

# BiH Media Round-up, 24/1/2002

## BiH State-related Issues

- Bond denies allegations US Administration pressed on BiH authorities to hand over the “Algerian Group”
- BiH Council of Ministers chairman claims the state institution received the Algerians extradition related Human Rights Chamber decision too late
- BiH Human Rights Chamber: The order banning deportation issued on January 17
- Lagumdžija says now there is a new framework for carrying out the constitutional reforms
- SDP BiH considers the BiH’s admission into the Council of Europe the most important event since the Alliance has been in power
- Dnevni List: Reactions in BiH to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly’s recommendation for BiH’s admission into the organisation
- Vecernji List: Events that are supposed to mark this year in the newest member state of the Council of Europe

## Federation

- Bosniak and Croat members of the BiH Presidency not prepared to support military cut until the existence of the fired soldiers is not resolved
- BiH Federation House of Peoples to discuss draft entity Budget for this year on Thursday
- BiH Federation Government to re-consider appointments in the financial institutions
- OHR says BiH Federation Government’s recommendation to temporary stop evictions absolutely unacceptable
- Dnevni List: The most important parts of the talk between Mostar Vicar Luka Pavlovic and Anne Carson, the Head of the US Embassy’s Mostar Office
- Dnevni List: **HDZ BiH Presidency holds session – Strong condemnations of Wolfgang Petritsch’s behavior**
- Slobodna Dalmacija: Explosive devices activated in Siroki Brijeg
- Vecernji List: **Marin Topic likely to become new Mayor of Mostar-Southwest**
- Vjesnik: Ungrounded stories about Mijo Anic’s resignation

## Republika Srpska

- RS President's statement in regard of NATO delegation visit to Banja Luka scheduled for Thursday
- Harmonization of election laws' provisions – Serbs from Croatia eligible to vote
- DNS officials says Ivanic and the Alliance are destroying the RS
- Interview with Mirko Banjac – New people for new image of SDS
- Brdjanin and Talic pleaded not guilty

## International Community

- Reuters: INTERVIEW-Bosnia envoy sees new will to grab Karadzic
- OHR: Deadline for the constitutional reforms determined by the elections time frame
- NATO delegation visits Sarajevo
- Brcko supervisor urges Croatia to lift traffic ban over border bridge
- Dnevni List: OHR concerned about the fact that Interinvest ignored the legal decision
- Vecernji List: Mate Granic says Petritsch is High Representative for BiH, not for Croatia

## Editorials

- Oslobodjenje and Jutarnje Novine

## Headlines

## BiH State-related Issues

### **Bond denies allegations US Administration pressed on BiH authorities to hand over the “Algerian Group”**

According to Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz, US Ambassador to BiH Clifford Bond told a group of BiH journalists on Wednesday

that there had been no pressures from the side of the US Administration on the BiH authorities to hand over six Algerians suspected for involvement in the international terrorism. "In the spirit of a good cooperation in combating terrorism, we have just offered to take over the people since they represent a danger," Bond said. He added that the US Administration welcomed the commitment of the BiH authorities to take part in the world-wide fight against terrorism. Bond officially confirmed that the Algerians were currently in prison in the US Guantanamo military base in Cuba.

## **BiH Council of Ministers chairman claims the state institution received the Algerians extradition related Human Rights Chamber decision too late**

The Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdžija, told a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday that not a single BiH law had been violated in case of the "Algerian Group" extradition. According to Dnevni Avaz, he emphasized that, quite opposite, "the laws would be violated" if the extradition had not been conducted. Lagumdžija also claimed that the BiH state institutions had received a BiH Human Rights Chamber decision banning the Algerians' hand-over only after their extradition.

## **BiH Human Rights Chamber: The order banning deportation issued on January 17**

Dnevni Avaz reports that the BiH Human Rights Chamber announced on Wednesday it had issued a decision on January 17 ordering both BiH and the BiH Federation to take all necessary measures and prevent forcible extradition of the "Algerian Group" from the country. The orders were directly delivered to the BiH and BiH Federation institutions early on Friday, January 18. Copies of the order were also sent by fax to OHR, OSCE, UNMIBH, IPTF and Human Rights Ombudsman.

