

BiH Media Round-up 10/10/2001

[BiH State-related Issues](#)

1. BiH House of Representatives fails to adopt changes to the Law on Refugees and Displaced Persons
2. BiH Coordination team for fight against terrorism proposes new BiH visa regime
3. Dnevni Avaz: Directorate of the BiH Vakuf requests to be included in drafting restitution laws

[Federation](#)

1. Sulejman Tihic is the most serious candidate for the SDA President?
2. Dnevni List: Croat deputies to HN Canton Parliament request dismissals in the Mostar-based UN Office
3. Dnevni List: IPTF dismisses two police officers in HN Canton
4. Dnevni List: Round table takes place on the Stolac and Stolac area in 16th century
5. Slobodna Dalmacija: OSCE organized a meeting on strategic planning **in Mostar**
6. Slobodna Dalmacija: Mostar City officials meet with a delegation of the World Bank in BiH

7. Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Kresimir Zubak, the President of the New Croat Initiative (NHI)
8. Vecernji List: First results on investigation in the Hercegovacka Banka in ten days

[Republika Srpska](#)

1. Dodik says Izetbegovic met with Bin Laden during the war in BiH
2. AFP: RS backs international fight against terrorism
3. AFP: IMF praises Bosnian Serb gvt efforts on reducing budget deficit
4. RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic claims that Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) and Serb Democratic Party (SDS) are staying together
5. RS Minister for Local Administration Petar Kunic will not resign
6. Provocative posters on the Banja Luka-Prijedor road

[International Community](#)

1. OHR says HDZ's attention directed towards Herzegovina
2. Petritsch concerned about the effects of the current global developments on BiH
3. Petritsch to host the first session of Civic Forum on Thursday

4. OSCE to initiate reduction of military expenditures in BiH
5. A total of 778,651 persons returned to their pre-war homes in BiH since 1996
6. Balkan experts to help identify U.S. victims
7. No forces from SFOR participated in military operations in Afghanistan
8. OHR agrees RS authorities not done enough in Dayton Agreement's implementation
9. The Hague Tribunal sentences two Bosniaks and a Croat in Celebici case
10. Dnevni Avaz: Wolfgang Petritsch – The Person of the Day
11. EU provides three million EURO as financial assistance to independent judiciary and civil aviation in BiH

BiH State-related Issues

BiH House of Representatives fails to adopt changes to the Law on Refugees and Displaced Persons

Onasa reports that the BiH Parliamentary House of Representatives on Tuesday failed to adopt the draft law on changes and addenda to the law on refugees and displaced persons. The draft law did not get majority of deputies' votes, after the Commission of the House's Collegium had failed to harmonize the draft. The Commission for Refugees of

the House of Representatives asked that the law obliges the Council of Ministers to secure six-month assistance in the amount of consumer basket to returnees, but Chairman of the Council Zlatko Lagumdžija said that the Council does not have sufficient funds for that, while BiH Minister for Refugees Kresimir Zubak said that the Council should foresee for social assistance to returnees in the budget for next year. The House accepted the Report on work of the BiH State Border Service in the period from January 1 to June 30 and the Report of the Central Bank of BiH for 2000. According to Dnevni Avaz, the House delivered the Law on the BiH Foreign-Trade Chamber of Commerce into the procedure of harmonization since the draft gained absolute but not the entity's majority.

BiH Coordination team for fight against terrorism proposes new BiH visa regime

According to Dnevni Avaz, the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism held its second meeting on Tuesday and will propose imposition of a new BiH visa regime, as well as a more efficient control at the BiH borders. Head of the Team Ivica Misic said following the meeting, which was also attended by the representatives of the international community, that the BiH Council of Ministers was expected to discuss the proposed measures at its next meeting.

