

BiH Media Round-up, 12/11/2001

[BiH State-related Issues](#)

- BiH Delegation takes part in the work of the UN General Assembly in New York
- State Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons: Allocation of land only with OHR permission
- Regional conference on missing people held in Sarajevo

[Federation](#)

- Hercegovacka Banka shareholders urge Provisional Administrator to pay full amount of savings to small depositors
- Vecernji List: Interview with Nikola Grabovac, Federation Finance minister: I will sue Petritsch's people because of the robbery of 17 million Marks in Hercegovacka Bank
- Provisional Administration: There were 1000 additional illegal transaction in Hercegovacka Banka
- HDZ call for unity among all Croat parties in the process of constitutional reform
- Reactions on initiative on gathering of Croat parties launched after visit of Croatian Parliament: Tomcic to drag Jelavic into Croat Democratic Block?
- HDZ asking for one channel of the Federation Television to be given to Croats
- Finally Yours Vecernji List: Popular Zagreb daily presents special issue for Bosnia

[RS war crimes proposed charges against Alija Izetbegovic](#)

- Studio 99: Interview with Alija Izetbegovic
- RS Parties React to "Indictment" Against Izetbegovic

[Republika Srpska](#)

- RS Vice-president: Political changes cannot take place overnight
- RS Prime Minister in Budapest: We need to avoid raising political issues which have caused the war
- RS Defense Minister Says He Does Not Know Where Karadzic and Mladic Are
- Nenad and Predrag Banovic Transferred to The Hague – FRY Interior Minister Applied the ICTY Statute, RS President Sees It as an Abduction
- Banja Luka Public Security Center Filed Criminal Charges Against General Manager of the RS Pension and Invalid Insurance Fund
- Amnesty International: The rising incidence of violent attacks against members of minority groups returning to the Republika Srpska

International Community

- Dnevni List: Interview with High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch
- Wolfgang Petritsch for *Reporter*: SDS will be held accountable
- US Ambassador to BiH: BiH is not a terrorist problem
- ICG: In the Balkans, terrorist threat of Islamists real only in BiH
- Jerker Torngren, CRA Director: Procrastinating with the selection of the third GSM operator is in no one's interest
- High Representative Develops Strategy for "Rules of the Road" Court Proceedings
- OHR is concerned about security of their building in Sarajevo: Gas station in OHR neighborhood has been closed

Editorials

- Glas Srpski: Izetbegovic and Goebelses
- Dnevni List: High Representative and Provisional Administrator telling lies about Hercegovacka Banka

BiH State-related Issues

BiH Delegation takes part in the work of the UN

General Assembly in New York

At an annual UN General Assembly Summit in New York, the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdžija, said that BiH has already demonstrated a firm commitment to the international anti-terrorist coalition. He stressed, however, that the military action, even if accompanied by a humanitarian aid, is not enough to secure a long-term settlement in Afghanistan. All media report that Lagumdžija proposed a combination of military action and a program of social-economic development, similar to one that BiH experienced in the 1992-95 war. BiH Foreign Minister also briefly talked to the UN Secretary General Koffi Annan mostly about the cooperation with the UN Mission to BiH, and BiH's participation in the work of the UN. Over the weekend, Lagumdžija also met with leaders of Iran, Slovenia, Croatia and other high officials.

Dnevni Avaz reports that the main focus of the platform of the BIH delegation which is currently in New York is the non-permanent rotating membership of the country in the UN Security Council. The chief of the BIH delegation in the UN, Mirza Kusljagic, told the daily that there have already been some positive developments in that direction, and added that, by 2010, BiH will have completed all requirements for the membership.

BiH Delegation to lobby for BiH membership in the World Trade Organisation

In a press release carried by nearly all media in the Federation, the BiH Ministry of Foreign trade and economic relations said that BiH delegation participating in the work of the Fourth WTO Conference in Doha will lobby for the membership of BiH in the World Trade Organisation. The Ministry said that the accession could be expected by the end of the year 2002, and urged the BiH Parliament to adopt the Law on Tariff within the next two months.

State Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons: Allocation of land only with OHR permission

The State Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons stressed on Friday that all decision pertaining to allocation of land for construction of homes for refugees and DPs will be considered null unless the OHR has given a permission for such allocation. Federation, Banja Luka and Croatian newspapers quote the Commission's president, Kresimir Zubak, as saying that the Commission will form an expert team which is to draft a proposal solution for all relevant cases and give recommendations to entity ministries as to how to handle them by December 10.

