

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 18/9/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: An incident at a dinner in Salzburg – Djindjic changes borders!

Dnevni Avaz: FOSS still operates without any supervision

Dnevni List: Strikes shake a part of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton with Bosniak majority – Education workers will not accept something that looks like a charitable donation

Vecernji List: The sale of Hercegovacka Banka continues – Hypo Bank buys Hercegovina Osiguranje

Glas Srpski: The RS Health Care Bureau – the salt with the taste of metal

Nezavisne Novine: Vaccination of children against certain infective diseases stopped in the Federation – some 10,000 children received a suspicious vaccine

Euro Blic: Crossing of BiH-Croatia border without passport; Ashdown annuls appointment of judges; Children ill because of vaccine from donation; Volas: The Trade Union for negotiations with all parties

BiH relations with neighbors: An incident at a dinner in Salzburg

Oslobodjenje (front page story) learns that, during a common dinner in the framework of the European Economic Forum in Salzburg two days ago, an unusual and one would say an incident discussion developed between the BiH Foreign Minister **Zlatko Lagumdžija**, and Serbian Prime Minister **Zoran Djindjic**. Djindjic reiterated his thesis about “an unstable BiH sovereignty and a need that the process of border establishment is completed in order that the peace comes here.” He did not stop referring to BiH in his speech and its links with Kosov (in terms of the status). Djindjic concluded that the (Balkans) region should not join Europ until the border issue is not finally resolved. Lagumdžija for his part reiterated what Djindjic had heard many times before. He said that the region should not further partitioned and that it should not be pushed away from the EU. The enlargement of EU on the region would, according to Lagumdžija, generate an additional stability and hurry up the projects seeking ethnically clean states.

Glas Srpski quotes (p 3) **the FRY President, Vojislav Kostunica**, as saying two nights ago that some Bosniak politicians from the BiH Federation deliberately distorted his statement regarding the relations between the RS and FRY and used it for pre-election purposes. Kostunica said in an interview for a Sabac-based TV station that he said what he really meant and he said it in a way that is completely clear to any normal person. He said that Monte Negro and Serbia should improve their relationship and strengthen their relationship with the RS within the DPA framework and nothing out of that. As far as the border crossing regime is concerned, Kostunica said that he has always advocated that the RS should not be privileged comparing to the BiH Federation. *“The change of borders is the last thing on my mind. However, making connections between people is certainly in our interest and this especially goes for the RS and our people there and the DPA foresees that”*, said Kostunica. Kostunica also said he was requested by the BiH Constitutional Court to express his view on constitutionality of the RS-FRY Special Relations Agreement, adding that he did not want to comment on it until now because he did not want to ruin the relationship between BiH and the FRY. He said this was the first time he goes in public with this information. *“There are obviously some people who want to ruin that relationship”*, said Kostunica, adding that Haris Silajdzic and some people around him are some of those people.

Nezavisne novine carried the same statement (p 3).

Oslobodjenje reports (p 3) that the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdžija, and the Croatian President, Stipe Mesic, agreed in Salzburg on Monday to send to the Governments of the two countries an initiative that the regime of crossing the inter-state border only with presentation of the ID Cards (not passports) is imposed permanently. So

far, more precisely, this and last year, the regime was being imposed only temporarily during the summer holidays season. (Nezavisne Novine, p 2, Dnevni List, front and p 3, Blic, p 7)

Ivanic responds to Behmen: Policemen in Kozarac were attacked by Bosniaks

The RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, on Tuesday responded to his Federation counterpart, Alija Behmen, expressing his surprise with the tone and the contents of a letter Behmen had sent to him a day earlier with regard to the recent incidents against returnees occurred in some RS town following the victory of the FRY basketball team at the World Championship. "With full understanding of the pressures you have exposed to due the pre-election campaign, I cannot understand that, instead of to deal with the events in Sarajevo following the soccer game between BiH and FRY national teams, or the spontaneous welcoming the BiH Council of Ministers Chairman and the Serb refugees in Ustikolina, you describe the celebration of the Yugoslav basketball players triumph as a serious threat to the return of refugees and displaced persons to the RS," Ivanic wrote in a letter to Behmen. He added that, in addition, the returnees of the Bosniak nationality had been identified as the attackers on the police officers occurred recently in the Prijedor settlement of Kozarac. (Oslobodjenje, p 3, Dnevni Avaz, p 10)