Dnevni Avaz: Directorate of the BiH Vakuf requests to be included in drafting restitution laws

The Directorate of the BiH Vakuf supports drafting of the framework BiH restitution law, which should be adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers this month, but it fears that the entity laws on the issue are preparing discrimination of the original owners of the expropriated properties. The framework law will determine basic principles of the restitution process, which will have to be incorporated into the BiH Federation and the Republika Srpska restitution laws. "We will

send an open letter to the BiH Council of Ministers and the Entity Governments and request them to include us as a concerned side in the procedure of the laws drafting and adoption. We manage with a large number of real estates, which must not be subjects of the privatization because they belong to the Vakuf," the lawyer of the BiH Vakuf Directorate, Esad Hrvacic, told Dnevni Avaz. He emphasizes that the institution he represents will demand state and federal authorities to respect the European Convention on Human Rights, which considers the private property as indisputable. "We are appalled and dissatisfied with the statements of BiH federation Urban Planning Minister Ramiz Mehmedagic and OHR Spokesperson Alexandra Stiglmayer, who advocate for the privatization of the nationalized apartments. Although the Government has still not even discussed the draft law on the restitution, Mehmedagic and Stiglmayer have dared to speak about the law. They are prejudicing what will future provisions contain, which is a precedent," said Hrvacic commenting on their public statements concerning the issue. Mehmedagic has said he would propose to the Government to allow privatization of the nationalized apartments, which is a solution also supported by OHR, but under condition that current occupancy right holders do not participate in compensating earlier owners. The discussion on this proposal is yet to be held. "It seems that its is very important for the international community that these apartments are sold (to the current occupancy right holders), but not a single international official has even mentioned how the genuine owners will be compensated. Possible solutions include either financial or the compensation in the real estate of the same kind, but they are not interested in any solution," Hrvacic said. Approximately 900 Vakuf's apartments were nationalized in BiH, 600 of which are in the BiH Federation. The Vakuf Directorate requests that the current occupancy right holders stay in the apartments for life, but that they are not allowed to purchase them. (Written by Amina Pilav)

Federation

Sulejman Tihic is the most serious candidate for the SDA President?

According to the current opinion of the majority inside the BiH Democratic Action Party (SDA), Sulejman Tihic is the most serious candidate to be elected President of the party at the upcoming Congress, Oslobođenje learned from sources close to the SDA leadership. The newspaper has already reported that current President Alija Izetbegovic would not nominate for the post. However, Jutarnje Novine quoted SDA Spokesman Sefik Dzaferovic as saying that Izetbegovic had still not made the final decision on the issue.

Dnevni List: Croat deputies to HN Canton Parliament request dismissals in the Mostar-based UN Office

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Caucus of Croat MPs in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) Assembly sent a letter to the Head of UN Mission in BiH, Jacques Paul Klein, regarding the current situation in the MoI of the HNC. The Caucus believes that the national structure in the Canton's MoI has been ordered because a Minister of Interior and other senior officials from the line of the Croat people have not been appointed yet. Beside that, an attempt of introducing an institution of the Police Commissioner and reconstruction of the MoI opposes the current Law on Internal Affairs and such things cannot be implemented until the Law has been changed, says the Croat Caucus. The Caucus holds the Head of the Mostar UN Office, Rubina Khan, and Deputy Coordinator of the UNMIBiH Civil Affairs, William Ozkaptan, responsible for the ordered structure and "illegal"

reconstruction of the MoI and requests the Croat officials in the cantonal Government and other executive authorities to cease every shape and form of communication and co-operation with Ms. Khan and Mr. Ozkaptan. The Caucus also requests Jacques-Paul Klein to appoint new persons, who would implement the UN Missions' mandate impartially and professionally, to their positions. Cantonal officials are recommended to review the necessity of participation in the work of these authorities until the Minister of Interior has been appointed and the principle of parity has been re-instated in the Cantonal MoI that has been stipulated in the Cantonal Constitution. The Caucus of the Croat MPs calls upon the members of the IC and UN Security Council to stand for consistent implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord and to appoint persons, who would endeavor for full tolerance, equality and democratic dialogue among peoples, to the responsible duties, reads Dnevni List.