Regional conference on missing people held in Sarajevo

FENA news agency reported on Sunday, quoting the head of the Federation commission for missing persons, Amor Masovic, that the bodies of nearly 2,000 Bosnians have been exhumed from mass and individual graves across the country in the last six months. Addressing a regional conference on missing persons which was held in Sarajevo with experts from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia, Masovic said that "12,000 bodies have been exhumed in BiH since the Dayton agreement was signed in 1995 to stop the war in the country." The conference focused on finding missing persons after nearly a decade of Balkan conflicts was organised under the auspices of the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP).

According to ICMP estimates, between 25,000-30,000 people have been listed as missing in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war.

Federation

Hercegovacka Banka shareholders urge Provisional Administrator to pay full amount of savings to small depositors

Shareholders of the Hercegovacka Banka in Mostar have asked the bank's Provisional Administrator to pay the full amount of saving to small depositors, and ,at the same time, accused the High Representative to BiH, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the Provisional Administration of deceiving public by presenting false amounts of loans the shareholders apparently received from the Hercegovacka Banka, Hina news agency reported quoting a statement from the shareholders. "We are surprised to hear all these lies that Hercegovacka Banka shareholders have robbed the bank and its depositors," shareholders said, explaining that their shares far exceeded the amount of loans they received from the bank. They also stressed that the Provisional Administrator, Toby Robinson, ought to pay the entire amount of savings to small depositors. "There is no need to pay only up to 5,000 KM to small depositors. Even if the full amount of savings is paid immediately, about 27.000,000 KM would remain on the bank's account," the shareholders said in the statement. (Most Croatian and Herzegovina papers carry this and earlier statements of the Provisional Administration spokesman, Johan Verheyden)

Vecernji List: Interview with Nikola Grabovac, Federation Finance minister: I will sue Petritsch's people because of the robbery of 17 million Marks in Hercegovacka Bank

'I have completely distanced myself from the case of Hercegovacka Bank after everything that happened. First of all, I did not know that there would be a raid and I am very angry because the investigation was not completed within two or three months, at least because of the interests of the Federation since, by the coming of the Provisional

Administration, 17. 700, 000 Marks from our budget was blocked in Hercegovacka Bank. If they do not reveal serious criminal activities I will take efficient measures in order to get the money that pensioners and invalids should receive.

The High Representative has changed the Law on Banks, which used to make possible the payment of depositors only after the formal liquidation of the Bank. According to his decision, the payment of deposits amounting up to 5000 Marks was made possible. How do you judge this move of the HR?

I ordered the Banking Agency and the Agency for the Ensuring of Deposits to find out at whose expense these deposits are being paid and who can authorize someone to do it. I ordered experts to find out which is the effect and consequences of this law. What is going on? Is the Law being changed only because of a few depositors of Hercegovacka Bank and why this Law has not been changed in the case of SAB Bank depositors? Therefore, I cannot state my stand with regard to this issue until I get all these information.

What will actually happen with Hercegovacka Bank?

I do not know it yet. However, I am seriously thinking, and I am telling this in public for the first time, to institute legal proceedings against the OHR on behalf of the Ministry of Finances because of the seizure of 17. 700, 000 Marks.

(...) We have 37 banks in the Federation and we have Provisional Administrations in 6 of them. 4 Provisional Administrations were introduced in Bosniak banks, but the most difficult situation is in two banks under the Croat control. (...) First of all it is Posavina Bank. (...) However, so far, none has used this case of Posavina Bank as an attack against Croats – it is the attack against criminals, who caused this situation. (...) Since I was appointed the Minister we have not received a single Kuna of assistance from Croatia. Even before I was appointed the Minister I had demanded from Zlatko Tomcic to

stop sending the assistance to BiH. I have been living in Sarajevo for ten years and I know that nobody in Sarajevo received a single Kuna of the assistance from Croatia. None will feel the suspension of the assistance because the assistance was not arriving. However, if someone did receive it than it is time that Croatia says as to who was receiving it and which amounts of the money were sent.

You have caused a lot of displeasure in the Cantons, especially the ones with a Croat majority,. The leaders of these Cantons claim that you have completely disempowered and overcharged them?

