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Constitutional reforms

Petritsch meets with four RS political parties representatives to discuss ongoing constitutional reform

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, met in Sarajevo on Wednesday with the representatives of the four political parties from the Republika Srpska to discuss the ongoing constitutional reform in BiH. The attendees at the meeting included the PDP leader, Mladen Ivanic, the SDS President,

Dragan Kalinic, Dragutin Ilic (on behalf of the SPRS leader Petra Djokic), and Krstan Simic (on behalf of the SNSD President Milorad Dodik). In the presence of representatives of the Contact Group (US, UK, Russia, Germany, France, Italy), Petritsch told the RS political leaders that, while the amendments passed by the RS National Assembly last Thursday went in the right direction and represent a step forward, they did not fully reflect the Mrakovic-Sarajevo Agreement. What the IC expects is what the Steering Board stated in its March 27 Communique: "... that all parties actively ensure that the content of this Agreement is fully implemented in the constitutional amendments to be adopted by the parliaments of both Entities. The amendments to the Entity constitutions must be adopted fully in line with the Agreement reached by the political parties on 27 March 2002." The Head of the OHR Press Office, Alexandra Stiglmayer, told Oslobodjenje that the High Representative had called on the RS leaders to ensure adoption of the amendments to the entity Constitution, which would fully reflect provisions of the Mrakovica-Sarajevo Agreement, by April 18, when the exact date of holding the next BiH general elections should be announced.

Dnevni Avaz: Interview with Wolfgang Petritsch, the High Representative of the international community in BiH

"The Agreement on the Implementation of the Decision on the Constituency of the Peoples in accordance to the BiH Constitutional Court's ruling is not in deadlock. It is not jeopardized...It contains clear instructions to those who should implement it, what and how they should act. The deputies to the parliaments are elected and paid to do that," the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch said at the beginning of an interview with Dnevni Avaz. In the interview, Petritsch also addressed some other including the current crisis in the BiH Federation Government caused by the Orasje-based AM Sped company case and the future of HDZ as a political party. (Full

translation of the interview to follow)

Dnevni Avaz: Poll – The public trusts Petritsch

Asked whether they believed the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, would ensure persistent implementation of Agreement on Constitutional Changes in BiH, 61 percent of the polled citizens answered yes, 14 percent said no, as 25 percent said they did not know. The phone poll was conducted by the Avaz Agency on the sample of 300 randomly selected citizens in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka.

Nezavisne Novine: Interview with Wolfgang Petritsch – April 18th is the final deadline for changes of entities' constitutions

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne Novine carries an [interview](#) with the High Representative for BiH, Wolfgang Petritsch in which he explains his views on the latest development regarding the constitutional amendments. Commenting on constitutional amendments, passed by the RS National Assembly, and whether they are in keeping with the Mrakovica Sarajevo Agreement, Petritsch says that OHR experts did a thorough analysis of the amendments and concluded that they have some serious omissions and that some issues have to be further clarified. "To be more specific, the OHR experts came to conclusion that the RS did make a step forward. However, it (the RS) still has not reached the point when one could say that is a full implementation of the Agreement. I cannot expect anything less than the full implementation of the Agreement. The Agreement is a result of a positive compromise and is in keeping with European standards. The Agreement is on the table and we cannot negotiate further, because it has to be implemented", said Petritsch.

Party for BiH requests Petritsch to fulfill promises

The Party for BiH President, Safet Halilovic, told *Oslobodjenje* that the decision made by the Party's Presidency to withdraw its signature from the Sarajevo Agreement was still in effect and would be suspended only after the annulment of the illegal amendments to the RS Constitution adopted by the RS National Assembly. These amendments, according to Halilovic, do not reflect at all the genuine implementation of the Agreement and the BiH Constitutional Court's ruling on the constituency of the peoples. He emphasized that the leaders of SDP, NHI and Party for BiH had been assured by Petritsch and the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board that they would insist on the 100-percent implementation of the Mrakovica-Sarajevo Agreement in the both entities.

