

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 29/7/2002

Print Media Headlines

Oslobodjenje: Economic reforms to be presented to PIC Political Directors

Dnevni Avaz: Will Srebrenica and New York become sister cities?; Silajdzic: No economy without roads

Jutarnje Novine: SFOR Helicopters helping State Border Service to detect smugglers

Vecernji List: Dual Citizenship- Thousands of citizens to lose BiH citizenship

Dnevni List: Croat Veterans: Status of 464 war veterans still questionable

Nezavisne Novine: Lagumdžija – US supports reforms in BiH; Kostajnica issue not resolved

Glas Srpski: Administrative Board in the Serbian Assembly: between party and rights

Blic: Massacre in Leskovac

Ljiljan: Lagumdžija involved in a fresh scandal – The BiH Embassy in Belgrade placed in a villa owned by Milanko Delic and Ratko Mladic?

State Institutions and International Community

Oslobodjenje (front page) reports that the BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, **Azra Hadziahmetovic**, will on Tuesday in Sarajevo present to the **PIC Political Directors** the program of economic reform, which will be the basis for building of the economic future in BiH. The program, which was drafted by the Council of Ministers, entity governments and the International Community, was supported by the US President, George Bush, during his last week's meeting with the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdžija, notes the daily. *"The program which will be presented to the Council focuses on support to private initiatives, free flow of goods and the consolidation of economic programs. Minister Hadziahmetovic will present data about formation of the special court for processing cases of crime and corruption,"* an unidentified OHR official told the daily. Hadziahmetovic: *"The key for completing the transition process in BiH is to finish the privatization, attract foreign investments and the creation of the business ambiance through various legal regulations."* Oslobodjenje notes that although the economic goals of the BiH administration have been known for a while, financial support for them will depend entirely on whether they are accepted or not by the PIC. (This was also to top story in Sunday's **BHTV 1** prime time news, **Dnevni Avaz** p.2, **Nezavisne Novine** p. 5)

OHR Chief Spokesman **Julian Braithwaite** confirmed this information to **Dnevni Avaz**, adding that PIC Political Directors will for the first time meet in Sarajevo and together with representatives of BiH authorities. **Braithwaite:** *"The session will be opened and presided by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown. In his opening remarks, Ashdown will stress that the economy in BiH is in a very bad shape, that it is burdened with inefficient administration, complicating and not very stimulating regulations...We must transform the economy in such a way that it creates new jobs and improves living conditions."* Braithwaite also explained that domestic authorities in BiH and the PIC should agree about five top priorities of the economic reform – to encourage privatization, remove legal obstacles to foreign investments, guarantee free flow of goods and services through the entire BiH, to ensure higher quality of goods and services and to secure benefits for the most vulnerable segments of society.

At a session scheduled for today, the BiH Presidency is to discuss the current situation pertaining to the disputed border crossing at Kostajnica and the still unfulfilled requirements of the EU Road Map. The session of the Presidency will for the first time be opened for public. (**Dnevni Avaz** p.2, **Oslobodjenje** p. 3, **BHTV 1**)

FENA news agency reports that the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, will on Tuesday address deputies in both chamber of the Federation Parliament. The joint session of two chambers will be held in Sarajevo. (**Oslobodjenje** p. 3, **Dnevni Avaz** p. 4)

The Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**, will visit Tuzla today, where he will meet the heads of municipalities in Tuzla Canton and discuss with them the ways of improving return to this area. **Dnevni Avaz** (p.2) reports that Hays will express his support to efforts to improve the results in the area of returns.

