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BiH State-related Issue

General Secretary of the BiH Presidency not aware of any ICTY request

General Secretary of the BiH Presidency Anto Grbic on Monday could neither confirm nor deny an information published in the Split daily Slobodna Dalmacija that the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) had asked the Presidency for minutes and transcripts of the Presidency sessions held from 1990 to 1993. In a statement to ONASA, Grbic said he could neither confirm nor deny the information since he "has not seen any official ICTY request," although he had heard rumors about it in the halls of the Presidency building.

Belkic visits Stolac

BiH Presidency member Beriz Belkic during his Monday visit to Stolac met with Mayor Zdravko Kuzman and Municipal Council Chairman Kemal Isakovic to discus processes of the return and repossession of property, according to a press release from Belkic's office. ONASA reported that the officials at the meeting had stressed that 50% of the total of 928 claims for the repossession of property were solved at the administrative level, as 35% of them were fully implemented.

RTV BiH waits for Skenderagic s official appeal

The Editorial Staff of the RTV BiH news program does not

intend to neither apologize nor deny allegations from the August 6 commentary of journalist Amarildo Gutic until SDP BiH Presidency member Nijaz Skenderagic officially submits his appeal. After Skenderagic lodged a complaint to the Communication Regulatory Agency (CRA) claiming that Gutic had deliberately manipulated with information to make damage to him and the SDP, the Agency recommended the SDP official to directly address the media house s editors. RTV BiH news program Editor-in-Chief Marija Topic-Crnoja told Oslobodjenje that the CRA recommendation did not represent any obligation of the RTV BiH, since it had been delivered directly t Skenderagic.

Federation

HDZ announces addresses of Jelavic and Tokic

The BiH Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) on Monday announced the addresses of the dismissed president and vice-president of the party, Ante Jelavic and Marko Tokic. “Following reports in media that the summons for hearing before the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo have not been delivered because the addresses of Jelavic and Tokic were unknown, we would like to publicly inform the Court about the addresses,” the HDZ said in a press release on Monday. According to ONASA, it added that the addresses were already known to everyone, just like the addresses of the Mostar-based headquarters of HDZ and the Croat National Assembly (HNS), so that “there was no real reason not to send the summons.”

Vecernji List: BiH Federation RTV to start working this autumn

Written by Zoran Kresic (provided by OHR Mostar)

A great number of Croats in BiH have recently received overdue slips preceding the legal action for defaulting the subscription fee for the phantom-like Federation RTV, reads

Vecernji List.

Kresic says that the service they want to charge was never provided and that this television does exist on paper but has not become operational.

“Slavko Kukic, the Chairman of the FTV Steering Board, lays the blame on who else but the HDZ BiH. He claims the HDZ is threatening Croat journalists against working for the Federation TV. At the same time, this promoter of Croats rights, who receives salaries as a member of 14 various boards, claims the Federation TV will not start working unless his Western Herzegovina is provided with the TV signal. (&)

The major part of Herzegovina inhabited by Croats is not covered with the TV and radio signal from Sarajevo, as was also the case in the communist Yugoslavia, and residents of Siroki Brijeg, Ljubuski and Citluk were taken care of by the Zagreb-based television. There are no more announcements of terminating the HRT broadcasting in BiH. Commencement of the FTV and PBS broadcasting primarily depends on the restructuring of the existing RTV BiH and employment of Croats. According to some estimates, 300 to 400 of the Bosniak employees are supposed to be dismissed and Croats are too few to contribute to an equitable representation of the two peoples. There are different sorts of obstacles, from the mental ones in Croat journalists, through the lack of readiness to dismiss the current Bosniak employees, but there is also the High Representative s Second Decision on the media restructuring, which does not provide assurances for a secure position of the Croatian language in the program. Despite the fact that it is established that programs must be “complementary and mixed,” it is not defined that the Croatian language, for instance, must be represented by 1% in those programs. In fact, the Croatian language is no longer a prerequisite, which could also apply for Croats,” concludes the article.

Republika Srpska

Zukic says construction of houses in Kotorsko continues even after OHR s request

The BiH Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons protested the continuation of the construction of houses on the Bosniak land in Kotorsko, even after OHR had requested that all construction works in the village are stopped. The president of the Association, Mirhunisa Zukic, said on Monday, after she had toured the places of the return in the past days, that the construction of houses intended for Serbs who did not want to return to the Federation had obviously continued.