SDP says the Sarajevo Agreement implementation being obstructed by the national political parties

The SDP BiH General Secretary, Miro Lazovic, told a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday that the Party's Main Board had assessed the Sarajevo Agreement on the constitutional reform as a big step forward comparing its content to the current situation. According to *Oslobodjenje*, Lazovic said that the Agreement therefore had to be implemented in full, and this particularly concerned the necessary correction of the adopted amendments to the Republika Srpska Constitution. He added that the national political parties (SDS, SDA, HDZ) did not want the genuine implementation of the Agreement, in order not to lose their current political influence.

SDA believes adopted amendments to the RS Constitution are direct consequence of the

Sarajevo Agreement

According to Oslobodjenje, the SDA Presidency does not accept the Agreement of political leaders on the implementation of the decision on the constituency of the peoples, because it does not ensure the equality in a symmetric way. The consequences of such agreement are adopted amendments to the RS Constitution, which ensure the domination of Serbs, at the same time making Bosniaks and Croats national minorities. Due to these and other reasons, the SDA deputies will neither support the draft amendments to the BiH Federation Constitution.

Ivanic says the international community acts in favor of the BiH Federation

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies quote RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, as saying on Wednesday in Banja Luka that recent event regarding the constitutional amendments prove that things are getting complicated and old practice of pressures on the RS continues by the IC representatives who are taking one side again. "Whatever the RS does that is not enough and the time has come to abandon that practice and to say 'enough' to those pressures", said Ivanic. He said that these events are connected with problems that exist within the Alliance for change as well as with problems between Croats and Bosniaks. "It is evident that the Alliance is falling apart and the IC is trying to save the situation by transferring the problem to the RS", said Ivanic. According to him, the RS NA passed the constitutional amendments without any problems and without triggering tensions among the peoples, which some people obviously see as a problem. "It is absolutely unacceptable to make any assessment before telling what the objections to the amendments are. Obviously, somebody need a political spectacle, because the BiH Federation parties have the right even to offend the High Representative and nobody reacted to

that", said Ivanic. He also finds unacceptable that some ambassadors stand behind some political parties. Ivanic mentioned the case of Avdo Palic. He said that statement made yesterday by an OHR Spokesperson about the case of Avdo Palic shows that the minimum line of decent relations has been crossed. "The case of Avdo Palic is a 7 years old case. This is the cheapest political pressure and I do not have intention to react to that", said Ivanic. As for the constitutional amendments, Ivanic added that it is not possible to return the issue of constitutional amendments to the RS NA again. "I am ready to forward our amendments to the Council Europe so that the CoE assesses whether the amendments are in accordance with the BiH Constitutional Court ruling on constituent status of all peoples in BiH", said Ivanic, and added if the practice of additional pressures, aimed at humiliating the RS institutions, keeps going on BiH is going to face big crisis.

(Click [here](#) for the more comprehensive report on the Ivanic's news conference)

PDP leader says RS has no intention to change the essence of the adopted amendments

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

The PDP President, Mladen Ivanic stated late last night to Srna news agency that the RS had no intention to change the essence of the amendments to the RS Constitution, adopted by the RS NA. He, however, did not exclude certain corrections. "At the meeting with the representatives of the for major RS parties, the High Representative presented his views on the RS amendments, which are to a great extent burdened with the views of political parties from the BiH Federation", Ivanic said. The PDP President stated that most of the adopted constitutional changes were fully in accordance with the Sarajevo Agreement and that there were no major deviations. According to him, the adopted amendments contain parts that are not dealt with by the Sarajevo Agreement and that are now

being contested. He added that the RS would implement constitutional changes in line with the decision of the RS NA.

DNS threats with call for referendum on constitutional amendments in the RS

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski quotes member of the Democratic National Alliance (DNS) main board, Zlatko Knezevic, as saying yesterday in Banja Luka that if the High Representative requests that the RS National Assembly declares the amendments to the RS Constitution, passed by the RS NA, null and void the DNS will call for referendum on constitutional amendments in the RS. Knezevic went on to say that the DNS will also request before the RS NA that the entire RS leadership resigns, after which an extraordinary elections should be called for. The party also strongly condemned the move of LDS leader, Rasim Kadic who posted a sign which says "Ramallah" at the entrance to Sarajevo Canton, as a gesture of solidarity toward Palestinians.

