

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 21/6/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Lagumdžija attends the European Economic Forum in Vienna – an economic boom to take place next year in BiH; Paddy Ashdown at the “Town Hall” meeting in Siroki Brijeg – The payment of debts threatens to cause economic crisis; Safet Halilovic: the deal with Durakovic will be honored

Dnevni Avaz: A storm ahead of the SDP Main Board session – Durakovic writes a letter

Jutarnje Novine: The High Representative at the “Town Hall” meeting in Siroki Brijeg – there are 7,000 indictees for war crimes

Dnevni List: The High Schools graduating ceremony in Mostar on an American way; Ten Ashdown’s Commandments; BiH/Croatia dual citizenship agreement will not be reached by the end of the year; deadline to apply for repossession of the destroyed apartments expires on July 1

Vecernji List: The High Representative Paddy Ashdown on war crimes in BiH – There are 7,000 suspects

Nezavisne Novine: General strike in Spain – 30 persons arrested; Young scouts are cleaning Miljacka river

Glas Srpski: Serbs from Srebrenica send an open letter to Charlie Powell – Your behaviour make the old sores re-open; Stanisic will not testify against Milosevic

Nacional: Djindjic prepares the DS for an extraordinary elections in Serbia; Cavoski: The Hague Tribunal has sued Nacional without a legal basis; Vuk Draskovic: In September we will block roads, schools, factories...

Vecernje Novosti: Novosti’s journalist in train Belgrade-Banja Luka: Blues in empty train

Euro Blic: Parents’ protest due to different conditions for enrollment in secondary schools; Bulic, a director of the Customs, Babic, a Minister of Trade; Radomir Neskovic: RTRS does not have an insight even into its own money; Miroslav Mikes: The Socialists independently at the elections

Lagumdžija attend the European Economic Forum in Vienna - BiH to experience an economic boom next year

Oslobodjenje (front-page, continued on p 9 – Alda Omeragic) reports that the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdžija, on Thursday addressed a European Economic Forum in Vienna organized by the Bank Austria Creditanstalt. *“By foreigners, BiH is considered as a country of great opportunities,”* he said adding that, according to all indications, BiH would experience an economic boom next year (Dnevni Avaz – p2, Jutarnje Novine – p 7)

Paddy Ashdown: We need to spend less time talking to politicians, and more time talking to teachers, judges, businessmen and returnees

“The returnees need more than the security itself. They need jobs and a sustainable economic future,” the Hih Representative, Paddy Ashdown, told a press conference in Mostar on Thursday, at which he in ten points summed up his impression after a two-day visit to Central Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dnevni Avaz – p 2, Oslobodjenje – p 3).

Oslobodjenje (p 3 with photo of Ashdown, announced on the front-page with photo of the HR) and Jutarnje Novine (p 4 with photo of Ashdown, announced on the front-page with photo of Ashdown) reported on the "Town Hall" meeting in Siroki Brijeg on Wednesday, at which the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, among other things said that, according to some information, "there are 7,000 persons accused of war crimes in BiH."

Croat(ian) dailies, namely **Dnevni List**, **Vecernji List** and **Slobodna Dalmacija** dedicate a lot of attention to the visit of the High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** to Mostar and Siroki Brijeg. Dnevni List (front page "Paddy Ashdown's Ten Commandments", same title on page 4 which carries the OHR press release on summary of the visit of the HR to cantons 6,7,8 and 10).

Storm ahead of the SDP Main Board Session: Durakovic writes a letter to explain why he will not attend the session

"Lagumdžija cannot make decisions on my destiny. I cannot be removed from the SDP Presidency or erased from the party membership list by anyone but by the Congress, which elected me. I have proposed to Lagumdžija to call the extraordinary Congress, but the question will then be who will be removed: me or Lagumdžija," Nijaz Durakovic, a SDP BiH Presidency member, told Dnevni Avaz (front-page, continued on p 3 – Fadil Mandal) ahead of the today's session of the Presidency and Saturday's session of the SDP Main Board. Durakovic added that he would stick to the deal reached with the Party for BiH founder Haris Silajdzic and run for the BiH Parliamentary Assembly in the October elections as an independent candidate on the Party for BiH list. According to another Dnevni Avaz (p 3) article written by the same journalist, the SDP Presidency and the Main Board are also expected to decide whether the party leader, Zlatko Lagumdžija, will run for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency.