Srebrenica

Dnevni Avaz (front page) reports that the head of Srebrenica municipality, **Sefket Hafizovic**, will initiate a meeting with the US Ambassador, **Clifford Bond**, to whom he will propose that Srebrenica and New York become sister-cities. **Hafizovic**: *"Although we believed that Srebrenica massacre cannot be repeated ever again, the events in New York proved us wrong. That is when the idea was born that Srebrenica and New York stand together against new...similar crimes in the world."*

Guardian (Richard Norton-Taylor) reports on Monday that a highly decorated former SAS soldier is being taken to court by the Ministry of Defense after publicly criticizing NATO and the UN for the failure to protect 50,000 Bosniaks from the Serb Army in the "safe area" of Srebrenica seven years ago. The man, who uses the pseudonym, Nick Cameron, was awarded the Military Cross for his actions in Bosnia where he was leader of a three-man patrol secretly infiltrated into Srebrenica to gather intelligence and liaise with an ill-prepared battalion of Dutch soldiers. *"The military power that could have prevented the catastrophe had been assembled, but it was never used,"* he wrote in an article in the **Sunday Times** this month. *"I was not at liberty to reveal what had really happened because of a confidentiality agreement I was ordered to sign,"* he said. *"I made up my mind that when I left the army I would write my own account of the unbelievable events of 1995 – censorship or not."*

BiH Foreign Relations

Kostajnica

Blic (p. 13) reports that expert teams of the BiH and Croatian State Border service will meet in Kostajnica on Monday to discuss technical details concerning the future joint border crossing. (**Nacional** p.11)

Nezavisne novine quotes (p.3) **Croatian Deputy Foreign Minister, Josko Paro**, as saying that the Croatian side is ready to discuss the BiH proposal on construction of a bypass between the two Kostajnicas (Croatian and Bosnian), but that statements like one that made Svetozar Mihajlovic are not very helpful. Mihajlovic said that BiH would annul the agreement with Croatia if Croatia rejects the BiH proposal that the issue of bypass reconstruction and joint border crossing be solved together. Paro: *"In case BiH rejects the Croatian proposal that the bypass be built two kilometers upstream from the disputable location, then this whole issue will become a problem of BiH because the Croatian police will cross the Una river and practically deploy its troops on the BiH territory."*

Jutarnji List (page 2), **Vjesnik** (page 2) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 4) also report on the dispute over the Kostajnica border crossing, noting that BiH authorities do not recognize the fact that the area between Rivers of Una and Uncica is *"actually a Croatian territory."*

In an Op-Ed piece in **Vjesnik**, Marko Barisic writes that BiH authorities question *"once again"* the territory between the rivers of Una and Uncica. *"This territory belongs to Croatia and BiH cannot decide whether it will allow or not allow Croatian Police to come on the territory that belongs to Croatia."*

Dual Citizenship

Vecernji List (page 5 and front page, signed by Dejan Jazvic) reports that the BiH Council of Ministers has launched an initiative for the change of the Law on Dual Citizenship, which would extend the deadline for reaching this agreement by 5 years. According to the present Law, all BiH citizens having dual citizenship would be stripped of their BiH one if the agreement on dual citizenship is not reached by the end of the year. VL concludes that it is certain that thousands of BiH citizens will have to make a decision as to which citizenship to keep and will most certainly lose their BiH citizenship.

Lagumdzija - US

In an editorial in **Dnevni List**, Snjezana Marijanovic criticizes the "hypocrisy of the American President" during his meeting with the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdzija. *"It was not that long ago that the US State Department was saying that BiH is a country which encouraged and allowed the development of terrorist groups in this area, while now, according to Lagumdzija, Bush is more than grateful for all efforts that BiH exerted in a combat against terrorism."*

BiH Ambassador to FRY resides in a villa half of which is owned by Ratko Mladic?

"As the international community is searching for the two most wanted war crime indictees, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, it seems that the current BiH authorities know the whereabouts of the second one (note that this is written in the fully ironic tone since the BiH Embassy in Belgrade is placed in his half of a beautiful villa," Sead Arslanagic wrote in this week's **Ljiljan**. *"According to the available information, the ownership over the house, built during the aggression on BiH, is equally shared between the pre-war Sarajevo ZGP construction firm director, **Milanko Delic**, and the RS wartime commander Ratko Mladic. Land Registries are being hidden carefully, but the neighbors we talked to proudly claim their general Mladic has his half of the villa, which is currently the residence of the BiH Embassy to FRY,"* Arslanagic adds. The BiH Ambassador, **Zeljko Komsic**, is allegedly aware of this unbelievable fact, so he has already contacted with Sarajevo asking for the dislocation of the Embassy.