Dnevni List: IPTF dismisses two police officers in HN Canton

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vincent Coeurderoy, the IPTF Commissioner, decertified two policemen of the MoI of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton because of violation of the police code of conduct, said the UN Mission spokesman, Stefo Lehmann, at a press conference in Sarajevo. Former Chief of Police Administration of Mostar West, Darislav Paponja, has been dismissed because of non-conforming with the IPTF instructions to evacuate the building of the Police Administration, as of July 26, the Administration was occupying, which was previously claimed by its owner. The Police Administration should have been relocated to the present MoI premises, instead of that Paponja, according to Lehmann, moved the Administration to his apartment and made a deal with the MoI that was going to pay a monthly rent of 1200 KMs. It is a serious and unacceptable

conflict of interests, contrary to the IPTF instructions, says the UN Mission. The acting Chief of Capljina Police Administration, Dragan Petkovic, has been dismissed because he has been a double occupant since 1993 despite the fact that his house in Klepci has been reconstructed, reads Dnevni List.

Dnevni List: Round table takes place on the Stolac and Stolac area in 16th century

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

(...) Participants of the round table on Stolac in 16th Century, including some prominent scientists such as Dr. Mladen Ancic, Dr. Ante Skegro and Boris Graljuk MA, among many other issues, addressed the request on reconstruction and construction of religious facilities in the town centre saying that archeological excavations need to be carried out because there are data that the Careva mosque foundations are in fact foundations of a Christian Church. They appealed to the Municipal authorities to consult competent cultural institutions and experts prior to any works (on the mosque), reads Dnevni List. Don Luka Pavlovic informed the participants of the data from the Vatican and Istanbul archives and thanked the scientists for their elaboration of historic facts that must serve the truth and justice (...) Participants expressed their concern with the behaviour of the so-called Board for Construction of Careva Mosque which representatives are clearing the site of the former Careva mosque, on which there are data that was built on foundations of a Christian Church, without an authorization. It is suspected that the members of the aforementioned board want to destroy the foundations of the Christian Church and make the work of archeologists, who should explore the site, harder. The meeting was attended by Head of Municipality (resigning) Zdravko Kuzman, Vicar General Monsignor Luka Pavlovic, representative of the Orthodox Church, Slobodan Biberdzic, municipal and cantonal officials, representatives of the IC and other associations for

conservation of monuments and cultural heritage, reads Dnevni List.

Slobodna Dalmacija: OSCE organized a meeting on strategic planning in Mostar

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The OSCE Regional Center in Mostar, in co-operation with the City Administration and the City Council of Mostar, on Tuesday organized a one-day seminar on strategic planning so as to make Mostar qualified for support from the Alliance of Cities.

The City of Mostar seeks support from the Alliance in order to be able to deal with the challenges that the city is facing on its way of building a vital community after the war.

Since the Alliance of Cities, which itself is supported by the World Bank, only provides assistance to the communities that have full city development plans, the purpose of the seminar was to help the City Administration devise the best possible plan of further development.

It was stressed that strategic planning is a complicated process and that it is not enough that one body, the City Council for instance, only passes good decisions, but it is necessary to have mechanisms for their implementation ensured as well.

The seminar was attended also by the Mostar Mayor Neven Tomic, his Deputy Hamdija Jahic and the City Council Chair Milan Jovicic.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Mostar City officials meet with a delegation of the World Bank in BiH

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Neven Tomic and Hamdija

Jahic, together with the Head and Deputy Head of the Office for the Infrastructure with the City Administration, Zarko Markic and Ibrahim Sehic, met with a delegation of the World Bank in BiH, led by the Co-ordinator of the Water Supply Project, Simona Manghe.

She gave a short statement after the meeting and said that they were preparing a new infrastructure project referring to solid waste in BiH and engagement of the biggest city in Herzegovina in the infrastructure project.