## **Lagumdžija says now there is a new framework for carrying out the constitutional reforms**

According to Oslobodjenje, at a press conference held in Sarajevo on Wednesday, BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija said that, following the recommendation for the BiH accession to the Council of Europe, there was a new framework for the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's decision on the equal status of the all peoples in the entire BiH's territory, which was determined by the European standards and norms of political behavior. He emphasized that the BiH's admission into the oldest European institution was a joint success of all progressive political forces in the country and a new political climate being created in BiH.

## **SDP BiH considers the BiH's admission into the Council of Europe the most important event since the Alliance has been in power**

Oslobodjenje quoted Vice-president of the SDP BiH Sead Avdic as saying that the BiH's admission into the Council of Europe was the most important political event since the Alliance for Change has been in power. "In political terms, the country get another recognition of its international subjectivity and territorial integrity," Avdic told journalists in Sarajevo on Wednesday. He added that the party would request the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to impose the amendments to the entity Constitutions if "we soon do not reach the agreement on the constitutional" reforms. Commenting on the extradition of the "Algerian Group," Avdic said that it had been done in accordance to the Constitution and the laws and with a political consensus inside the governing Alliance.

## **Dnevni List: Reactions in BiH to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's recommendation for**

## **BiH's admission into the organisation**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List carries reactions of BiH politicians and political parties to the fact that BiH is to join the Council of Europe.

When it comes to the Federation of BiH, the SDA Spokesperson Sefik Dzaferovic is of the opinion that this confirms the integrity and independence of BiH. SDP and Party for BiH's stances are identical, reads Dnevni List. These parties welcome the move that BiH is to join the Council of Europe adding that there was still a lot of work to be completed by BiH itself. Parties in the RS welcome the readiness of the Council of Europe to accept BiH although the country did not meet some fundamental requirements. The set of laws, set forth to BiH, clearly speaks how far from Europe the country really is.

The HDZ, being the most influential party among the BiH Croats, did not officially declare itself on the matter, but the daily learned from a source close to the Presidency of the HDZ that "the HDZ has most reasons to be happy with the act" (...), reads Dnevni List.

## **Vecernji List: Events that are supposed to mark this year in the newest member state of the Council of Europe**

Written by Robert Bubalo (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List says the first political event of importance for BiH took place the day before yesterday in Strasbourg where the delegates voted a recommendation for the accession of BiH to the Council of Europe.

The daily quotes Stjepan Kljujic, the President of the BiH Republican Party, as saying that BiH is not joining the Council of Europe because of the merits of the Alliance for

Changes, but that Europe simply could no longer stand it that none of its requests are met. "Eventually, they said – let us admit them to the Council of Europe and then we will dictate. It will no longer be about friendly persuasion, but about economic sanctions," said Kljucic.

Vecernji List says another important event will be the implementation of the Constitutional Court Decision on the Constituency of peoples, and it will be known by the end of February whether or not the Republic of Srpska will be forced to introduce the House of Peoples.

At length, the daily says in a country like BiH, it is difficult to predict everything, so that one should be cautious and expect events such as those that happened in Trebinje and Banja Luka last year.

## **Federation**

### **Bosniak and Croat members of the BiH Presidency not prepared to support military cut until the existence of the fired soldiers is not resolved**

Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency Beriz Belkic told Oslobodjenje that he and Croat member of the Presidency Jozo Krizanovic were not prepared to make a decision on the reduction of number of soldiers in the BiH Federation Army unless their future existence is not resolved. He said that the Presidency had recently rejected to approve BiH Federation Army cut for 5,000 soldiers, until a complete project of their future professional engagement is not made.