"Party for BiH has reached a deal with Nijaz Durakovic that he is put on as the first candidate on the party list for the BiH House of Representatives, and for us this is it. WE do not expect any changes in his position after the Saturday's session of the SDP Main Board," Safet Halilovic, the President of the Party for BiH told Oslobodjenje (p 6, announced on the front page)

The Hague Tribunal delegation ends its visit to BiH

The Hague Tribunal Spokesperson, Florence Hartmann, told a press in Sarajevo on Thursday, at the end of the Tribunal's delegation several-day visit to BiH, that the ICTY would not close its operations all until the most wanted war crime suspects, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, are at large (Oslobodjenje – p 3, Dnevni Avaz – p 8).

RS Customs Administration Affair/RS Government appointed new RS Customs Administration Director and new RS Minister for Trade and Tourism

Glas Srpski(page 3) and **Nezavisne Novine** (page 3) quote the Head of the RS Government's Bureau for Public Relations **Cvijeta Kovacevic** as saying that the RS Government yesterday appointed former RS Chief Market-Inspector, **Boro Babic** a new RS Minister for Trade and Tourism. Kovacevic said that the Government also decided at its yesterday's session to appoint **Djuro Bulic** a new RS Customs Administration Director. Currently Bulic is the General Manager of the Banja Luka-based Joint stock company "Meridijan", which deals with international transport. Kovacevic said that the Government accepted the resignation of the RS Finance Minister Milenko Vracar and the RS Customs Administration Director Goran Popovic, adding that the Vracar's replacement will be discussed later. (**Dnevni Avaz** – p 8, **Oslobodjenje** – p 3, **Blic** – p 11)

Nezavisne Novine (page 3) reports that from 1992 up until his appointment to the post of the RS Chief-Market

Inspector Babic was a general manager of a factory from Prijedor. The factory employees claim that Babic was a very bad manager and that he ruined the factory. The paper reports that there are some serious allegations against Babic (using favouritism to allocate the factory-owned land plots). The paper also reports that Babic owns a sawmill near a very-well known bordello "Sherwood" in Prijedor. The paper also reports that several criminal reports were filed against Babic with the Prijedor Basic Court. On June 19th 2001 the Mrakovica Hunting Association filed with the Prijedor Basic Court criminal report against Babic for false representation, forge documents and fraud. On July 16th 2001, another two criminal reports were filed against him, but the paper claims their journalists could not find why and by whom. A source close to the PDP claims that Ivanic has been told several times that Babic is the wrong person, but Ivanic did not do anything.

Glas Srpski (page 3) reports that the SDS welcomed the RS Prime Minister's decision to appoint Boro Bulic a new RS Minister for Trade and Tourism and Djuro Bulic a new RS Customs Administration Director.

Werner Blatter: Number of returns was being constantly increased in the past period

The Head of the UNHCR Mission to BiH, **Werner Blatter**, said at a press conference held in Sarajevo on Thursday on the occasion of the June 20 - The World Refugee Day that *"the number of returns was being constantly increased in the past period."* (**Oslobodjenje** - p 8)

"Given that the Dayton Agreement's Annex 7 does not foresee just a real return, but it only gives those willing to return the right to do so, it is hard to determine exact figures," Blatter said.

