so far been a means of political parties in BiH in various political negotiations, agreements, causing crises and everyone would in the end withdraw and look for justified or non-justified reasons. Mostar definitively must stop to be a means for political parties in BiH and become an end."
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