RS Democratic party says will of majority should be respected

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski carries a press statement, issued by the RS Democratic Party (DSRS), which states that the DSRS expresses its concern and discontent regarding the fact that the High Representative has no reserves in his support to those who are not capable of ensuring the functioning of BiH in a democratic and institutional way. The press release further states that the High Representative does not take into consideration the view of majority of political parties in the RS. The statement says that the DSRS will keep on with the implementation of the RS NA constitutional amendments, but under conditions that the implementation goes without suggestions and pressures coming from the politicians such as Zlatko Lagumdzija.

RS war veterans' organization embittered by pressures on the RS

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski carries a statement, issued by the RS War Veterans' Organization, which states that the pressure exerted by certain politicians and parties from the BiH Federation in reaction to the constitutional changes on the leadership of the RS and parliamentary representatives were designed to make the RS National Assembly relinquish the decisions adopted in a legal and legitimate manner. The RS War Veterans' Organization expects that the High Representative will make a realistic assessment of the new developments and objectively characterize the newly attained level of the constitutional changes in the RS. We are convinced that the adopted constitutional changes present a firm constitutional foothold of the peace and stability in BiH and that the democratic Europe and the world will bear that in mind, the statement goes on to say. The RS War Veterans' Organization calls on the authorities in the RS institutions, parliamentary representatives in particular, to preserve their unity and determination at this point and share it with their people who, at these complex times when the RS is under attack, is prepared for every sacrifice but not for humiliation, the statement points out.

Oslobodjenje: Leaders of BiH political parties with Croat prefix to meet with Picula and Tomac in Mostar on Friday

The leaders of the BiH political parties with Croat prefix will meet with the Croatian Foreign Minister, Tonino Picula, the Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Zdravko Tomac and the Croatian Ambassador to BiH, Josip Vrbosic in the Mostar-based Croatian Consulate on Friday to discuss the ongoing constitutional reforms in BiH. Miljenko Brkic, the President of the BiH Croat National Community (HNZ), told the

newspaper that majority of the Croat leaders in BiH “do not accept the Agreement signed in Sarajevo, because it does not meet interests of all three peoples.” According to Brkic, the Agreement can be just an initial step for the further negotiations. Concerning the upcoming meeting with the senior Croatian officials in Mostar, Brkic emphasized that it was not about any “pressures,” or the Croatian interference in the BiH’s internal affairs, but about the regular informing of the Croatian leadership about the position of Croats in BiH.

BiH State-related Issues

Initial version of the draft law on the BiH Public Broadcasting System sent to the BiH Council of Ministers, PBS to start broadcasting its first news on May 7

Oslobodjenje and Jutarnje Novine report that the members of the BiH Public Broadcasting Service Founding Board, BiH Federation RTV Council, RTRS Steering Board, BiH Council of Ministers’ working group and representatives of the international community supported the initial version of the law on the BiH Public Broadcasting System at their meeting in Sarajevo on Wednesday. The law stipulates basis for the functioning of the System comprising three equal public broadcasters: two at the entity level (BiH Federation RTV and RTRS), and one at the BiH state level, the BiH PBS. The relations among the broadcasters are based on the cooperation and agreement. The adopted version was delivered to the BiH Council of Ministers for further consideration and adoption. The BiH PBS Founding Board publicly announced that the first PBS evening news would be broadcast on May 7, this year.

The first hearing held before the BiH Human Rights

Chamber in case four “Algerian Group” members versus BiH, BiH Federation

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report that the BiH Human Rights Chamber on Wednesday held public hearing in legal proceedings launched against BiH and BiH Federation by Hadz Boudellaa, Boumediene Lakhdar, Muhamed Nechle and Saber Lahmar, the four member of so called “Algerian Group,” who had been suspected for preparing terrorist attacks on the Embassies of United States and Great Britain in Sarajevo. In the meantime, they were transported to the US Military Base Guantanamo on Cuba. Their legal representatives informed the Chamber on the demand for financial compensation amounting approximately 4.5 million marks for material and non-material damage suffered by their clients.