It is a lie. The competence within the Federation has been divided clearly and precisely and it was done by the Federation Government 5 years ago and none legal regulation on this issue has been changed. (...) A single Mark that belongs to the Canton does not go to the Federation.

You have been an HDZ member. Why have you left the party?

It happened in Zagreb during the meeting with Tudjman, when I realized that Ivic Pasalic is the one who actually pulls the strings. It was during the meeting when all Croat structure in BiH were supposed to make a peace. I was writing the conclusions of this meeting together with Ivan Aralica and Ivic Pasalic. Later on, during the session in Orasje Pasalic read completely different conclusions and said: 'You were not present when we made the final version of the conclusions.'

Provisional Administration: There were 1000 additional illegal transaction in Hercegovacka Banka

Johan Verheyden, spokesman of the Provisional Administration in Hercegovacka Banka, spokesman told Slobodna Dalmacija on Saturday that about 1000 transactions in the bank were made illegally, and without the consent of PA Toby Robinson after April 6. Some employees filled in blank forms by hand and they

paid money directly. During these financial transactions they used money that they found in the branch offices of Hercegovacka Bank. Reacting against the denial of Ante Ljubic, Verheyden said that they have not made any agreement with Antonio Trade, according to which Antonio Trade is supposed to pay back a loan by January 2002. Answering to the question whether the High Representative wanted to reduce dissatisfaction by the Amendment of the Law on Banks, Verheyden stated that the Law does not refer to Hercegovacka Bank only but also to 5 or 6 other banks in BiH. "We did not do it to reduce dissatisfaction of the people but for practical reasons, said Verheyden to Split daily.

HDZ call for unity among all Croat parties in the process of constitutional reform

Fena news agency reported that the Croatian Democratic Union [HDZ] called on Saturday on all Croat political parties to harmonize common viewpoints on forthcoming constitutional reforms, and in line with the decision by the BiH Constitutional Court on the constituent statues of all three nations on the whole territory of Bosnia-Hercegovina. The HDZ issued this call after an initiative by the chairman of the Croatian National Union, Milenko Brkic, to create a wide Croat political bloc, of which current political enemies would also form a part, the strongest, the HDZ, as well as the New Croat Initiative [NHI] and the Croatian Peasants' Party [HSS], which participate in the BiH government. "The leadership of the HDZ BiH once again calls on all political parties with the prefix Croat to agree on all most important national issues, such as constitutional reform", it is said in the public statement issued on Saturday after the meeting of the Bosnia-Hercegovina HDZ.

Reactions on initiative on gathering of Croat parties launched after visit of Croatian

Parliament: Tomcic to drag Jelavic into Croat Democratic Block?

Slobodna Dalmacija reports that Professor Miljenko Brkic, President of the Croat People's Community, initiated the gathering of Croat political parties into a Croat political block. Speaking about reasons behind the initiative he says: "There are several motives, but all of them can be summed into one which is the benefit to the Croat and other peoples in BiH, and BiH as the state and homeland of the three equal and constituent peoples. I am confident that the times of single-party-representing-one-people are behind us and that will never be the case anymore. That is why a co-operation between Croat parties is needed. BiH is a state where a balance between civic and national has to be found. That is why I advocate for a dialogue, firstly among us, the Croats, and then with the Bosniaks and Serbs. Otherwise we will be responsible if certain decisions, which would not suit the Croat people, went through (...) We have to iron out our problems, co-operate among us and with the IC and take our destiny in our hands ", said Miljenko Brkic. **Ante Jelavic** speaks about the initiative: "I am informed about the initiative launched by professor Brkic. I think the initiative is the Alliance's product, the Alliance being an anti-Croat block, which has brought the Croats into position of becoming a national minority in the past 8 months. The HDZ will consider the initiative, and I can say that we are ready to talk about the formation of a political block that would in turn make Croats a political factor". **Marko Tadic** thinks that the initiative is not new or original. "It has been in circulation for some years and its results so far have been poor. I personally support it ", says Tadic. **Ilija Simic**, on the initiative: "I think that the initiative is very useful but for the truth's sake it must be said that it is not new. There have been similar initiatives before. None of them bore fruit but all of them were useful because we'd meet and talk. HSS and myself personally support it". **Stjepan Kljujic** about