"The criteria we request the cantons to meet is that waste disposal sites be accessible and useful to as many municipalities as possible as well as a certain financial participation from the cantons. The cantons that offer best solutions will enter the program. We hope the project will be realized in about seven months. Streets of Mostar will be clean and the monthly price per household will equal the price of two or three packs of cigarettes," said Manghe.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Kresimir Zubak, the President of the New Croat Initiative (NHI)

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Speaking about the trial of the so called Zepce Group of Croats charged with war crimes, Kresimir Zubak, the President of the New Croat Initiative (NHI), stated for Slobodna Dalmacija that all the three sides had indictment bills issued without well conducted investigations and by the 'hear-say' method. As for Ivo Lozancic and others of the Zepce Group, Zubak thinks it is unacceptable that they are judged by the people who were on the other side during the war. He does not contest the necessity of prosecuting war crimes, but there is the question of how much money will be spent on compensations, and at this point he refers to the case of Mr. Djedovic who spent three years in prison only to be found not guilty eventually. Zubak said Djedovic will claim compensation, which

will not be small. He said a similar case happened in Mostar where two groups of people were prosecuted for war crimes, they were imprisoned and the Court found them not guilty.

To the interviewer's remark that the Alliance is claimed to be an artificial creation that could split up 'at the national seams', which was evident at the case of Aluminijs privatization for instance, Zubak said he thinks the Alliance will manage to overcome the problems and survive and that splits on the national basis are nothing but the wishes of the SDA and HDZ who were partners in power and political activity for years.

Speaking of the HDZ Congress, Zubak said what happened there was what used to be the practice of Communist Party congresses: long empty speeches and no changes.

"It was said that the establishment of the so called self-rule was a wrong move and that someone should hold responsibility for that. Eventually, the persons who made it happen, who were leading the self-rule, were elected to the leading positions.

There will be no essential changes although the HDZ announced that their delegates are returning to the Parliament, and there was much talk about the constituency of the Croat people in BiH, and that was completely opposite to the way they used to talk about it, when the Croat judges in the Constitutional Court voted against the constituency of all three peoples across BiH, so that all that happened in Mostar was quite contradictory.

As far as sanctions are concerned, I do not think the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch and particularly not Iвица Račan should impose any sanctions for the single but sufficient reason: the HDZ BiH will collapse in itself," said Zubak.

Vecernji List: First results on investigation in the Hercegovacka Banka in ten days

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Provisional Administrator for the Hercegovacka Banka, Toby Robinson, is planning to go public with initial results of the investigation in the bank. According to the information that Vecernji List received from her office, the initial results will compromise some Croats from the political pinnacle of BiH. The OHR and OSCE already have details of the yet incomplete financial analysis of the Hercegovacka Banka business operations. The first report will coincide with HDZ being put on the political margins, especially now after Ante Jelavic has been re-elected as the HDZ President. It is Jelavic's associates who are closely linked to financial embezzlements in the bank. We managed to find out that the company called "Monitor M", formally owned by the Croat Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, is linked to the most controversial data. Some other names of private companies which owners are close to the HDZ BiH pinnacle are also being mentioned. "Although the whole action of the IC had an almost exclusive political-economic character, results of the investigation will leave a sour taste with the Croat public. Unfortunately, some compromising details, that we thought were impossible to happen, will be revealed", says our collocutor, who had also been a Hercegovacka Banka employee before the Provisional Administration was introduced. The initial results of the investigation were previously announced for September. But the scenario was canceled at the last moment to see how the political relationships regarding some influential Croat parties pan out. Some say that that the results of the investigation are not convincing enough so experts from the FBI's financial-information department were engaged in the investigation. Results will be used to further compromise the HDZ BiH leadership. The OHR has already given some information pertaining to the audit to some media to probe politicians

whose names are mentioned in the Hercegovacka Banka case, reads Dnevni List.

Toby Robinson supervises the bank's company

Dnevni List reports that Toby Robinson has taken over the leading role in Supervisory Boards in every company owned by the Hercegovacka Bank.

Republika Srpska

Dodik says Izetbegovic met with Bin Laden during the war in BiH

Oslobodjenje, news agencies and all BiH electronic media report that the president of the Republika Srpska Party of Independent Social-democrats, Milorad Dodik, stated on Tuesday at the press conference held in Banja Luka that currently there were

about 600 mujahedeens in BiH, adding that it can be dangerous for the safety of BiH.