BiH Presidency requests OHR, RS authorities to immediately start new procedure for appointment of BiH Constitutional Court judges from RS

With regard to the recent High Representative's decision annulling the procedure of the appointment of the two BiH Constitutional Court judges from the RS, the BiH Presidency members on Tuesday met with the Head of the OHR Legal Department Ian Campbell and an advisor with OHR, Edouard d'Aoust. The Presidency consider the decision final and binding. However, it requested the OHR, RS National Assembly and the RS Constitutional Commission to immediately start the new procedure for the judges appointment. (Oslobodjenje, p 3, Dnevni Avaz, p 2, Glas Srpski, p 5, Nezavisne Novine, p 7, Blic, p 7)

The RS President, Mirko Sarovic, said in Banja Luka on Tuesday, that the decision made by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, which had annulled the election of the two BiH Constitutional Court judges from the RS, did not mean the replacement of the two judges, but that it referred only to the procedure of their appointment. Sarovic added that, since the credibility of Radomir Lukic and Miodrag Simovic had not been brought into question in any way by Ashdown's decision, only a part of the disputed procedure would be repeated in the RS National Assembly (Oslobodjenje, p 3, Glas Srpski, p 5, Nezavisne Novine, p 7). However, commenting on the issue for Dnevni Avaz (p 10), Sulejman Tihic, a SDA's member of the RS Constitutional Commission, which is expected to meet on Tuesday and discussed the appointment procedure, said that the judges could not be nominated by the RS President, but only by the RS High Judicial Council, and that one of the nominees had to be the member of other nationalities.

Glas Srpski quotes the **RS NA Secretary General, Mirko Stevanovic**, as saying that the RS NA will not discuss the High Representative's decision to annul the appointment of two judges from the RS to the BiH Constitutional Court at the continuation of the 19th RS NA session, which is scheduled to take place tomorrow. He said that the High Representative decided to annul the appointment of judges Simovic and Lukic upon the request of Bosniak members of the RS NA Constitutional Commission. According to him, the Bosniak members of the RS NA Constitutional Commission informed the High Representative that the appointment procedure was not carried out in accordance with the law, that is, the proposal of their appointment was not discussed at the RS NA Constitutional Commission. Stevanovic said that appointment of judges to the BiH Constitutional Court would have to wait for a new RS NA to be elected, which could paralyse the work of the BiH Constitutional Court.

Nezavisne Novine carried the similar report (p 7).

Nezavisne Novine reports (p 7) that if the RS NA Constitutional Commission members agree at Tuesday's session of the Commission that the vital national interest was violated in this case, then the appointment procedure will be re-run in the RS National Assembly. **Miroslav Mikes**, the President of the Commission, says that if the members of the Commission fail to reach the agreement, then the OHR will have to appoint two judges from the RS.

British Defense Secretary visits BiH, meets with BiH Presidency

Members of the **BiH Presidency** met in Sarajevo on Monday with the **United Kingdom Secretary of State for Defense Geoffrey Hoon**. They talked about BiH's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. As chairman of the BiH Presidency **Beriz Belkic** said after the meeting, it was jointly concluded that as far as BiH was concerned the contents were more important than the form – the contents which would undoubtedly guarantee that state institutions were in a total control over the armed forces. With this condition secured, BiH would also have to secure the transparency and the parliament's control over the armed forces in order to access NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. The BiH Presidency has achieved a form for this and, at the moment, we are working on filling the form with contents, **Belkic** said, emphasizing the importance of the decision, recently adopted by the Presidency, to structure the institutions of defence at state level. Presidency chairman **Belkic** and Defence Secretary **Hoon** agreed that BiH would have full support and help of the Great Britain in its efforts to become a member of NATO. Defence Secretary **Hoon** especially emphasized the importance of the forthcoming elections for BiH's future. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Dnevni List**, p 5, **Vecernji List**, p 2, **Vjesnik**, p 2, HINA, **Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4)