### **BiH Federation House of Peoples to discuss draft entity Budget for this year on Thursday**

According to Oslobodjenje, the BiH Federation House of Peoples

is expected to discuss draft entity Budget for this year at its session scheduled for Thursday. They will also consider the proposed economic policy measures, as well as the measures to stimulate employment.

## **BiH Federation Government to re-consider appointments in the financial institutions**

Dnevni Avaz reports, that the BiH Federation Government will review already defined appointments in the financial institutions, including the Agency for Deposit Insurance, Banking Agency, Office for Controlling Insurance Societies, Bureau for Accounting and Audit, Commission for Securities and Federation Investment Bank. Although it was not clearly stated, this according to the newspaper means that all legal procedures had not been followed during the appointing process. The Government made such a decision following a letter PDHR Donald Hays had sent to the Federation leaders expressing concern about eventual legal failures in these appoint procedures.

## **OHR says BiH Federation Government's recommendation to temporary stop evictions absolutely unacceptable**

OHR Spokesman Kevin Sullivan told Dnevni Avaz that a recommendation of the BiH Federation Government to the municipal housing authorities to temporary stop evictions of people having a right to alternative accommodation until April was for the OHR totally unacceptable.

## **Dnevni List: The most important parts of the talk between Mostar Vicar Luka Pavlovic and Anne Carson, the Head of the US Embassy's Mostar Office**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List says Monsignor Luka Pavlovic, the Vicar General in Mostar, met with Anne Carson, the Head of the Office of the American Embassy in Mostar, on January 15, and carries the main accents of their meeting.

According to the daily, Anne Carson stated that she came because she wanted to find out as to why the Ordinariate did not respond to the invitation that M. Selim Kartal, the Turkish Consul in Mostar, sent to the religious representatives from Herzegovina inviting them for a joint lunch or dinner. She stressed that the USA would like to see similar meetings taking place because of the great role that the religious leaders have on this territory.

Luka Pavlovic stated that the attitude of the Catholic Church in Herzegovina towards the other religious communities is completely clear, i.e. they would like to resolve the religious issues mutually and directly, without international mediators. 'This means if the other side has some religion-related problem they can come to us at any time and say what the problem is, or they can put it on paper and we shall try to respond to it. We do not want politicians, either domestic or international ones, to mediate in the religious meetings. Also, it has never occurred to us that we, people of the Church, arrange meetings among different politicians,' said Monsignor Pavlovic.

Talking about the fact that many Croats left the country during the Communist times and that some of them committed some acts because of which they were imprisoned in Germany, Sweden, the USA etc., Pavlovic compared that situation with the current situation in BiH saying that many Croats are leaving BiH, under various pressures, and go to third countries.

He wonders who will be blamed if some of them become terrorists, the Croat people or the international forces whose acting caused the emigration of the Croat people. As far as



the Dayton Peace Agreement is concerned, Pavlovic told Anne Carson that the International Community can continue to work as they have been doing so far, without some significant success, but it would be better if they made a revision of the Dayton injustice. Asked as to what the Dayton injustice would be, Pavlovic stated that, first of all, it is the fact that a half of BiH was given to the Serb people, the fact that the USA prevented the Croatian Army to release its country from the aggressor, and various principles that negotiators set at the beginning of the negotiations on BiH, but which they did not respect.

‘There are different pressures that Croats feel. For instance, the Croats elect their political representatives and the international community removes them and appoints politically correct ones. Colin Munro, a former Head of the OHR South, comes and tells Muslims to build the mosque in Stolac, regardless of the fact that it is on the foundations of a Christian Church, as Muslims themselves say. Of course, Muslims begin with the construction and Croats protest against it. And now I am supposed to go there as a priest, reconcile those people and ease the tensions that this international representative has sown in Stolac,” said Monsignor Pavlovic.