Dodik accused BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija of continuation of the Alija Izetbegović's policy. "I know that Alija Izetbegović met with Osama bin Laden during the war, and that Haris Silajdzic had to left politics due to his close connections with the Bin Laden's terrorist organization," Dodik said. "I am in possession of the evidence that Alija Izetbegović met with Osama bin Laden. In Brussels, I saw the photos of Alija Izetbegović with Osma bin Laden during the war in BiH", Dodik claimed, adding that Izetbegović and Silajdzic should be brought before The Hague Tribunal to explain their connections with the most wanted terrorist in the world. Izetbegović denied Dodik's allegation in a statement with the Sarajevo local TV Hayat.

AFP: RS backs international fight against terrorism

The President of the Republika Srpska, Mirko Sarovic, said on Tuesday that the RS

fully supported the US-led global fight against terrorism. "The RS supports the legitimate international fight against terrorism and regarding that, the RS will fully contribute through RS institutions" as well as at the state level, to the worldwide anti-terror campaign, Sarovic said. He added that, upon the recommendation of the RS intelligence service, security was tightened around RS government buildings and those housing international organizations. Sarovic called the US-led military strikes on targets in Afghanistan "only the beginning in a long-term fight" of terrorism. He stressed that "proof and documents exist" which link those responsible for terrorist acts with Islamic fighters living in Bosnia, "especially in the (Bosniak-Croat) Federation". "There are plenty of video records, (audio) tapes and documents which show that they (mujahedeens) were connected with top Bosnian officials, and that

they (mujahedeens) committed horrible crimes, especially in central Bosnia,

against the Serb and Croat people," Sarovic added. The RS president, following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, demanded investigations into alleged war crimes by fighters from Islamic countries in the mujahedeen movement on the side of Bosniaks during the 1992-95 Bosnian war. A number of fighters from Islamic countries fought alongside Bosniak government troops during the war. Some 70 of those fighters were among 420 people of Arabic and Turkish origins who obtained Bosnian passports. According to the Dayton peace agreement, foreigners were supposed to leave Bosnia, but a number of them stayed because they obtained Bosnian passports. Over 11,000 foreigners were granted Bosnian citizenship during the 1992-95 war in Bosnia.

AFP: IMF praises Bosnian Serb gvt efforts on reducing budget deficit

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) praised the Republika Srpska Government on Tuesday for its efforts in tackling the huge budget deficit. Chief of the IMF mission for Bosnia Franek Roswadowski told journalists in Banja Luka that "there were some difficulties" on the revenue side of the 2001 budget, but were later largely resolved. "The way in which this smaller amount was managed by the RS Government has been very good. So that by the end of the year, it looks to us (IMF), that the key objectives of the budget will still be reached," Roswadowski said. The IMF insists that the deficit at the end of 2001 must not be more than 25 million German marks (12,7 million euros, 11,7 million dollars), the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, said, adding that the Government expected the deficit would be "a bit" bigger. Ivanic's cabinet, elected in January, inherited a deficit of 307 million German marks from 2000 budget. No statistics on the current deficit in 2001 budget are available.

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic claims that Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) and Serb Democratic Party (SDS) are staying together

Nezavisne Novine carries a brief interview with the Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, in which he says that there will be no split in the ruling RS coalition (PDP/SDS), which has a majority in the RS National Assembly. When asked if resignation of the RS Minister for Agriculture Rajko Latinovic was a beginning of announced government reshuffle, Ivanic said that Latinovic clearly presented reasons for his resignation, which he respected. He added that the reshuffle itself was something completely different from what Latinovic had done.

RS Minister for Local Administration Petar Kunic will not resign

“I will not resign. Do not worry about it” replied Petar Kunic Deputy Republika Srpska Prime Minister and Minister for Local Administration when asked to comment on public speculations about his possible resignation. Kunic also commented on the relationship in the ruling coalition PDP/SDS saying that there were no disagreements.

Provocative posters on the Banja Luka-Prijedor road

Nezavisne Novine reports on the appearance of posters with provocative contents on the road Banja Luka-Prijedor. The posters appeared on traffic signs and advertisements along the road. The posters read names of the UNMIBH spokesperson for the Banja Luka ad Bihac regions, Alun Roberts, and the most wanted terrorist in the world, Osama Bin Laden, with a sign of equality between them.