Pre-election statements/commentaries

Speaking at a SDA pre-election rally in Travnik on Tuesday, the Party President, **Sulejman Tihic**, said that the SDA had always be a Bosnian-oriented party that stood for BiH, as a state of equal peoples in its entire territory. **Tihic** promised that, at the first next elections, there would be no any more an entity called Republika Srpska. (FENA, **Oslobodjenje**, p 6)

Vecernji List (page 2, by Gorden Knezovic) carries that apart from a national block of parties a civic political option has also developed on the Bosniak and Serb political scenes. The editorial says that NHI and HSS with their civic political programs do not have so numerous support of voters as it is the case with civic parties of other two BiH peoples. **Knezovic** also says that unnatural political processes are taking place during the pre-election campaign. The editorial concludes: *'As far as the objective reasons are concerned, the reason for 'stunted' Croat political scene in BiH is in the small number of Croats in the BiH Federation. They make 20% of citizens of the BiH Federation. The fact that there is four times bigger Bosniak population in the Federation, leave to the Bosniak political body enough space for the political development, that is, a political competition among national, civic and social issues without consequences for national interests, while the Serb entity gives a sort of sovereignty to the political development of BiH Serbs.'*

Cardinal Puljic received Paddy Ashdown; Hays writes to Federation leaders on disputed military apartments

Dnevni List (page 2 and front page, accompanied by a photo of Cardinal **Puljic** and the HR) carries that **Cardinal Vinko Puljic**, the Vrhbosna Archbishop, received yesterday **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative. DL says that at the beginning of the meeting the HR expressed his regret over the fact that this meeting did not take place before. The HR stressed that his *'first goal is creating of a stable state with Rule of Law'*. **Ashdown** also stressed that he *'sees in Croats the biggest economic power, although they are the BiH people smallest in number.'* Cardinal **Puljic** reminded that *'for five years he has been looking for a location for construction of churches in Sarajevo, however a positive solution has not been reached yet.'* The HR stated that he *'wants to open a new page in the co-operation between Croats and International Community and resolve all misunderstandings and*

disagreements.' The two agreed that this kind of meeting should be organized more often in order to exchange opinions and reach a better co-operation. They also agreed that all BiH peoples have to feel equality on the whole BiH territory. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 10)

Oslobodjenje learns(p 7), that on September 12, the Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, sent a letter to the BiH Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, and the Urban Planning Minister, Ramiz Mehmedagic, urging them to ensure that the military apartments are returned to the (former JNA) officers as the legal pre-war occupants, in accordance to a BiH Human Rights Chamber's Decision on the issue.

Federation affairs

In a front page story (continued on p 9), Dnevni Avaz says that, even three months following its establishment, the Federation Intelligence-Security Service (FOSS) still operates with a supervision by the authorized bodies.

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Zoran Kresic) reads that the Provisional Administrator for the Hercegovacka Bank (HB), **Toby Robinson**, continues to sell companies that are owned by the HB. Namely, VL learns from an anonymous source in the HB that Robinson is planning to sell "Hercegovina Osiguranje" Insurance Company and "Herbos Fond" Investment Fund of Mostar to HYPO Bank of Mostar and that the talks have reached final stages. Regarding the issue of "Eronet", which is labeled by VL as the key to the whole HB deal, Kresic writes that connoisseurs say that the 49% stake that the HB has in "Eronet" is a subject of deals between the Provisional Administration for HB, management of HPT Mostar and a few reputable foreign companies that are in mobile phones business.

Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 15, by Tomislav Zoric) reads that an anti-corruption team of OHR and Federation Financial Police have in the last few days intensified investigations into activities of a former Mayor of Mostar, **Safet Orucevic**, SD allegedly learns about this from sources close to aforementioned organizations. The sources say that the investigations deal with an issue of construction of a housing-business premises in the Mostar district of Cernica and illegal apportionment of apartments in it. According to SD's sources, the building was built by PTT BiH Sarajevo Public Company, which invested 1,2 million KM in it, and after the completion of works, almost one quarter of housing space in the building was usurped by **Esad Humo**, a former Head of AID (former Bosniak secret service) for the Mostar area, with help of Orucevic. SD says that it is interesting that the City Administration of Mostar does not have any clear documents about the apartments and their owners. Furthermore, SD reads that the aforementioned organizations are investigating into Orucevic's role into privatization of Hotel "Bristol" in Mostar and his influence on the management of Tobacco Factory of Mostar and in connection with that, his possible role in illegal storing of ammunition in the Factory.

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Z.K.) reads that 2nd Guard Brigade of HVO carried out a combined military exercise (three tanks and an infantry company) in Mostar yesterday. According to VL, the whole exercise was successfully completed according to NATO standards. It is interesting to note that VL's Z.K. (probably Zoran Kresic) says that the exercise was overlooked by *"a delegation of OSCE, RS Army and BiH Army"*. *"HVO was restored with pride and glory in Mostar yesterday"*, reads VL.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 15, by M(arijan) Sivric) reads that for today (September 18) 88th hearing is scheduled in **Leutar case**. The daily says that today's discussion will be focused on an important document that was hidden for three years. *"It is legitimate to expect that the evidence procedure will be finished on Wednesday (today) and that in next ten days one could expect final words. On basis of up-to-date information, it is objective to expect that, after non-proved indictment, the accused ones should be released to freedom"*, the author says.

Terrorism/war crimes

Dnevni List (page 3) carries that a terrorist organization '**Gavrilo Princip**' was formed during 1998 and that its leader is one **Slavko Aleksic**, a member of the RS Ravna Gora Chetnik's Movement, while one **Zoran Kovacevic Buco** is his deputy. DL says that according to the results of the investigation on the murder of **Meliha Duric**, a Bosniak returnee, the results show that that there is a

grounded suspicion that this organization committed the murder. According to DL, a meeting that was attended by representatives of Chetniks' movements from Serbia and Croatia was held in **Bajina Basta** in February and during the meeting they planned attacks on some officials in Serbia, BiH and some representatives of International Community. They also planned as to how to prevent arrest of **Karadzic and Mladic**. According to DL the organisation receives a part of donations from the USA (allegedly from Slobodan Pavlovic, and Rajko Dukic). DL also says that this organisation is planning its main terrorist actions in the area of **Gorazde and Kopaci** and the target of their attacks will be Bosniak returnees. DL carries that they also have their branch office in **Teslic** and the main activist of this branch is an Orthodox priest **Savo Knezevic**.

Glas Srpski reports on its **front page** that the ICTY Prosecution's Office rejected the request, filed by the former RS Army General, **Momir Talic**, that the ICTY grants him a temporary release, because he is suffering from an incurable disease (lung cancer). However, the Prosecutor's Office accepted that Talic receives medical treatment in Belgrade under the condition that the Belgrade authorities hold him in custody, either in a hospital or at home. The paper reports that one of the Talic's lawyers, Natasa Favo-Ivanovic, asked the prosecution what the purpose of the custody is given that Talic is suffering from a incurable disease and is not going to be alive before the trial ends. The defence reminded of the RS Army General, Djordje Djukic, who was temporarily released in April 1996 and died soon after the ICTY had granted him temporary release.

Nezavisne Novine carried similar report (p 3).

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Tuesday, 1900)

- Federation Ministry of Health instructed a withdrawal of the disputed immunization shots. So far nobody is responsible
- Herzegovina- Neretva Canton – Announcement of a general strike of employees in high educational institutions, police and administration of the Canton
- The UN Mission asked Presidency to appoint a management of the Agency for protection of information BiH, with no delay
- Iraq agreed upon non-conditioned return of the UN inspectors for arms

FTV 1 (1930)

- Iraq accepted a return of the Un inspectors for arms
- FRY President Vojislav Koštunica believes he should not apologize for statement on relations between FRY and RS
- The exhumation in Sremska Mitrovica continues
- What are the plans of the terrorists' organization "Gavrilo Princip"?

RTRS (1930)

- BiH Constitutional Court still without convocation
- Three police officers decertified
- Hague demands additional guaranties for provisional release of General Talic
- Sadam Hussein accepted return of weapons inspectors. The White House still puts pressure on Iraq