Another rally of support to Karadzic held in Montenegro

Another rally of support to the most wanted war-crime suspect Radovan Karadzic was held late on Sunday in the Montenegrin coastal town of Herceg Novi. The rally followed three similar gatherings organized by an association dubbed “Matica Brda” in the Montenegrin towns of Zabljak, Berane and Pljevlja. According to a speaker at the rally, Karadzic has been spending his summer holidays in a hotel on the Montengrin coast. All three Sarajevo and both Banja Luka dailies reported on the rally.

Nezavisne Novine: a brief interview with Sulejman Tihic, the SDA Vice-president

Nezavisne Novine conducted a short interview with Sulejman Tihic, the SDA Vice-president (title: There are no Bosniaks in the RS for the Prime Minister Ivanic). Tihic comments an alleged re-activation of the “Tajfun” (Typhoon) secret organization, implementation of the election results in Srebrenica and work of Ivanic’s Government.

How do you comment on a recent statement of Milorad Dodik that “Tajfun” is again active in the RS?

Given that such a statement was made by former Republika Srpska Prime Minister and president of a very influential party in the entity, I think the issue should be considered and the truth established. If this is confirmed, firstly, an action should be taken against those who stand behind such organization. Secondly, a question should be raised about those who tolerated the existence of the "Tajfun." I have a few information about this and cannot comment if it is true or not but competent institutions should consider the statement of the former RS Prime Minister.

What are you main remarks to Ivanic's Government?

From our perspective of representing Bosniaks interests, RS continues with a policy carried out by all post-Dayton entity governments. This means that it does nothing concerning the return of refugees and displaced persons, that it prefers nationalistic approach in terms of representation of other peoples in the authorities and governmental organizations. The current Government also continues a policy of land allocation only to Serbs. What concerns Bosniaks and the Dayton Agreement s Annex 7 implementation, nothing has changed.

RS Directorate for Privatization states Brcko Revena Hotel not privatized

Glas Srpski carries a press release of the Republika Srpska Directorate for Privatization denying a statement of Brcko District Supervisor Henry Clarke that it undertook action to privatize the Brcko Revena Hotel, which belongs to the "Brcko" state enterprise. The Directorate explained that it was not in accordance with the RS laws and regulations to privatize a separate part of property, but a state capital in the mentioned company. According to the newspaper, the OHR earlier informed the Directorate that 15 companies in Brcko, including the mentioned "Brcko" state enterprise, would as strategic companies be privatized under a special Brcko District Law.

Privatization of socially-owned apartments in the Republika Srpska

Glas Srpski writes that the privatization of around 70 000 socially-owned apartments in the Republika Srpska will start in mid-September at the latest. Assistant RS Urban Planning Minister Miladin Gacanovic said that the instructions for the application of the Law were harmonized, as well as seven kinds of forms, which are to be submitted for privatization. Gacanovic expects that printing of these forms will be finished by the end of August, when the Ministry plans to start distributing them, according to Glas Srpski.

A bank robbed in Modrica

Glas Srpski reports on a robbery of affiliate office of the Banjalucka Banka in Modrica, which took place yesterday in the afternoon. Nobody was hurt in the robbery, in which an unknown robber took away 31 000 KM. According to eyewitnesses, the robber drove off in a white golf in direction of the town s railway station. The investigation into the case is underway, the daily reports.

International Community

Beecroft says it is not profitable to compare work of the three High Representatives

In an interview with Oslobodjenje, OSCE Head of the Mission to BiH Robert Beecroft said that he did not think it was politically profitable to compare work of the three High Representatives engaged so far in BiH. He added that he just regret the High Representative was still in a position to use his powers. Commenting on the need for adoption of the election law, Beecroft said that what was happening now looked like the usage of a technical law in a political game. This is, according to Beecroft, unacceptable and all political

parties will have to agree on the issue.

Robinson says audit of Hercegovacka Banka could be completed in a few weeks

The Hercegovacka Banka Provisional Administrator, Toby Robinson, told the magazine Banks in BiH that the investigation into financial operations of the Bank could be completed in a few weeks. Robinson added that the evidences existed on certain criminal activities in the Bank, but she did not want to specify names until the evidences on these illegal financial transactions are fully collected.

***Vjesnik:* Boris Divjak says political parties control illegal financial transactions in BiH**

Vjesnik quotes Boris Divjak, the Director of the Transparency International, as saying in an interview for Dnevni Avaz that a "Study of the Transparency of Work of the International Community in BiH" will be published by the end of the month. Divjak added that the contents of the study will be "quite bombastic and many will not be pleased to see it published." (see the full interview)

***Vecernji List:* Initiative by three foreign policy experts in the Bundestag for formation of southeast European union**

Written by Jozo Pavkovic (partial translation provided by OHR Mostar)

(&) While one of the final acts of Yugoslavia s death is ongoing in the south (**NB**: referring to the war in Macedonia), the north is raising various initiatives of its establishment. (&)

Three foreign policy experts, CDU delegates in the German Parliament, have recently published a proposal of establishing a European Union for Southeastern Europe. It would include Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Greece, alongside the

countries of the former Yugoslavia. The Union would at first be functioning as a free-trade zone for the sake of a common market. The point of the initiative has been left unsaid, and that is – integration of the former Yugoslav Republics into one state. The multinational BiH would be the linking element.

It is not just politicians that are interested in those proposals. The policy of the ICTY, accidentally or not, coincides with those ideas. Most of the people they bring to their cells belonged to the political and army leaderships of the former Yugoslavia that worked for a division. Objective responsibility has opened wide possibilities for balancing of the guilt and eliminating of all those who either fought for independence of their respective states or had territorial claims against their neighbors. This is why the ICTY will, in the future, act by political, army or intelligence ranking more than it will by the gravity of crimes committed. Of course, this is not aimed at amnestying the politicians and many of the Hague prisoners of the crimes they committed. On the contrary! It is just a warning that the authors of the revival of the East still have many allies and that both the North and the West still support them (non)deliberately, reads Vecernji List in conclusion.

Editorials

Oslobodjenje editorials

In the Oslobodjenje In Focus column, Mirko Sagolj wrote about different views inside the BiH federation Defense Ministry about the recent apprehension of three Bosniak wartime commanders indicted for war crimes by the Hague Tribunal. Oslobodjenje acting Editor-in-Chief Senka Kurtovic presented her “personal stand” about the recent statement of OHR Spokesperson Alexandra Stiglmayer, in which she described in an insulting tone, as Kurtovic said, domestic politicians as the “Balkan ones.”

Nezavisne Novine: BiH before social unrest

Nezavisne Novine publishes an editorial written by Samir Kahrovic. Kahrovic predicts that the warnings on possible social unrest in the country made by BiH trade union s leaders, which were addressed to the Governments at all levels, could soon become truth. The current governments should take these warnings more seriously, thinks Kahrovic. In the upcoming weeks, we shall probably enter a final phase to be marked by concrete actions of the both sides.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Human trafficking paralyses BiH

Written by Stjepan Kljujic (partial translation provided by OHR Mostar)

Daily information about termination of drug and human trafficking chains is a BiH reality. It was established even earlier that a great number of foreign citizens, especially those from some Arabic countries, were given BiH passports. Many of them were suspected of terrorism and individuals were even on the international wanted lists. Of course, the names of the persons connected with the terrorist organization of Osama Bin Laden caused the greatest attention. (&)

Control of borderlines and foreigners residence is the primary task of the current authorities and the major challenge for the governments of both entities. Unless they find swift solutions for closing and controlling of the borders and the residence of foreigners in BiH, the citizens of this country could experience a total isolation. In that respect, co-operation with the Republic of Croatia is necessary since its tourist prospects could be affected by emigrants from the Near East. (&)

Slobodna Dalmacija: Petritsch is having a hard time

Written by Marijan Puntaric (provided by OHR Mostar)

It is not easy for the High Representative indeed. Quite unexpectedly, this political summer has become unpleasant and serious for him. His untouchable protectorate in BiH, his absolute powers and a visible arbitrariness have been brought into question by many different sides. For this reason by taking big steps Petritsch is trying to get out of a few corruption and financial-political scandals because of which he came into a conflict with the public, media, politicians of the ruling Alliance, IC officials, BiH Council of Ministers, Catholic Church, Human Rights Organizations.

Stunned by the fact that he is not politically untouchable anymore, although he himself is out and above all BiH laws, after he was exposed to the pressure of the public and after the Council of Ministers and Zlatko Lagumdzija resolutely refused obedience, a few days ago Petritsch had to order the annulment of the international tender for the sale of the third GSM operator to the Austrian Mobilcom& It is becoming increasingly obvious that the same will happen with the CIPS project, in which the Austrian Siemens was privileged. However, although the statements of the American Congressman Hyde, Cardinal Vinko Puljic and Bishop Ratko Peric disturbed the HR, he still has not decided to make moves which will clam down a deep political crisis and reduce tensions.

Arrogant response

Due to the fact that the Office of the High Representative openly supported accelerating of investigative activities, filing of criminal charges and issuing of bills of indictment against Ante Jelavic and other seven Croat officials, who are charged with pulling down of the constitutional organization and endangering of the national security, the gap toward Croats in BiH is deepening. Despite clear criticism of the use of force and tanks arguments that Petritsch is receiving from international circles, by a persistent avoiding to publish the audit results, and by the last moves of the Petritsch s Administration the agony of Hercegovacka Bank and 90 000 of

its depositors continues.

For this reason we are not surprised but disappointed by arrogance, uncriticallity and ignorance by which the OHR, deluding the public by giving incorrect statements, criticized our article titled Congressman Hyde and scandals are toppling Petritsch , published in Slobodna Dalmacija on August 03, 2001, and in which facts and events important for the political scene of the neighboring BiH are being mentioned.

In the text titled Arbitrary conspiracy theory signed by the Spokesperson of the OHR Mostar, the journalist of Slobodna Dalmacija was objected that that he does not know the way that the world diplomacy is functioning. Namely, the Spokesperson stressed that disturbed by the events in the American Congress, Petritsch could not possibly flew urgently for Washington and he could not demand to be received by Congressman Hyde because according to the world diplomacy rules, such meetings are being arranged months in advance. However, the Spokesperson claimed, that during his stay in New York, opposite to these diplomatic rules he could obviously demand suddenly, ad hoc meeting with Congressman Hyde.

It is clear to all of us that Congressman Hyde refused to receive him and that his busy schedule is only a polite and diplomatic excuse for a deep disagreement with the politics of Petritsch s protectorate. It seems to us that judgments that respectable and influential Henry Hyde stated in the American Congress are much more important than this crucial dilemma . According to Hyde, a just peace in BiH is more far then ever, imposing of solutions and bringing to power of the people, who are not wanted, does not have the support of the inhabitants of the region and poor results are a consequence of dangerous, exaggerated and unlimited powers of the HR.

Due to this the OHR is getting increasingly nervous. For this reason the report of the British Helsinki Human Rights Group (BHHRG) published in June is unacceptable and tendentious for

Petritsch. It openly talks about real ranges of illegalities of the UN regime in BiH. The BHHRG stressed that perhaps apart from the Belgium King Leopold in Congo, powers vested into the UN HR (an error made by the author) are much more illegal than those that colonial officials from the 19th century used to have . They reminded that the BiH sovereignty is completely fictitious and that the HR, who is out of BiH Law, is passing all important decisions.

Appalling destruction

In his letter to Bishop Peric, Daniel Simpson, an American, who was the second man in the OSCE until recently, stated very unpleasant judgments. He believes that the SFOR use of force during the raid into Hercegovacka Bank is an appalling destruction of the IC, an echo of a new international colonialism and he believes that the decision of the HR is irresponsible. Simpson writes that the IC had shown itself ready to use violence to achieve its objectives . He warns that there are different standards for different sides in BiH. During the organized violence in Trebinje and Banja Luka the SFOR did not intervene. Thus, there is not a word about that wide front of the resistance against the arbitrariness of Petritsch s protectorate in the OHR press release. It is about an ungrounded media harangue by a Sarajevo magazine (Slobodna Bosna) whose writings about scandals that Wolfgang Petritsch was involved into Slobodna Dalmacija carried without any checking . Also this claim is not correct.

Why would the Council of Ministers raise dust, demand the annulment of a scandalous tender for the third GSM operator, warn about a disgracefully low price and making of a privilege to the Austrian Mobilcom, and why would they directly oppose the HR and call the whole affair the greatest robbery of the BiH resources, if the OHR is completely irrelevant in the whole story. Why in its reaction to Slobodna Dalmacija the OHR has not shown with a single word that Jerker Torngren, the

Head of the CRA, who has an absolute Petritsch s support, had to annul the tender, that the Croatian Telecom also applied to. In front of foreign diplomats in Sarajevo Torngren admitted: I was wrong. I cooperated with wrong people! Perhaps the OHR Spokesperson knows whom he had on mind.

It is not correct that the OHR and Wolfgang Petritsch only assisted a competent state Ministry in the CIPS project. The OHR at no moment offered a single important information with regard to the price of Siemens arrangement, which was supposed to be covered by the money from the BiH budget and which overnight jumped from 32 million Marks to 60 million Marks, to any of BiH institutions. Why is the OHR role in the tender for the CIPS project being justified with the fact that the Law on Public Purchase does not exist, when the diligent OHR apart from 38 Laws, that it has passed in the period from November 2000 to March 2001, could not pass this Law, by which financial machinations would be prevented? How come that the OHR believes that the tender that only one Company, that is Siemens from Munich, applied to, is regular?

Not a word about scandals

It is correct that the Austrian Siemens did not apply to the tender, however in the final selection of the Company Mr. Petritsch had a final word. Perhaps it would be important that the OHR Spokesperson answers as to who Mr. Vesely, the Assistant of the Siemens General Manager is and in what kind of relations he is with W. Petritsch? It is correct that Munich is in Germany and not in Austria, as the OHR Spokesperson expertly claimed. However, it is equally correct that citizens, politicians and journalists in BiH decided not to live on Mars any longer as the OHR wants them to do. In its reaction to the article in Slobodna Dalmacija the OHR Spokesperson does not refer to the scandal with the third GSM operator, the arranged sale of Hrvatska Postanska Bank, pulling down of Hercegovacka Bank, and a role of Raiffeisen Bank and the OHR in these processes.

However, not even in four months since the raid of Hercegovacka Banka has the OHR made public the audit conducted by a US expert auditing team that was supposed to corroborate Petritsch s claims of the existence of a secret account containing 54 million DEM. There is still no evidence of the laundering of the money from drugs, tobacco and oil which was allegedly ongoing in the Bank, or of the disappearance of 25 million Dollars intended for the war veterans and victims, or the disappearance of 10 million Dollars in cash, or finally of the alleged illegal transfer of huge amounts of money to England, Switzerland, Italy and Boston.

Instead of that, the OHR informed the journalists a few days ago that the long awaited audit was yet to be worked on. Observers in Sarajevo and Mostar find it clear that the OHR is "buying time," that the collected evidence is very poor and that Petritsch had a hard time defending the operation "Athena," as it was named by The Washington Post in June, before the State Department officials during his last stay in the USA. According to The Washington Post, the US Government allocated 1 million Dollars for Petritsch s raid into Hercegovacka Banka. Still, instead of presenting detailed reports of crime and Hercegovacka Banka s connection with organized crime, a few days ago Petritsch admitted to a BiH senior official that a computer used for forging US driver s licenses had been found during the "Athena" operation. Knowing the business and financial skills of Herzegovinians, I think many hoped that SFOR would be more likely to find a computer for forging US Dollars rather than US driver s licenses. However, the OHR obviously does not want to get Hercegovacka Banka back into the legal banking system so that its destiny could be decided by the Banking Agency.

Controlling Herzegovina

A few days ago, Petritsch appointed the imposed administrator of Hercegovacka Banka, Mary Robinson (**NB**: Mary instead of Toby Robinson, error by the author) as the Chair of the Steering

Board of Croherc , the company dealing with trade of oil and oil derivatives that is in absolute ownership of Hercegovacka Banka. Financial experts see this decision as a way to a blockage and a seizure of Croherc , and next of the investment fund Crobih , 80% of which is owned by Hercegovacka Banka, and then Hercegovina Osiguranje , which is the owner of the other major investment fund Herbos BiH which disposes with 700 million DEM worth of public company certificates.

Besides, Hercegovina Osiguranje , the major share of which is owned by Hercegovacka Banka, controls 35% of the Eronet . Finding a strategic partner for Hercegovacka Banka would provide for an absolute control of the strongest bank, banking market, financial and privatization trends in Herzegovina and a part of Bosnia, ownership shares in the state companies and majority packages in the insurance and telecommunication companies. With such an operation, the OHR would establish a financial control of the politically shaky Herzegovina and the part of BiH administrated by Croats.

This suffices for opening of another financial and political scandal. Although nowhere in the article of August 3 did we claim that the OHR and W. Petritsch were standing behind the Sarajevo Cantonal Court indictment against Ante Jelavic and the others, the Spokesperson instructs us that the OHR expects a fair trial and that the court and judiciary are independent. Instead of expressing our suspicion about the independence of the judiciary in the country where the High Representative introduced a protectorate, we will only quote the first sentence of a report made by the British Helsinki Human Rights Group. “In the state where citizens have no right to file an appeal with the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg& , the High Representative literally has the role of policeman, judge, juror and executive. He is in command of the police and the army, he can change the Constitution and postpone elections. His decisions are not subject to legal examination.”

In addition to this, let us say that Mr. Petritsch has the key

role in the election of judges and prosecutors. With a threat of new criticism from the OHR, we will believe the Sarajevo paper Oslobodjenje which says that the Chief of the Police with the Federation Ministry of Interior and the IPTF Commissioner opposed the issuance of indictments against Jelavic and the others but that the indictments were issued after all with the help of the OHR and Jacques Klein.