International Community

OHR says HDZ's attention directed towards Herzegovina

Jutarnje Novine quoted OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic as saying that it was disappointing that there had seemed to be no real discussion at the Saturday's HDZ Congress on how to tackle problems of unemployment, economic reform and investment, and a wealth of social issues such as education, health care and pensions. “The HDZ also seemed to have recognized that they have failed; the HNS policy has failed, the policy to pull the HVO from the Federation Army has failed, and the HDZ finally admits that the constitutional reform process is important,

six months after the High Representative requested it to join the Constitutional Commissions. They are willing to return to the legal institutions and become active in the process of Constitutional Reform," Milisic told a press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo. He added that the elections to leading positions in the party suggested that the HDZ's attention was directed towards Herzegovina. "Some like two thirds of BiH's Croats live outside Herzegovina – this begs the question of how they expect to fulfil the claim that they represent all Croats in BiH," Milisic emphasised.

Petritsch concerned about the effects of the current global developments on BiH

According to Oslobodjenje, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is very concerned about the effects of the current global developments on Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Only this weekend, the High Representative participated, together with numerous experts, at a Stability Pact seminar on 'The Balkans and the European Union'. It has become evident, that international attention for Bosnia and Herzegovina is decreasing rapidly in the light of the events after the attack on the World Trade Center of September 11th. There is a serious and substantiated danger together of an ever-decreasing interest of international investors, as well. The current situation is one of economic risk and Bosnia and Herzegovina is still considered a country of risk and if this remains the case it will not be taken by investors," OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic told a press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo. International funds will be redirected to other areas of concern. He added that progress needed to be made now, otherwise, Bosnia and Herzegovina would not be able to adapt to the changing global environment. "The engagement of everybody will be necessary to develop the basis for a self-sustaining democracy; one where the rights and needs of citizens come above the needs of the Government and the Administration; one where the independence of the institutions

is upheld by the legislative and the executive branches of Government,” Milisic emphasized. According to Milisic, the High Representative holds that partnership relations need to evolve more rapidly in the light of the current situation, and he will discuss with the government and the presidency this issue.

Petritsch to host the first session of Civic Forum on Thursday

Dnevni Avaz quoted OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic as saying that High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch would host the first session of the Civic Forum on Thursday. “Earlier this year, when the High Representative, presented his concept of partnership, he did not only suggest a Partnership Forum on a political, working level, he also put forward the intention of engaging with civil society in forming the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative is pleased that the scope of the new dialogue is established and will now reach beyond the purely political and enlist the opinions and insights of a broad range of representatives within Bosnia and Herzegovina civil society. This includes the fields of education, arts, religion and even further. The Forum represents a core pillar of dialogue between the International Community and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Partnership relies on the intellectual capital and the capital of civic society if it is to succeed,” Milisic told a press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo. He added that the Thursday’s meeting would focus on the nature of the Forum itself – how it can usefully develop and make an optimum contribution to policy discourse.

OSCE to initiate reduction of military expenditures in BiH

Dnevni Avaz reports that the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is going to launch a country wide Military

Expenditure Reduction initiative, which will officially start on Thursday October 11, 2001. "The initiative will be introduced by the Head of the OSCE Mission, Robert Beecroft, during a press conference here in the CPIC," OSCE Spokesman Henning Philipp told a press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo.

According to Philipp, the aim of the initiative, titled 'Lower Military Expenditures – higher standard of living', is to make citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina think about the amount of official expenditure for the military and to realize that the public has an influence on how the authorities spend the money of the tax payers.

A total of 778,651 persons returned to their pre-war homes in BiH since 1996

Dnevni Avaz quoted UNHCR Spokesperson Aida Feraget as saying that, according to UNHCR statistics, the total number of persons that had returned to or within Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1996 was 778,651. "For the first eight months of this year, UNHCR registered over 50,000 minority returns countrywide. This represents an increase of some 69% when compared to the same period of last year. Total number of returns registered in the Federation was 30,236, in the Republika Srpska 17,889 and 2,314 in the Brcko District," Feraget told a press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo.