the initiative: " (...) After the talks with the delegation of the Croatian Parliament in Sarajevo recently, we have come up with a conclusion that the ones who care about this state and are responsible to the Croats, do not want to lead us to margins, constitution wise. Such an option exists and there are reasons to substantiate it. The key issue is the implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on the constituent status of the peoples. The HR cannot just criticise the the RS officials, he must use his authorities, which are above the BiH legislation and order the implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision. In that case the RS would not be mono-ethnic as it is now, and the Federation would not be just the Bosniak and Croat entity and BiH would have to enact a law on national minorities. Some Constitutional Commissions in the Federation and RS are out of question, it is cynical to have representatives from the line of "others" as Presidents of these Constitutional Commissions. The Brkic's material is very good, but it has no perspective if it is not supported by other parties in the Alliance. If it's only supported by Croat MPs then the things in BiH will develop negatively", says Stjepan Kljucic, reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

HDZ asking for one channel of the Federation Television to be given to Croats

Onasa news agency and Oslobođenje report that the presidency of the HDZ BiH is asking for a division of the recently formed BiH Federation television (FTV), since "Croats are not able to produce and broadcast programs in Croatian language." "The HDZ believes that all constitutive peoples in BIH should be given the right to produce and broadcast programs in their own language, and that the only way to achieve that is to designate one of the two FTV channels for specifically this purpose, e.g. production in Croatian language" read a statement from the HDZ. It added that Serbs, as the constitutive peoples have realized their right to have the

Republika Srpska television, and Croats in BiH should be given the same right.”

Commenting on this, the Fed TV Council president, Slavo Kukic, demised the demand of the HDZ as a part of the party’s overall nationalist politics, and stressed that the program of the Federation Television is meant to satisfy all *citizens* of the Federation. “Only such program could ensure the reintegration of the BiH and the BiH society,” stressed Kukic.

Finally Yours Vecernji List: Popular Zagreb daily presents special issue for Bosnia

As of today, Monday, Vecernji List starts with its new edition for BiH. Ruzica Cigler, an Editor-in-Chief says that first 7 pages are dealing with BiH domestic political issues. There are also two pages on sport, one page with a black chronicle and one page with a TV program and the world of entertainment

RS war crimes proposed charges against Alija Izetbegovic

Studio 99: Interview with Alija Izetbegovic (Onasa summary)

Former member of the BiH Presidency and honorary president of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) Alija Izetbegovic once again dismissed the “indictment” brought against him and sent to The Hague UN Tribunal by the RS, adding that he trusts that Tribunal. RS Public Prosecutor Vojislav Dimitrijevic on Thursday presented the “ground suspicions against Izetbegovic,” adding that a team of prosecutors of the

District Public Prosecutor’s Office in Banja Luka, in cooperation with RS bodies, worked on collecting the evidence. He said that “Izetbegovic, as president of the BiH Presidency from May 1, 1992, until December 14, 1995, was organizer of

the BiH Army, which included paramilitary, voluntary units, and mercenaries over which he had effective authority.”

“Izetbegovic was responsible for systematical killing, torturing of civilians, as well as founding of about 400 camps in the Federation BiH, 80 of which in Sarajevo, systematic shelling and intimidation of civilians in the cities that were not in any zone of military operations, systematic destruction of religious facilities of the Serb Orthodox Church, and a treatment of war prisoners who were tortured and molested contrary to the 1949 Geneva Conventions,” Dimitrijevic said. The indictment, which allegedly weighs 50 kilograms, among other documents contains about 300 criminal charges, 350 statements of witnesses and 16 video cassettes.

In an interview with the Studio 99, which was broadcast on Saturday night, Izetbegovic said that those are “50 kilos of lies”, and denied the existence of camps. “Everyone here knows – Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks – that there were no such camps. I think that data alone compromises the entire (indictment) material”, said Izetbegovic. Commenting on the indictment, he said that the “Serb propaganda had several objectives”, and they seized the moment in which BiH has been referred to as a country harboring mujahedeen. “So, it is an old project of partitioning BiH and backing a theory that the war was a civil war, that it was a conflict between the Christianity and Islam, instead of the legitimate defense of the independent country. I think that this was the basic motive”, said Izetbegovic.

He added that the RS is the only part of the Balkans that does not cooperate with the UN Tribunal in The Hague. “Instead of cooperating with the Tribunal by arresting so many publicly named war criminals, murderers, they seem to think that they cooperate by naming me. They think the Hague Tribunal will construe it as an act of cooperation”, Izetbegovic said.

Asked if he had invited the mujahedeen to come to BiH,

Izetbegovic replied – "Of course not". "They were coming on their own, leaving on their own, some as aid workers, some as fighters, some as both. We did not need to invite them... They heard the religious facilities were being devastated here and a number of them came with the best of intentions, bar some of them. That is the problem. They came here to hide, not many of them, let's say 10% of them, but that was sufficient to compromise things", Izetbegovic said in a highly publicized interview with Studio 99 Television.

RS Parties React to "Indictment" Against Izetbegovic

Weekend edition of "Nezavisne novine" carries reactions of RS politicians to the RS Government's decision to provide the ICTY with comprehensive documentation, which incriminates former BiH President, Alija Izetbegovic. The paper quotes president of **Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Milorad Dodik**, as saying that Izetbegovic deserves to be one of ICTY cases. "I am convinced that Izetbegovic will end up in The Hague. Izetbegovic's responsibility for war crimes is beyond question, but only the ICTY can issue the indictment", says Dodik. He also adds that this move can also be seen as an RS Government's attempt to score few political points.

Member of the SDS Executive Board, Mirko Banjac says that Alija Izetbegovic is responsible for many things that happened during the recent war and that he should be held accountable before the ICTY, and that it is up to the ICTY to decide whether it is going to issue indictment against Izetbegovic or not.

SDA deputy in the RS National Assembly, Adil Osmanovic says that the RS Government should start dealing with economic problems instead of dealing with Izetbegovic. "This is just a political maneuver that the RS Government is making in order to distract the attention of people in the RS from the difficult situation the RS is in. "If the RS Government is

accusing Izetbegovic then what is going on with other Serbs, indicted for war crimes such as Karadzic and Mladic?”, says Osmanovic.

Member of the **Democratic National Alliance Executive Board, Drago Kalabic** says that the RS Government is dealing with Izetbegovic instead of dealing with economic problems. Kalabic says that the indictment against Izetbegovic is a part of the work of judiciary and there is nothing wrong in forwarding it to the ICTY. “I am afraid that Ivanic is trying to distract the attention of the people from burning issues. I see Izetbegovic as an individual in the sea of other people who should be brought to justice. However, attaching such a big importance to the Izetbegovic case shows that the RS Government finds more important to send Izetbegovic to The Hague rather than start dealing with economy”, says Kalabic.

PDP Spokesman, Igor Crnadak commended the move of the RS Government and said he hoped that the documentation, sent by the RS Government, would be sufficient for the ICTY to make a case against Izetbegovic. “Izetbegovic held one of the top positions during the war. He was familiar with many crimes that were committed but did nothing to prevent them”, says Crnadak.

SPRS (Socialist Party of the RS) and DSP (Democratic Socialist Party) top officials, Miroslav Mikes and Slobodan Gavranovic commended the move of the RS Government and said they hoped that the documentation, sent by the RS Government, would be enough for the ICTY to make a case against Izetbegovic.

Dzevad Osmanovic, SBiH (Party for BiH) deputy in the RS National Assembly is asking the RS Government if the evidence against Izetbegovic are valid or not and accused the RS Government of being selective in dealing with war crime issues.

Commenting on the indictment against Izetbegovic, **SDP BiH**

deputy in the RS National Assembly, Zekerijah Osmic says that this is a usual procedure given that judiciary has the right and the obligation to inform the ICTY about war crime related cases. "Ivanic's cooperation with the ICTY is not sincere. RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic keeps throwing dust into people's eyes. He has the obligation to extradite Karadzic and Mladic to the ICTY but nothing is going on in that regard", says Osmic.

Republika Srpska

RS Vice-president: Political changes cannot take place overnight

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic enjoys support of the president's cabinet, RS Vice-President Dragan Cavic has said, adding that in comparison with the previous government, the current authorities must rely on their own sources when preparing a legal framework for a self-sustainable economy. In an interview with SRNA, Cavic said that "one cannot ignore the reformist nature of the numerous already adopted laws". "I am neither a pessimist nor an optimist, I am a realist and under circumstances such as these today one must not be disillusioned with the possibility of a magic stick or other political structures in the RS which could change everything overnight and bring about new political structures which would adopt dramatic changes, because, realistically speaking, this is not possible," Cavic said.

Cavic describes the law on identity cards in BiH as a "compromise which could have been reached in a better way", emphasizing that the compromise was accepted by "the deputies of the PDP [Party of Democratic Progress], the SPRS [Socialist Party of the Serb Republic], the SNSD [Party of Independent Social Democrats] and the DSP [Democratic Socialist Party], which support the Alliance for Change, and who jointly have

five deputies". "They accepted that the entity's name could be included on the identity card at one's personal request . However, the text of the law stipulates that when such a request is made, the official issuing the identity card is responsible of warning the person making the request that this could cause him trouble when crossing the border, which is farcical, since the identity card is not an international document, but an internal document of Bosnia-Hercegovina," Cavic said.

RS Prime Minister in Budapest: We need to avoid raising political issues which have caused the war

At a regional meeting of the European three lateral commission in Budapest, RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic said that the situation in BiH is not as bad as some would want to present it. "What we need now is to focus our attention on the economy and not to, over and over again, raise political questions which caused the war. SRNA reports that two themes dominated the gathering: the future of the Balkans, in particular BiH six years after the Dayton and the global situation following the September 11 attacks on the United States and the fight against terrorism.

RS Defense Minister Says He Does Not Know Where Karadzic and Mladic Are

Weekend edition of "Nezavisne novine" carries a short interview with RS Defense Minister, Slobodan Bilic in which he said that the RS Army does not protect former president of the RS, Radovan Karadzic and RS Army Chief of Staff, General Ratko Mladic. "We have no information on their whereabouts, nor we have any contacts with them. I really do not know anything about it and if the ICTY has the information on Karadzic's and Mladic's whereabouts it would be very good if the ICTY could give precise information about it. I talked about this problem on several occasions and I still do claim that the RS Army does not know where they are", says Bilic.

Nenad and Predrag Banovic Transferred to The Hague – FRY Interior Minister Applied the ICTY Statute, RS President Sees It as an Abduction

Weekend editions of both Banja Luka dailies report that twin brothers, Predrag and Nenad Banovic were arrested in Belgrade and transferred to The Hague on Thursday night. The Banovic brothers, who were guards at the Keraterm detention camp during the war, are charged with crimes against humanity, violations of the Geneva Convention and the laws and customs of war. Both papers quote **RS President, Mirko Sarovic**, as saying that the Banovic brothers were abducted according to scenario so typical for the FRY. “I hope that adoption of the Law on cooperation with the ICTY will bring overall relations to human and legal procedures”, said Sarovic.

The RS Government Bureau for cooperation with the ICTY requested the Serbian Interior Ministry to release information as to who ordered the arrest of the brothers. Commenting on the arrest of the Banovic brothers, Serbian Interior Minister, Zoran Zivkovic said that Serbia has the obligation to cooperate with the ICTY. “There is a dilemma concerning our citizens but there is not dilemma to non-FRY citizens such as Banovics. Since there is no decree or a law on cooperation with the ICTY at the federal level, then we have to apply the ICTY Statute”, said Zivkovic.

Banja Luka Public Security Center Filed Criminal Charges Against General Manager of the RS Pension and Invalid Insurance Fund

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the Banja Luka Public Security Center filed criminal charges to the Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office in Banja Luka against general manager of the RS Pension and Invalid Insurance Fund, Ostoja Kremenovic. Kremenovic is charged with misuse of position and embezzlement of 94,947 KM while being RS Minister of Local Administration and Self-governance.

Amnesty International: The rising incidence of violent attacks against members of minority groups returning to the Republika Srpska

In a statement for the press, the Amnesty International noted that there has been an increase in violent attacks against members of minority groups returning to Republika Srpska. "These attacks – most of which are believed to have been deliberately organized – undermine the entire return process," the AI said. "They do not only violate individuals' right to return in safety and with dignity, but also reinforce fears amongst a vulnerable returnee community already traumatized by years of war. Oslobođenje carried the AI press release. See the full text of the [statement](#).

International Community

Dnevni List: Interview with High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch

In an interview with Dnevni List, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, talks about the confrontation with the HDZ politics in BiH, the future of the country and the status of the Croat people living in BiH, Hercegovacka Banka and the launching of the Federation Television.