Vecernji List: Interview with Jadranko Prlic, BiH Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List carries an interview with Jadranko Prlic, Deputy Minister in Council of Ministers’ Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations. Speaking about the new party that media reported that Prlic is to form, the Proeuropean Peoples’ Party, Deputy Minister Prlic said that it was not his party but party of people who have a pro-European way of thinking. He says that initiatives come from all over BiH and that he would have more information pertaining to the issue in some ten days time. Prlic denied media reports that the party is being formed because the IC ordered so adding that the IC would for sure support the project as it usually supports normal projects. Finally in relation to this issue, Prlic says that the party will gather people who achieved results in economy and that the whole strategy is focused on young, successful people.

Answering to a series of economy related questions, Prlic said that BiH is not attractive to the International Community and that the primary and only goal of the IC is a stable BiH, a BiH which will not disseminate instability in the region. Regarding the membership in the CoE and WTO, Prlic said that it would not improve economic situation in the country. He also criticised the decision to pay-out discharged soldiers of the Federation Army saying that the money will be spent unwisely i.e. that it will not be properly invested.

Asked whether he would sign the Agreement on constitutional changes if he were in HDZ shoes, Jadranko Prlic said that the Agreement had to be better in some parts of it saying that it had to secure that no people has a majority in either entity. "Everything would have been different had that principle been saved", says Prlic.

In relation to the change in the Office of the High Representative, Prlic expects Paddy Ashdown to take radical steps towards normalisation of situation, getting closer to EU and in the areas of education and judiciary.

Federation

Grabovac claims his deputy establishing parallelisms

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz report on the continuation of the crisis inside the BiH Federation Government caused by a disputed pay-out of a deposit worth approximately 1.7 million KM to the Orasje-based AM Sped company, which was approved by Finance Minister Nikola Grabovac without consent of his deputy, Sefika Hafizovic. At a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday, Grabovac according to Oslobodjenje accused Hafizovic of working on the establishment of parallel structures within the Ministry. He also said that, on several

occasions, Hafizovic had tried to block his activities without any grounded reason, but just to act contrary to him. Dnevni Avaz reports that the investigation into the matter being conducted by the Federation Financial Police has already revealed a series of interesting details. Reliable sources told the newspaper that, out of the mentioned sum, 900,000 KM was immediately transferred to Belgium, as the company's owner, Mirko Anic, took in cash the rest of 800,000 KM.

BiH Federation House of Peoples holds session in Sarajevo

According to Oslobodjenje, at a session in Sarajevo on Wednesday, the BiH Federation House of Peoples adopted the program to take care about the soldiers to be dismissed from the Federation Army as well a decision on taking a 100-million KM loan to compensate the dismissed soldiers. The Deputy Federation Defense Minister, Ferid Buljubasic, said the first contracts with the soldiers leaving the Army would be signed on Thursday. The House also supported the draft law on the BiH Federation intelligence-security service.

A year after establishment of the Provisional Administration: "Liquidation of Hercegovacka Banka"

Oslobodjenje learned that, a year following the appointment of the Provisional Administration, the Hercegovacka Banka in Mostar would be blocked soon. The liquidation of the Bank has been proposed by Toby Robinson, the Provisional Administrator appointed by OHR, at a meeting with BiH Federation Government officials. The intention of the Provisional Administration to liquidate the Bank is not anything new at least for the Croatian media. Johan Verheyden, the spokesman for the Provisional Administrator, last week announced in the Croatian media a possibility of liquidations, claiming that this was the only way for its salvation. According to the Oslobodjenje sources, the same was claimed by Robinson at the meeting with

the Federation officials. (Full translation of the article to follow).