Balkan experts to help identify U.S. victims

Sarajevo dailies and news agencies report that three experts based in BiH will help identify victims of last month's attack on the United States with a method developed while tracing thousands of dead in the Balkan wars in the 1990s, officials said on Tuesday. The experts, one American and two Bosnians, are members of the International Commission on Missing Persons for former Yugoslavia (ICMP) and will travel to the United

States within days, ICMP spokeswoman Sanela Tunovic said. "The facilities that exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina for mass identification are unique in the world," a statement quoted ICMP chief-of-staff Gordon Bacon as saying. ICMP is an umbrella agency coordinating the search for an estimated 40,000 missing persons from the violent break-up of the former socialist Yugoslavia in the last decade.

No forces from SFOR participated in military operations in Afghanistan

Oslobodjenje quoted SFOR Spokesman Daryl Morrell as saying that no forces from SFOR had participated in the military operations begun on Sunday evening by the United States of America and the United Kingdom as part of the global campaign against terrorism. "This operation is not directed against the people of Afghanistan or Islam, a religion of peace practiced by over 1.3 billion people world-wide. It is designed to strike against al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, Morrell told press conference on Tuesday in Sarajevo. He added that there were no plans at present to withdraw the troops of any nation from Bosnia and Herzegovina. "SFOR will continue to conduct our normal patrols, carry out our normal duties and remain vigilant during these troubled times," Morrell emphasized.

OHR agrees RS authorities not done enough in Dayton Agreement's implementation

Commenting on the latest ICG report accusing OHR of a soft approach towards the Republika Srpska authorities, OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic told Oslobodjenje that the Office had never and would never tolerate any lack of the results achieved by the authorities in BiH. "We agree that the RS authorities have not done enough in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, and that jeopardizes position of the

citizens in the entity. We will first analyze the ICG report and then decide further steps," Milisic said.

The Hague Tribunal sentences two Bosniaks and a Croat in Celebici case

The International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia on Tuesday sentenced two Bosniaks and a Croat to 18, 15 and nine years in prison respectively for crimes against Bosnian Serbs committed in Celebici prisoners' camp during the war in BiH. Hazim Delic and Esad Landzo are the first Bosniaks to be convicted in the Hague. Delic was sentenced to 18 and Landzo to 15 years in prison for violation of the customs of war and Geneva Convention. Bosnian Croat Ratko Mucic was sentenced to nine years, Sarajevo dailies reported.

Dnevni Avaz: Wolfgang Petritsch – The Person of the Day (full translation)

An interview of High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch with the Belgrade newspaper Danas deserves attention due to many reasons. Petritsch publicly expressed his opinion in time when in the BiH's neighborhood, both on the east and on the west, a perfidious media campaign is underway on the alleged "mujahedeen-terrorist sins of Bosniaks." The Austrian diplomat was obviously not impressed by the old chauvinistic thesis on the nature of the war in BiH, as well as the new one on a terrorist danger coming from Sarajevo. "The Bosnian variant of Islam is the European one. I would not assess that there is a big danger here of Islamic fundamentalism development," Petritsch said among other things. Precisely defining social and economic problems as main causes of any radicalism, the High Representative in an indirect way sent a message to the BiH's neighbors not to spread fear of "Moslem fundamentalism," (coming from BiH) where it does not actually exist. By regretting Radovan Karadzic, the main war crime suspect, was still not in The Hague, Petritsch in an efficient way put

again in focus the real causes of the majority of problems in BiH. Because, without apprehension of Karadzic and Mladic, BiH will always be an easy target of all kinds of nationalism and dangerous political manipulation with tragic destiny of each of the three peoples in BiH.

EU provides three million EURO as financial assistance to independent judiciary and civil aviation in BiH

Within the program of assistance for the year of 2001, the European Union has provided two million EURO (approximately four million marks) to support the independent judiciary, and a million EURO (approximately two million marks) to support the civil aviation sector in BiH, all BiH media reported. The financial agreement was signed on Tuesday in Sarajevo by Head of the European Commission's Delegation to BiH Hansjorg Kretschmer and BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdzija.