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BiH State-related Issues

Civic Forum to be good basis for better influence on BiH authorities

Friar Petar Andjelovic, one among the invited to the first session of the Civic Forum scheduled by High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch for today, told Dnevni Avaz that the Forum would not change the world, but will analyze a number of issues and suggest current authorities what to do in order to reach well being for everyone. President of the Bosniak Cultural Association Preporod Sacir Filandra, who was also invited to the session, said that the Forum was a good way for the High Representative to establish a better basis both for his own work and the influence on the BiH authorities.

Lagumdzija and Domazet meet with IMF representatives to discuss new stand-by arrangement

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report that BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdzija and BiH State

Institutions Treasury Minister Anto Domazet met on Wednesday in Sarajevo with a delegation of the International Monetary Fund headed by Franek Rozwadowski to discuss possibilities for a new stand-by arrangement. The talks on the issue have been started both at the state and entity levels since the previous arrangement had expired at the end on May this year.

BiH SCMM representatives informed on the US-initiated Joint Contact Teams Program

According to Oslobodjenje, the representatives of the BiH Standing Committee for Military Matters were on Wednesday informed about the Joint Contact Teams Program, which was presented by the officers of the US Armed Forces Command in Europe. It is about a program of mutual military cooperation being established by the US Armed Forces with the majority of the transition countries in Europe. BiH and FRY are the only countries, which are still not members of the program.

BiH requesting confirmation or denial of existence of Izetbegovic's photo with Bin Laden

Glas Srpski, on the cover page, reports that BiH Foreign Affairs Ministry requested the Austrian Embassy in Sarajevo to provide additional information, which would confirm or deny existence of joint photographs of Alija Izetbegovic and Osama Bin Laden Ivica Misic, the Deputy BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, told SRNA that that one Austrian citizen had said to the BiH delegation members at the recent session of Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg that such photographs existed.

Sejfudin Tokic, the Speaker of the BiH House of Peoples holds a press conference in Banja Luka

Nezavisne Novine reports on a press conference of Sejfudin Tokic, who recently undertook position of the BiH House of

Peoples Speaker. Tokic said the priorities of the House in the future period would include the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, drafting legislation and the implementation of the laws related to transition process, as well as BiH's European integration. Asked to comment a statement of Milorad Dodik, the President of the Republika Srpska Party of Independent Social-democrats (SNSD), that Alija Izetbegovic had met with Osama Bin Laden during the war, Tokic said a BiH delegation was told by high officials of Council of Europe during the recent session in Strasbourg that the photographs proving this did exist. He added that the BiH Foreign Ministry has ordered investigation into the matter.

Federation

BiH Federation Government says Federation TV Director Jasmin Durakovic elected illegally

All Sarajevo print and electronic media report that the BiH Federation Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Dubravko Lovrenovic held in the capacity of the BiH Federation Government's Coordinator for Media in the RTV BiH Transformation Process a press conference on Wednesday in Sarajevo in regard of, as he said, illegal election of the BiH Federation TV Director Jasmin Durakovic. Denying that Durakovic was elected by an unanimous decision of the BiH Federation TV Council, Lovrenovic said that only four out of seven Council members had voted for him: Slavo Kukic, Nedjo Milicevic, Nedzad Fejzic and an international. To be legally elected, a candidate needs to gain five votes. According to Lovrenovic, Dunja Blazevic and Zlatko Dizdarevic did not attend the session as Boris Tihi was against the proposed candidate. Lovrenovic emphasized that a working group tasked with the issue by the BiH Federation Government had established a very good cooperation with OHR, and that in the

process of consultation a common candidate had been agreed, which is Haris Pasovic. “That is why we are very surprised and very dissatisfied with what happened later, more precisely, with the appointment of the candidate, who was not discussed at the joint meetings,” Lovrenovic said.

Kukic and OHR say Durakovic appointed legally

Commenting on the BiH Federation Government claims that BiH Federation TV Director Jasmin Durakovic had been elected illegally, Chairman of the BiH Federation TV Council Slavo Kukic confirmed to Dnevni Avaz that, according to the rules and procedures, five members of the Council had made a decision to appoint the proposed candidate. Kukic denied allegations of Dubravko Lovrenovic, the BiH Federation Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, that two members of the Council had not attended the session. “Only Dunja Blazevic did not attend the session. Zlatko Dizdarevic, who is not a member of the Council any more due to assignment on the other duty, was replaced by Kadrija Hodzic from Tuzla, who attended the session and voted for Durakovic,” Kukic said, adding that this made five requiring votes. OHR Spokesman Patrik Volf told the newspaper that OHR supported the decision made by the BiH Federation TV Council. He confirmed that all rules and procedures had been followed at the election of the Director.

Komsic says such RTV transformation could leave Croat people without TV signal

According to Oslobodjenje, Speaker of the BiH Federation House of Peoples and a member of the BiH Federation Government’s working group for the RTV BiH transformation Ivo Komsic said on Wednesday that the BiH federation TV viewer might be damaged by such a process of transformation, because when the Federation TV starts its broadcast the HRT (Croatian Radio Television) signal will be turned off. “The Federation TV

signal will be able to cover neither a half of the BiH Federation territory. This means that an entire population will be left without the TV signal, they will have neither the federal TV nor the HRT. In that moment, it can be expected that someone will start manipulating with this part of the population, which will not have any TV signal. It is about Croats. Then, one will have a full right to say that this represents a deliberately thought strike on the Croat population. The transformation currently underway is going towards that direction. We want to prevent that, as those who created all this do not really care about that. I believe that this is a deliberate action," Komsic told a press conference he held together with BiH Federation Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Dubravko Lovrenovic.

Dnevni List: Is the international community operating illegally in case of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Ministry of Interior

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List carries a summary of events with regards to the situation surrounding the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton's Ministry of Interior from the time when the High Representative dismissed the then Minister of Interior, Dragan Mandic, until present days and the situation with the Head of UN Mission in Mostar, Rubina Khan and Deputy Coordinator for UN Civil Affairs in BiH, William Ozkaptan, when the Croat MPs in the Cantonal Assembly of C7 demand Jacques-Paul Klein to relive them from the duties. The article reads that the OHR's favourite mean for implementation of its requests are the famous suspensions which have been applied mostly on Croats. Rest of the article carries spokeswoman of the OHR South, Avis Benes, as saying that the OHR is concerned with the Croat MPs in the Canton 7 Assembly recommendation for obstruction regarding the non-appointment of the Cantonal Minister of Interior and that the situation will not be resolved by the

proposed boycott.

Dnevni List: Deputy Governor of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Dragan Vrankic says that by not appointing the Minister of Interior the parity gets endangered

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List carries an interview with Deputy Governor, Dragan Vrankic, in which he talks about the problems in the Cantonal Ministry of Interior.

Deputy Governor Vrankic: “The problem can be summed up as this. Governor and Deputy Governor appoint the Government, and the Cantonal Assembly confirms it. When we were in the procedure of appointing of the Government, there came the obligation for confirmation of two ministries, namely MoI and Ministry of Justice, by the OHR and the UNMIBiH. I must point out that it is not stipulated in the Constitution but we have to acknowledge certain circumstances that it needs to be done”. Vrankic then goes on about the parity in the Cantonal Government that has been endangered by non-appointment of the Minister of Interior and that such situation could result in outvoting in the Cantonal Government. Vrankic: “Our obligation is to appoint Cantonal Ministers and we have previously appointed acting Ministers without getting the approval from the Assembly. But when it came to Mr. Beslic, Governor Dziho did not fulfill his constitutional duty by not confirming nor appointing Mr. Beslic as the new Minister of Interior. That’s why I hold him (Dziho) responsible for leaving the MoI without its Minister and compromising the constitutional position of the Croat people. He claims that the OHR and UN suggested him to wait for their consent but during the talks with the UN officials I was promised that they would declare themselves within 72 hours and now it has been a month since they have not done anything. We want to have a partner relationship with

the IC and we expect a correct attitude from them. If they do not want to confirm Mr. Beslic they should at least inform us in due course. We cannot let ourselves be left without the Croat staff in the MoI. Beside that, Chiefs of Police Administrations are being removed (…) I do not want to be misunderstood, I do have anything against some suggestion, for instance the motion to have one Police Administration at the City level, but I am against that decisions can be made without the consent of the Croat staff in the MoI without observing any legally stipulated procedure (…) I do not see a need for a mentor in the Canton, as requested by some in the past few days, I think it is not in the interest of the Croats and citizens of this Canton. Now the decision lies with the OHR which should give its consent for the Minister of Interior. There would not be a problem if the structure underneath were set up properly, the thing is that there are not a leader and his associates so the policemen are left on their own. The situation reflects on the security situation in the Canton and I am pleased that there have not been any serious incidents. My message is that we stay calm and dignified and let us not get provoked regardless of the circumstances that surround us.

Dnevni List: Interview: Mladen Ivankovic, the President of the People's Party "Working for Progress"

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

(…)

I established the "Working for Progress" list of independent candidates on the eve of last year's elections, but I did not have enough time then to found a party. We are satisfied with the results achieved, bearing in mind that the pre-election campaign was dominated by uncivilised pressures on us and our candidates.

(…)

We have founded the party with the aim to try to take the Croat people out of atmosphere of single-mindedness. We have time to present the programme in which a man – a voter is treated as a civilised being who suffers grave consequences of economic and other forms of neglect by the people who rule him. Isn't it high time to acknowledge that someone had to bear responsibility for such a situation. The HDZ attributes the blame for the overall position of the Croat people to someone else. Yet, it will not work that way any longer, particularly following the latest HDZ Congress, as the things are far clearer now. The HDZ must be aware of its historic responsibility because of the obvious strategy that implies the protection of interests of individuals and lobbies in the party, whereas, at the same time, the Croat people is imposed a platitude on a hard struggle for the people's interests. The HDZ managed to abolish those theses by its behaviour and programme-wise failures.

(…)

In the moral sense, our engagement is crystal-clear, and, in the legislative sense, it is founded on the BiH Constitution which is, again, based on the Dayton postulates which were signed by the HDZ and which that party had been applied for the last 5 years.

(…)

I have not joined the authorities in order to profit, since my personal profit, as a co-owner of "Lijanovici", amounts to over 1 million KM a year. I was called by the Alliance and accepted it because I care for the development of medium and small-size business, as that is something which interests me most. I will continue endeavours in that direction and will keep on insisting on passing new, better quality laws and one of the most significant sucessess of the Alliance is, in my

opinion, passing of the Election Law which we, Croats, can also be satisfied with. Naturally, I also have objections to the slowness of the Alliance, particularly when it comes to new laws, but one should not forget that this authority inherited financial dreary.

(…)

In Tuzla, I was elected a member of the HNS Presidency and still am the Presidency member. I warned the HNS in Tuzla that we had kamikaze leading us to catastrophe. Because of that, some proclaimed me a traitor and did not invite me to the Presidency sessions. Had they called me, I would not have let them do foolish things. Now they have admitted it themselves. Unlike kamikaze destroying their own selves and others, our kamikaze destroy others only, i.e. the Croat people and values that were with difficulty acquired through the history, and they re-elect themselves to the positions of presidents and vice-presidents without allowing anybody else to run for the positions, let alone to be elected. I do not intend to leave the Assembly (HNS) because it should be organised in a truly democratic manner and not abused as was the case so far, reads Dnevni List.

Slobodna Dalmacija: The Mostar City Administration held its session

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The Mostar City Administration held its regular session yesterday. Neven Tomic, the Mostar Mayor, and his Deputy Hamdija Jahic attended the session. They mostly discussed the report on the 'Strategy on Economic Development of the City of Mostar' and Darinka Omanovic, the new Head of the project, who replaced Edin Batlak, who now performs a new function, informed about all details and the course of realization of program's goals. Neven Tomic demanded that the whole program, that the working groups are working on, together with

coordinators, is finalized in order to include and realize through the strategy some projects that are very important for the development of the City of Mostar and the HN Canton.

Republika Srpska

RS National Assembly discusses work of the entity representatives in the BiH state bodies

Oslobodjenje reports that the Republika Srpska National Assembly held an extraordinary session on Wednesday in Banja Luka to discuss work of the entity representatives in the BiH state bodies, as well as a document titled: "BiH Defense Policy." RS President Mirko Sarovic said that the RS accepted all Dayton solutions but that it could not accept imposition and adoption of the documents, which had no constitutional foundations. Sarovic also said that a lack of a proper coordination among the RS representatives in the BiH institutions was making damage to the entity interests. According to TV BiH, Serb member of the BiH Presidency Zivko Radisic emphasized that the BiH Defense Policy had been supported by all RS institutions including the Supreme Defense Council. He again failed to confirm whether he had signed the document. The session was interrupted with the continuation scheduled for October 25.

Petritsch expresses concern about obstructionist behavior of some RS delegates in the State Institutions

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, has addressed a letter to the Speaker of the RS National Assembly, Dragan Kalinic, on the occasion of Wednesday's special session of the Assembly. In the letter he expressed concern about obstructionist behavior of some RS delegates in the State

Institutions. (All BiH print and electronic media carried the Press Release together with reports on the RS National Assembly session)

Ivanic not to sign a document requesting RS to accept establishment of the joint BiH Army

According to Habena news agency, the Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, said on Wednesday he would not sign a document for BiH's accession to the Council of Europe, which was requesting RS to accept the establishment of the joint BiH Army. In his address to the deputies in the RS national Assembly, Ivanic emphasized he was supporting the BiH admission into the Council but without additional conditions. "An accession document requests that the entity representatives approve formation of the joint BiH Army two years following the country's admission into the full membership of the Council of Europe, which is violating both the Dayton Agreement and the BiH Constitution," Ivanic said.