"The Board of Principals at its regular weekly meeting in Sarajevo today considered an incident in Srebrenica earlier this week during which police had to protect Bosniaks from Serbs. This incident confirms the importance of fundamental and robust measures to support the return process. Much has been done to promote sustainable return and there has been considerable progress in this respect in Srebrenica. This week's incident is being investigated. However, it is clear that prejudice and ignorance remain basic stumbling blocks to the return process," OHR Spokesman **Oleg Milisic** said at a press conference in Sarajevo on Thursday. (**Dnevni Avaz** - p 2, **Jutarnje Novine** - p 8)

Dnevni List (page 2) reports that BiH Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons (SIRL) pronounced Bishop **Franjo Komarica** the personality of the decade for his support to refugees in the period 1992-2002. President of BiH SIRL **Mirhunisa Zukic** explained that Bishop Komarica has been given this reward for his unselfish support to refugee return, and this at request of any individuals and groups that are members of SIRL. (**Sarajevo dailies** also reported on the issue)

Serbs from Srebrenica send an open letter to Charlie Powell

Glas Srpski (front page) carries a letter, which Serbs from Srebrenica sent to the Head of the OHR Srebrenica Office Charlie Powell in which they are complaining about numerous omissions which Powell made in his work and which are detrimental to the Serb community in this town. The main objections is that Charlie Powell has been seen sitting in a restaurant with the war time Chief of the Srebrenica Police, Hakija Meholic, who along with Naser Oric and Zulfo Tursunovic ordered and participated in murders of Serbs in 1992/1993. "We find such behaviour of yours extremely offensive. It causes us a great pain and it causes even a greater pain to the families whose family members were killed by Meholic's orders", reads the letter. The Serbs from Srebrenica also stated in the letter that the way in which Powell operates will not lead to reconciliation but will rather make that the local Serb community loses trust in the IC institutions.

Jacques Paul Klein: BiH still needs international presence

"Situation in BiH, although significantly improved, still requires presence and engagement of the International community," Head of the UN Mission to BiH **Jacques Paul Klein** said late on Wednesday

in his address to the UN Security Council in New York.

Socialists call on Serb member of Bosnian Presidency to resign

The RS Socialist Party (SPRS) believes that BiH Presidency member Zivko Radisic should resign because he no longer enjoys support of the party which delegated him to this post, SPRS secretary general Zivko Marjanac told a news conference in Banja Luka yesterday, Nezavisne Novine reports (page 4). Radisic officially announced in Derventa two days ago that he had joined the People's Party of Socialists (NPS). Marjanac believes that Radisic, although directly elected as member of the BiH Presidency, at the time of elections was SPRS chairman and therefore he took part in elections as party member. (Blic – p 11, Dnevni Avaz – p 10)

Radomir Neskovic on RTRS

Blic (p. 10) carries an interview with RTRS General Director, **Radomir Neskovic**. He thinks the RS Government has not created a favourable financial ambient in which RTRS may function, which has an adverse effect on collection of prescription fee. According to him, the agreement RTRS has with Telekom (on collection of prescription fee) damages this TV station, since it does not have insight into its own funds, which are controlled by Telekom (and which is controlled by the PDP and the SDS). He supports former High Representative Petritsch's Law on RTRS. He says RTRS has to stay independent, without any political influence.

The BiH Federation Government to request the High Representative to reconsider the previous property laws-related decisions

Oslobodjenje (p 6) and Dnevni Avaz (p 12) report that, concerned about a fact that approximately 80,000 plots for construction of houses have been illegally allocated in the RS so far, the BiH Federation Government decided at its session in Sarajevo on Thursday to address the High Representative in a written form with a request for reconsideration of the previously imposed property legislation. In his address to the press, the Urban Planning Minister Ramiz Mehmedagic, said it was very important for the OHR to clearly make its stand on the issue, in order to avoid making a picture it is taking part in ethnic shaping the area according to the Radovan Karadzic concept from 1992.