Federation Affairs

Vecernji List (page 3 and front page, signed by Zoran Kresic) reports that the revision of the Federation budget for 2001 revealed that the **Federation Government** wrote off debt amounting to 84 million KM for pension insurance of Bosniak companies only. The daily notes that this move is the best illustrator of relations within the BiH Federation and the way that the budget funds are being used. *"Apart from obvious national discrimination, the Federation Government also raised a price of these companies because their debts were written off before the privatization."*

Vecernji List (page 2, by Eldina Medunjanin) reports that the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament should render the issue of appointment of two ministers for the Federation Government, the Minister of Finances and Minister of Refugees and Displaced Person, at its session scheduled for Tuesday. According to the daily, Federation principals received assurances from **Ismet Briga**, the Chair of the House, that the issue would be given priority.

VL notes in the end that the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, is likely to address this issue, during his address before the two chambers of the Federation Parliament which is scheduled for Tuesday.

In an editorial in **Vecernji List**, Zoran Kresic criticizes **Safet Halilovic**, the Federation President, who called the Croat component of the Federation Army 'so-called' in an official request in which he demanded an inspection of the Ministry of Defense. Kresic notes that this document marked the continuation of Party for BiH's "project of elimination of Croat non-SDP cadres from the ruling Alliance for changes." *"However, it is the Croat officials themselves who responsible for this situation. They did not come in power by the will of the Croat people, they don't enjoy support by the Croats, which is what the Alliance is taking advantage of."* Kresic concludes that due to constitutional changes Croats really might become the 'so-called'.

Slavo Kukic, the President of the HPT Steering Board, stated for **Dnevni Avaz** today that he will resign in the case that HPT accepts the offer of **Toby Robinson**, the Provisional Administrator of Hercegovacka Banka, to buy Eronet shares currently owned by Croherc. According to Kukic, *'a sly play of international capital'* stands behind the whole case. He added that in case that GSM license is given under these conditions 'Deutsche Telecom' as the major owner of Croatian Telecom, which owns 49% of Eronet shares, would overtake control over BiH phone services. In that case, Deutsche Telecom would be in position to destroy the other two GSM networks but also fixed telephone line, whose value would drop on eve of privatization.

Pre-election campaign

In a two page editorial in **Feral Tribune**, Ivan Lovrenovic in which the author retells recent scandals on BiH political scene citing the CIPS project, AM Sped and loans that Haris Silajdzic secured from Pakistan as examples. Lovrenovic says that it is hard to systematically organize the scandals due to the quantity and frequency of the scandals and goes on to say that all of them come from within ranks of the Alliance for changes, *"whilst the SDA, the HDZ and the SDS are rubbing their hands with pleasure because of the internal war in the Alliance"* *"Sarajevo is already suffocating in an intensive pre-election stench and oozes concentric circles over the whole of BiH, so a serious question of political and information ecology raises: how to survive everything that's going to hit us by October 5"*.

Incidents

An explosive device was thrown at the house of returnee Sejfo Hodzic who lives in Prijedor (northwest Bosnia) in Vojvoda Misic street on Sunday 0200 (midnight GMT), the Prijedor police said. The explosion damaged Hodzic's house and car. The criminal police department has inspected the scene of the crime and an investigation is under way. (All electronic media reported on the incident)

Electronic Media Headline

BHTV 1

- BiH Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija is expected to meet with Paddy Ashdown to discuss economic reform
- The PIC and the High Representative Paddy Ashdown agree that the progress in BiH depends on Belgrade and Zagreb
- Expert teams to meet in Kostajnica on Monday to determine the exact place of the new joint border crossing

FTV

- Important witness in police trial takes the stand
- Car accidents across BiH
- Kosovo war veteran from Serbia goes on a shooting rampage, kills his wife and six others

RTRS

- BiH Presidency to discuss positions and measures referring to Kostajica border
- BiH Foreign Ministry said it is unacceptable to have Croatian border guards on its territory
- Trails to Ferhadija incident in Banja Luka to start on Monday