Fight against corruption in Republika Srpska

Glas Srpski reports on a meeting on fight against corruption, which took place in Banja Luka on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by the Head of OHR's Anti-fraud Department Manfred Dauster, Republika Srpska Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and other representatives of the RS institutions. According to the newspaper, an order was given to the RS Public Prosecutor to investigate into 31 cases of corruption, as agreed at the meeting. Dauster stressed that, among 31 cases of corruption in the RS, six have major priority but he did not name the specific cases in order to secure investigation, Glas Srspki writes. Dauster only mentioned that the cases were to do with public accounting and the budget year of 2000. First results of the investigation should be announced in the firs half of November this year. RS Prime Minister Ivanic said that he insisted on fight against corruption from the beginning of his

mandate and that the fight should not remain on words only.

International Community

Slobodna Dalmacija: OHR says Action Plan for Mostar is null and void

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

OHR Spokesperson in Mostar Avis Benes said at the press conference in the town on Wednesday that OHR was very concerned over “recommendation” for obstruction sent by the Club of Croat Councilors in the HN Canton, due to the delay in election of Minister of Interior and, as they say, “violation of parity principle”. She added that now it is even more certain that the solution for this situation will not be achieved by boycott. She also stated it is difficult to comprehend that certain political factors still cannot realize that this method is only counter-productive and mostly damages those who are doing it and those who are represented by them. The price of possible non-participation will be paid by citizens and so much time will be lost, during which officials will not give up their salaries. She added that one could even wonder whether the real existing problem is used only as an excuse for non-working and masked as a fight for political and national interest.

Talking about the Action Plan on Reintegration of Mostar, the Spokesperson stated that the OHR has never disputed the contents of the Action Plan, however, having in mind the way of its adoption, the OHR believes that the legal validity of this document is null and void. She stated that the Sarajevo press published a large number of misinformation about the OHR and the Plan.

Vecernji List: OHR says HDZ is hostage of its leadership

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Avis Benes, the OHR Spokesperson, stated on Wednesday at the press conference in Mostar that the HDZ BiH is becoming a hostage of the people whose position leads to isolation. Commenting on Jelavic's announcements that HDZ representatives will return to the BiH and the Federation Parliaments, that they have been boycotting for 6 months, she stated that the IC will also cooperate with the other Croat parties from BiH and that the HDZ is not the only party that represents interests of the Croats.

Plavsic may testify against Milosevic -Del Ponte

The Hague Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte said on Wednesday she expected former Bosnian Serb leader and war crimes suspect Biljana Plavsic to be among a clutch of high-profile witnesses at Slobodan Milosevic's trial. Del Ponte told reporters she hoped to have a third indictment against Milosevic, for Bosnia, ready within weeks to add to the Kosovo and Croatia indictments he already faces and it would contain the gravest charge of all, genocide.

The Hague Tribunal gives material to U.S. bin Laden probe

The Hague Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte said on Wednesday she had handed the United States information from her Bosnia probes for its investigation into Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. "Yesterday I received the U.S. war crimes ambassador Pierre Prosper and I gave him all the information we collected in Bosnia, coming from our investigations," Del Ponte told a foreign press lunch in The Hague. Del Ponte declined to give precise details, but said: "It was in

connection with the terrorist group, with people who are in Bosnia – for example, staying in Bosnia. It was in connection with terrorists, yes."

Dnevni List: Interview with Florence Hartmann, Spokeswoman for the ICTY

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

In a hefty interview for Dnevni List, Ms. Hartmann talks about the latest indictment against Milosevic and his involvement in the war in Croatia and comments Milorad Dodik's allegations on Alija Izetbegovic's links to mujahedeens. Ms. Hartmann: "The Banja Luka authorities have been announcing that they would send us certain documents on Izetbegovic for days already. We receive and examine every document that has been sent to us, no matter if they are sent by authorities, individuals or NGOs if they carry evidence on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. But I cannot comment on a certain delivery that needs careful examining or possible translation. We are considering all elements and continuing the investigation. We check everything we get so I cannot draw any conclusions this early. Any comment regarding this is premature. When asked whether Izetbegovic can be tried for objective, and indeed for individual responsibility, over the crimes against Croat civilians, Hartmann said that it would be very hard to answer that question. "I cannot answer to that question because there is not an indictment against him, so I cannot say anything more on the elements the Prosecution is in possession of. But in general, we investigate into both responsibilities, individual and objective responsibility it is. Like in Milosevic's case, we can prove his responsibility through his structures, although he was not their boss, but de facto he influenced them or he had an authority over them, in other words he was their commander". Regarding the Halilovic case, Ms. Hartmann says that the procedure is in its initial stage and that the Prosecution is submitting evidence so the defense

can prepare itself, reads Dnevni List.