Vecernji List: Budget beneficiaries of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton hostages of politics

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List carries an article about situation in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton bringing a small summary of events and saying that the whole Canton could soon go into receivership. VL says that according to unofficial information, the Principle Deputy High Representative Donald Hays recommended an immediate de-blocking of the Cantonal Treasury and pay-out of salaries to budget beneficiaries. The daily also carries an OHR spokeswoman Avis Benes as saying that people have become hostages of political goals whilst their salaries are used as political tools. The spokeswoman added that it was unacceptable to use the earned money of budget beneficiaries as tools for bargains without consent of people concerned. "Elected officials will not for sure get a legitimate mandate for similar games", says Benes. VL reads that observers assess that international administration, albeit the domestic politicians bear biggest political responsibility, should have acted differently from the beginning and untie the knot in the Canton with special regime. One cannot rule out that, says VL, if there are no results this week, the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch could fill in the 53rd spot allocated for removed officials. Unofficially, reads VL, Ahmet Bebanic, Deputy Head of Cantonal Treasury, could soon be looking for a new job because he has been requested to do so by Deputy Governor Sefkija Džiho.

Jutarnji List: Jelavic, Tokic attended ceremony marking 10th anniversary of Croat sufferings on Kupres plateau in 1992

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The article says that during the ceremony, which was organized this time without the BiH state symbols, Ante Jelavic left delivering of speeches to Marko Tokic, HDZ Vice President, who called Mijo Anic, the Federation Minister of Defense, a traitor of the Croat people. Also, Tokic stood for the federalization of BiH and constituency of the Croat people in BiH and added: 'Territorial exclusivity has been secured for Serbs. In the Federation, they would like to turn us (Croats) to a nameless mass, which would be given the identity later on. Our sovereign right in BiH has to be made possible either through a consensus or through a territory. If the RS exists, then the Croat Republic will exist as well.' The same article carries that the units of the SFOR Canadian Battalion were observing the ceremony.

Republika Srpska

RS Tax Administration signed contract with tax debtors

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the RS Tax Administration signed the contract on extension of deadline for payment of 4,7 million KM of tax money with two enterprises owned by Slavko Roguljic, "Bomi frist" and "Sinekop". The third enterprise "Ambalazerka", owned by the same person as the aforementioned two companies, yesterday paid off the debt amounting to 500,000 KMs. The papers quote Head of the RS Tax Administration Execution Sector, Zeljko Orelj, as saying that, according to the contract, Roguljic has to pay off the entire debt in 24 equal installments. "If Roguljic fails to pay the first installment amounting to 194,000 KMs until May 5th, the Agreement will be annulled and forceful sequestration will be continued", said Orelj.

International Community

Reuters: Dutch politicians, army slammed in Srebrenica report

A long-awaited report on Wednesday into the Dutch role in Srebrenica, Europe's worst massacre since World War Two, slammed its army and politicians for giving peacekeepers a mission impossible. Dutch soldiers became unwitting collaborators in ethnic cleansing when Bosnian Serb forces overran a supposedly U.N.-protected eastern enclave in 1995 and murdered up to 8,000 Muslim men and boys, the official report said. The account, by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD), largely blamed Dutch political pride for sending the peacekeepers on the ill thought-out task that saw Muslims slain practically under the noses of Dutch U.N. troops. "Humanitarian motivation and political ambitions drove the Netherlands to undertake an ill-conceived and virtually impossible peace mission," said the almost 7,000-page report, which the government commissioned in 1996. It said once things had gone wrong, the army had played down how bad it was in order to preserve their troops' image. "We fell short, it was the opposite of a success. But you can also fail by doing nothing – take the current situation in the Middle East," said Prime Minister Wim Kok in reaction. The lightly armed troops on the ground were largely exonerated, as their weak mandate gave them little hope of fending off the Serbs, especially after the French U.N. commander in Bosnia refused to order air strikes they requested. NIOD said the battalion, known as Dutchbat, had been sent with an unclear mandate and inadequate training, resources or intelligence-gathering capacities "to keep the peace where there was no peace." ([Oslobodjenje](#) and Dnevni Avaz prominently report on the event. [Reuters article](#)) (For more information see the attachments or visit: <http://www.srebrenica.nl/en/index.htm>)