Zepic: To abolish the entities or to give one to Croats too

Vjesnik (page 7) carries interview with **Bozo Zepic**, professor at the Mostar University (Croat) with the title "To abolish the entities or to give one to Croats too". Zepic is the author of the book "Enigma BiH" that was presented in Zagreb. Talking about role of International Community in BiH Zepic said that their role is primarily positive and stabilising. Talking about possible solutions for building functional BiH Zepic said: *"Therefore, we have to abolish the entities (Federation BiH and RS) or to give one entity to Croats as well. We should dissolve cantons or cantonise the whole country."* Answering to the question about solution that would be most suitable for Croats Zepic stated: *"Any solution in which Croats would remain constitutive and become equal to other two larger nations is acceptable... As long as Croats are inferior, more and more put aside, and Croat national issue is still pending one, that will not be possible."*

OHR forwards draft legislation on strengthening fight against organized crime, corruption to the BiH Council of Ministers

*"On Wednesday afternoon the OHR forwarded draft legislation under which special organised crime, economic crime and corruption panels would be established in the BiH judicial bodies to the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications, asking the Ministry to propose the law for consideration by the Council of Ministers. The new legislation will tackle serious inter-Entity crime and international crime that involves Bosnia and Herzegovina," OHR Spokesman **Oleg Milisic** told journalist in Sarajevo on Thursday. (Oslobodjenje – p 3, Dnevni Avaz – p 10, Jutarnje Novine – p 4)*

BiH House of Representatives adopts law on the state agency for information and protection

Nezavisne Novine reports (page 4) that the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly held a session in Sarajevo yesterday at which it adopted in emergency procedure the Law on Agency for Information and Protection of BiH (SIPA). This law establishes the Agency for Information and Protection of BiH, regulates its operation, competencies and other issues of importance for its work. The agency is an independent BiH institution and is accountable for its work to the BiH Parliamentary Assembly and has the duty to submit reports on its work to the BiH Presidency and the BiH Council of Ministers. The seat of the agency is in Sarajevo, with regional offices in Mostar and Banja Luka. The agency will have an administration, which will comprise of director and his two deputies who will be appointed by the BiH Presidency at the proposal from the Council of Ministers and after consultations with entity governments. (Oslobodjenje – p 8, Dnevni Avaz – p 4)

Dnevni List, Slobodna Bosna and BH Dani comment on OHR, Ashdown's activities

Dnevni List (page 4) carries editorial by **Ilija Sagolj** in which he criticizes the High Representative **Paddy Ashdown**. Regarding Ashdown's story about sitting next to late Croatian president **Tudjman**, making sure his (Tudjman's) glass is always full of wine, and then publicly stating Tudjman's views about future of BiH, the author stated that that is below level of a decent person, especially diplomat. The author adds that it was public knowledge that the filthiest war was agreed in many points among international bigwigs. Sagolj says that *"fight against crime and corruption that Ashdown proclaimed will not leave him possibility to deal with espionage, what he used to do in the past"*.

Slobodna Bosna (June 20) notes in a shorter article that the OHR cannot be too proud of its economic advisors. *"Only a few months ago, the PDHR Donald Hays visited Sabix furniture company in Hadzici and said after the visit that he was thrilled with what he saw, as the furniture there was 'as of good quality as in the US, however three times cheaper.' Hays was obviously not aware that the secret of Sabix's success was lying in the fact that it does not produce its own furniture from scratch, but refurbishes used furniture imported from western European countries. Only a few days later, Paddy Ashdown could not hide his exuberation after the visit to Bobita company in Citluk. Ashdown was obviously not told that only a few days earlier, Bobita was also visited by customs inspectors who discovered a tax evasion in the amount millions of KM"*

In a shorter article titled **"Two major mistakes of Paddy Ashdown"**, **Slobodna Bosna** writes that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, failed to remove Hasib Salkic, the Deputy Director of the Federation Customs Administration, at the same time he removed Nikola Grabovac from the post of the Federation Finance Minister over the AM-SPED affair. According to the weekly, Salkic is as responsible for the financial scandal which shook the Federation. *"According to sources from the OHR, Ashdown spared his party colleague, Liberal Salkic, who was his generous host on several occasions during the war. This was the second serious mistake of the High Representative, who was in the most euphoric manner greeted at the beginning of his mandate. He made the first*

mistake already during the second day of his mandate, when he visited Bobita company in Citluk."