Wolfgang Petritsch for Reporter: SDS will be held accountable

In an article written exclusively for Banja Luka Reporter, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, comments on his last week's visit to Banja Luka, the behavior of the SDS and the general situation in the RS and warns the entity leadership that this is their last chance to undertake some necessary reforms in the field of economy, human rights and return. "My visit to Banja Luka was a warning shot...The ball is now in the court of the RS leaders and particularly the SDS," stressed

Petritsch in an [article](#), which was quoted on Monday in all news programs of the BiH Radio One.

US Ambassador to BiH: BiH is not a terrorist problem

In an interview with ONASA (which was also carried by Dnevni Avaz, Nezavisne Novine and Oslobodjenje), US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, said that BiH is not a terrorist problem, although he conceded that there are some individuals who present threat to security of BiH citizens. "Following you media here, I see that some of individuals (who could be connected with terrorist organisations) are indeed in BiH. It is individuals who are a threat and I don't want to incorrectly present BiH as a part of that threat.

Commenting on the attitude of the US government towards the SDS (Serb Democratic Party), Bond, once again, stressed that he will not have any contacts with representatives of this party. "I tried to be clear as possible: As long as we do not see the SDS which is reformed and which works constructively to help the creation of sustainable BiH, I will not be in a position to meet its representatives," said Bond.

ICG: In the Balkans, terrorist threat of Islamists real only in BiH

Sarajevo media carry excerpts from the most recent ICG (International Crisis Group) report on the links between terrorist groups and the Balkans. After evaluating the presence of Islamic extremism in the Balkans, ICG offers a list of recommendations to the International Community, most notably, to closely monitor the security situation and activities of Islamic organisations in BiH and Kosovo. For the full report, see [pdf file](#).

Jerker Torngren, CRA Director: Procrastinating

with the selection of the third GSM operator is in no one's interest

In a shorter interview with Oslobodjenje, the director of the CRA (Communication Regulatory Agency), Jerker Torngren, said that his dispute with the BiH Council of Ministers and its chairman, Zlatko Lagumdžija, is a matter of the past and added that he now has regular contacts with the Council on all issues concerning telecommunications. Commenting on the process of the selection of the third GSM operator in BiH, Torngren said that the procrastination in the selection is in the interest of no one. He added that the problematic issue is the ownership structure of the Eronet, which has not been determined yet. Torngren refused to comment on the possible price of the operator's license, stressing that the Eronet issue first needs to be resolved.

High Representative Develops Strategy for "Rules of the Road" Court Proceedings

Weekend editions of both Banja Luka dailies carried the entire [press release](#) issued by the OHR.

OHR is concerned about security of their building in Sarajevo: Gas station in OHR neighborhood has been closed

Vecernji List reports that according to an unofficial information immediately after the terrorist attack against the USA, the OHR Sarajevo demanded from Energopetrol to close a gas station, located near their premises in Sarajevo because it could be used as a good target for possible terrorist actions. This information has not been confirmed since it was weekend and the OHR and Energopetrol were not working. According to the information that Vecernji List has at its disposal, this request was not motivated by any particular threat but it is exclusively a safety measure.

Editorials

Glas Srpski: Izetbegovic and Goebelses

By Branko Peric

The very fact that powerful and arrogant military strategists did not abide by military art and rules is also the fault of their civilian commanders. And Izetbegovic is one of them, just like Milosevic and Karadzic no matter how inappropriate this comparison may seem to somebody. By responding with the same technology of warfare Izetbegovic set up a retaliation strategy and started down the path of balancing the crimes. That is how he joined ranks with criminals. That is why he belongs with Milosevic. Or with Tudjman.

Dnevni List: High Representative and Provisional Administrator telling lies about Hercegovacka Banka

By Antonela Pehar

In an editorial, Pehar notes that that the High Representative, Provisional Administrator in Hercegovacka Banka, Toby Robinson, and her Spokesperson are telling stories about a big plundering of the bank, without presenting a single piece of evidence to substantiate these statements. Companies, that Vehayden named during the press conference, denied his statements using arguments and documents. She concludes that it was much easier to destroy the bank than to find 56 million Marks or to prove that privileged are those who were granted with the loans with interest rates of 12 and 15 %.