Reuters: Bosnian Serb camp suspect set free by Hague court

One of twin Bosnian Serb brothers charged with beating prisoners to death at a Serb-run camp during the Bosnian war will be released for lack of evidence, the Hague war crimes court said on Wednesday. Judges ordered the immediate release of Nenad Banovic, who was accused with his brother Predrag of crimes against humanity in Bosnia's notorious Keraterm detention camp in 1992, after granting a prosecution motion to drop charges against him. "We grant the motion to withdraw the indictment. We order his immediate release from the detention unit," presiding judge Richard May said after prosecutors said they had insufficient evidence to proceed to trial against one of the two brothers. The twins, arrested in Belgrade and handed over to the court in November, were accused of beating prisoners to death at Keraterm, one of three main Serb-run camps in northwestern Bosnia where thousands of Bosniak and Croat civilians were held and hundreds killed and tortured.

Tribunal moves Bosnian Croat to Spanish prison

A Bosnian Croat convicted by the U.N. crimes tribunal of atrocities against Bosniaks in a Bosnian village in 1993 has been transferred to a Spanish prison to serve his 12-year sentence, the tribunal said on Tuesday. Drago Josipovic was sentenced by the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia to 15 years in prison, later reduced to 12 years, for taking part in a massacre of 116 Bosniaks, including 33 women and children, in Ahmici in April 1993, according to Oslobodjenje and Reuters. Spain is one of seven European states that have agreed to imprison war criminals convicted by the tribunal. The others are France, Italy, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Austria.

Editorials

Oslobodjenje: In Focus – Resolution

The international authorities have at a key moment demonstrated, through the PIC Steering Board Ambassadors, unity and decisiveness in their stand that the amendments to the entities' constitutions must be fully in compliance with the Agreement on the Implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's Ruling on the Constituency of the Peoples, writes Zija Dizdarevic. "BiH is before making crucial political and constitutional decisions. The most important thing is that the international community remains resolute in its demand that the entities' constitutions are put under supremacy of the BiH Constitution in line with the constituency of the peoples, equality of the citizens and elimination of the discrimination," concludes Dizdarevic.

Nezavisne Novine: A shoulder to cry on

Written by Goran Mihajlovic (Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

History recorded that, just before the war broke out, the member of the then Presidency of SFRJ, Borisav Jovic, received Serb and Montenegrin diplomats in order to hear their problems and be informed about the difficulties they encounter in their work. At that meeting, he said a famous sentence, which, later on, many defined as one of the key reasons for the failure of politics Jovic represented: "We do not need you." Thousands of tragic examples proved that self sufficient politics and politics that needs no one, cannot score even one result that would not be doomed from the start. But, it seems to be even more tragic that politics of 'we do not need anyone apart from ourselves' is being repeated, in spite of numerous painful wounds that have not yet healed. It seems that these days, RS officials and leaders of political parties are competing by expressing accusations at the expense of their partners from the BiH Federation, with

regards to their views over the adoption of amendments on the RS Constitution. The media is full of statements which attack Federation political leaders who requested the revision of the adopted amendments. Also, a sort of a campaign that can be called 'an explanation of the essence of the amendments to the broad masses' is going on. Taking part in that, RS President Mirko Sarovic, spoke about the constitutional changes with special emphasis on the reactions from Federation political parties at the opening of an agricultural fair in Bijeljina, while on the other hand, the Speaker of the RS National Assembly Dragan Kalinic, amongst others, discussed constitutional matters with a delegation of the Prnjavor municipality. Having been lulled into the political bed of self-sufficiency and viewing things from the perspective best described as '*nobody can harm us, we are stronger than destiny ...*', they tend to conclude that it is both good and enough. But... What is happening 'on the other side of the pillow?' While Serb politicians are explaining the essence of the constitutional changes to farmers and Prnjavor officials, Zlatko Lagumdzija (who, by the way, is the main target of the 'poisonous arrows') combs through the same issue with Clifford Bond and Wolfgang Petritsch. Without going into the essence of the amendments to the RS Constitution or the contents of the Sarajevo Agreement, but at the same time accepting that the whole process of according constitutional changes caused 'collateral damage' in the form of a new national homogenization (perhaps stronger than ever), one has to ask which type of political struggle is better and more efficient. Whether to talk to 'broad masses', seek 'a shoulder to cry on' and weep over their sad destiny, or present one's views to those people who might be able to decide on the outcome of the whole situation? To meet with Petritsch *post festum*, when certain things have already been 'combed through' and when he and the Peace Implementation Council have already expressed their views on the amendments, would not be a politically advantageous move. From that aspect, Lagumdzija's strategy could be seen as responsible towards his own political program