BH DANI (June 21) marks as a very good move the initiative by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, to create a special panel within the BiH State Court which would try cases of international and inter-entity crime. *"This would ensure that after seven years of vigorous criminal activity because of the silly legal gaps the justice will not die at the boundaries of entity jurisdictions,"* writes DANI.

In the latest issue, **BH DANI** calls catastrophic the behavior of the OHR with respect to the "illegal" distribution of socially-owned land in Kotorsko. *"The OHR welcomed with greatest delight the resignation of Nikola Gavric, the head of Doboj municipality, who felt politically responsible for the failure of town's authorities to comply with the High Representative's Decision on the ban on the allocation of socially-owned land and the construction of homes for Serb refugees on the land belonging to Bosniaks near Kotorsko. Gavric was obviously not patient or wise enough to realize that no one even thought of removing him. For, why would Kotorsko be an exception, when the OHR does not have any intention to even warn, much less to remove some of the municipal officials across the RS who have distributed thousands of pieces of land which was socially-owned, and worked so diligently on the implementation of the concept of ethnically clean land where no more than 10% of the non-Serb population can live? Paddy Ashdown is not even aware that that he has fallen into the nest of bureaucratic institution which, going along the wind, is peacefully watching the idea of the indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic becoming a reality...."*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Thursday, June 20, 1900)

- The World Refugee Day, June 20, is a reminder to the entire world about the poor situation that millions of refugees around the world are in, UNHCR regional coordinator for South-Eastern Europe and Head of the UNHCR Mission in BiH Werner Blatter said on Thursday. (3)
- Info on refugee Branko Tepic from Kozara. (2)
- Short interview with president of ICTY C. Jardo for BHTV1. (1.55)
- BiH Serb Ranko Cestic, accused of war crimes against Bosniak and Croat civilians during the war in BiH, pleaded not guilty before the ICTY. (2)

FTV 1 (1930)

- Ranko Cestic, a Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect, pleaded not guilty at the Hague tribunal on Thursday to charges of murdering and sexually assaulting Bosniaks in a notorious Serb-run detention camp during the Bosnian war. (2)
- Budget of Zenica- Doboj Canton has been damaged by a 100 million KM in several thefts and frauds. (2.25)
- The BiH Federation Government decided on Thursday to request an urgent meeting with the High Representative to BiH, at which the problems of property laws implementation would be discussed and equal criteria during the repossession of property in the entire BiH would be agreed upon. (2.55)
- RS Government appoints Boro Babic new minister of trade and tourism, and Djuro Bulic new director of RS Customs. (2)
- BiH Parliament adopts Law on agency and protection of BIH institutions. BiH House of Representatives adopted several laws. The state still has not Law on holidays. (2.55)

RTRS (1930)

- RS Government appoints Boro Babic new minister of trade and tourism, and Djuro Bulic new director of RS Customs. (2)
- The BiH Council of Ministers determined on Thursday a proposal for the law on amendments and addenda to the law on the customs tariff and forwarded it to the BiH Parliament for the urgent adoption. (2)

- The Office of the High Representative forwarded on Wednesday to the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications a Draft Law on setting up special councils to the BiH Court to combat organize and economic crime and corruption, requesting the Council of Ministers to send the draft to the state parliament on consideration. (.4)
- BiH Parliament adopts Law on agency and protection of BIH institutions, and Law on conflict of interests in BIH institutions. (2)
- Spokesperson of ICTY F. Hartmann said she is not satisfied with cooperation of RS with ICTY. (.3)