and his voters and the moves of the RS leaders can be described as yet another attempt to 'sell the impossible'. Unless, of course, the 'collateral damage' is not someone's objective and ultimate and goal. If so, then 'at the end of the ballad', a few more 'shoulders to cry on' would be requested. Or, perhaps – united Serb political factors, with all the farmers, working people and citizens, members of the Assembly and Prnjavorans would sing together: *"Nobody can harm us, we are stronger than destiny."*

Dnevni List: A harsh word has killed us

Written by Ivica Glibusic (provided by OHR Mostar)

Daily Commentary deals with the recent visit of the High Representative paid to Stolac and Mostar. The editorial says that the HR's coming meant hope for some people because they expected new removals and condemnations of the Croat officials and the Croat behavior in the Neretva valley. The others were afraid because they thought that his visit means a new persecution for the Croats or a green light for artificial causing of new crises apart from the one, which has already emerged in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. The editorial says that it seems that the only reason for the HR's visit was a meeting with Bishop Ratko Peric or his representative, so that, in public, he can get satisfaction for his moves made with regard to the Croat people and the Catholic Church, however, none came. Glibusic says that the HR stated that he loves the Croats and he has nothing against them. Glibusic wonders whether this was repentance or new hypocrisy wrapped in a veil of a sincere love. The author of the commentary also says that they are glad because this time the HR did not come escorted by tanks and other armored vehicles and says that earlier visits of the HR and his associates were organized because of TV cameras so that the world can see that nevertheless something is being done in BiH. Glibusic says that the real face of the international organizations, which allowed massacres or illegal financial transactions, can be

seen now. Glibusic says that new constitutional changes have killed the last hope that the Croats will become equal with two other peoples. According to the present situation, the Agreement on constitutional changes might fail if the HR does not impose it. Glibusic concludes that all political games go in the direction of the idea to create one people with three different religions and wonders as to how someone can mix something that cannot be mixed according to any principle. He wonders whether the next HR will love the Croats as Petritsch loves them now, or his harsh word will kill the Croats.

Headlines

Oslobodjenje

- Liquidation of Hercegovacka Banka

Dnevni Avaz

- Crisis in the BiH Federation Government: Grabovac accuses Party for BiH

Jutarnje Novine

- The (BiH Federation) Government prepares monopoly on oil

Glas Srpski

- Petritsch met with representatives of 4 RS leading parties – BiH Federation in crisis; RS under attacks;
- RS Housing fund to approve loans for apartment purchase – 7% interest rate;

Nezavisne Novine

- Crisis culminating in the Behmen's government – The Government is falling apart at the political seams;
- Interview with Wolfgang Petritsch – April 18th is the final deadline for changes of entities' constitutions;

Dnevni List

- Interview: HVO general Zeljko Glasnovic: Why do I leave Army of Federation
- Interview with Deputy Minister of Federation BiH for social care, DP's & refugees: We are reconstructing 106 houses in Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje
- What stands behind newest scandal in Federation authorities: Grabovac or Hafizovic – questions without answers?

Vecernji List

- Conflict between Finance Minister and his Deputy causes Government crisis: Party for BiH crushes Alliance
- Jadranko Prlic, Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade: Foreign investors are not interested in BiH
- Report on slaughter in UN protected zone issued: Dutch admit guilt for Srebrenica