Dnevni List also quotes him as saying: “Before and after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, hundreds of people were received by the Ordinariate. Thousands of hours were spent on similar talks with international representatives such as: Koschnick, Odendahl, Garrod, Casado, Ellerkmann, Rehn, Erni, Munro, Sonn, Egelking, Sontheim, Kartal, Foley, Kuznetzov, Cairns, Azimov, Simpson, De Monchy, Soerensen, McCullough, different journalists, ambassadors, UNPROFOR, SFOR and especially SPABAT Generals, OSCE, ECCM, CRS, WCO, WPR, OHR and many other officials. We have an impression that none of the things that we agreed upon has been complied with. On the contrary, it seems that the more frequent and courteous their meetings are, the more defeating is the situation for the

Croat people.”

## **Dnevni List: HDZ BiH Presidency holds session – Strong condemnations of Wolfgang Petritsch’s behavior**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List reports that the HDZ BiH Presidency held a session yesterday and discussed, among other things, the activities regarding the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court Decision on the Constituency of peoples. They concluded once more that a consistent implementation of the Decision and symmetric constitutional solutions with the full legislative powers of House of Peoples in both entities are a necessity and the essential prerequisite for building BiH as a self-sustainable, multiethnic and multicultural state. Within this context, the HDZ BiH Presidency strongly condemned the High Representative’s “most recent tactless statements, stripping the Croat people in BiH of constituency and declaring them a national minority instead.”

Slobodna Dalmacija also carries the press release under the title ‘Petritsch’s tactless statements.’

## **Slobodna Dalmacija: Explosive devices activated in Siroki Brijeg**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Two strong explosions awakened the citizens of Siroki Brijeg on Wednesday around 0300 a.m. Explosive devices were activated at an office building within the Sports Hall complex in Pecara. The Canton 8 Ministry of the Interior issued no press release by the conclusion of the article. Slobodna Dalmacija quotes the UNMIBH Spokesperson in Mostar, Kristen Haupt, as saying that the explosions caused a damage amounting to 15,000 KM, but no one was injured. She added that the perpetrators were unknown and that an investigation was underway.

Dnevni List says the Anti-Terrorist Headquarters, presided by Governor Vinko Zoric, was formed in Canton 8 a while ago. On the day of the explosion, which, Dnevni List says, could be called a terrorist act, Governor Zoric was not answering the phone in his office and his mobile phone was switched off.

## **Vecernji List: Marin Topic likely to become new Mayor of Mostar-Southwest**

Written by M. Brkic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List found out from anonymous sources that Marin Topic, a well known painter from Mostar, is most likely to succeed Ivan Mandic on the position of Mayor of the Municipality Mostar-Southwest after the latter was removed by the High Representative. Vecernji List, as a reminder, carries a part of the OHR press release about the removal of Mandic and goes on to say that Marin Topic, a graduated architect, would not seem to be a bad solution for the OHR if his candidacy undergoes the regular procedure – verification from the Municipal and City Boards of the HDZ , as well as approval from the HDZ BiH top leadership. The daily says it important to say that Topic, as the holder of the HDZ list for the Municipality Mostar-Southwest at the last elections, won the greatest number of votes and enjoys a full confidence of Croat voters. Topic stated on several occasions that although the people trust him, HDZ officials never contacted him to offer him a public office.

Ten years ago, while Mostar was still a single city, Marin Topic was performing the duty of Vice President of the City Government. However, because of his views and opinions, he was the thorn in the side of many, so the JNA attempted to assassinate him back in 1992, during the fiercest attacks on Dubrovnik. Topic has been reproached for supporting in public the process of ousting Neven Tomic from the HDZ membership.

At the last session of the Municipal Council of Mostar-

Southwest, he voted against the appointment of seven new persons as Managers in seven public companies in Mostar. He explained he had nothing against those persons, but he minded the fact that the appointment was not done in accordance with the Law on the Local Self-Government. He even named all Serbs and Bosniaks for not being capable of fighting for their own national interests because they have no representatives in any of the company steering boards.

In conclusion, Vecernji List says it remains to be seen whether the man who painted a portrait of Mate Boban at a time and who is known by his claim to be the only HDZ member that has not profited from it, will eventually take the hot chair as the new Mayor of the Municipality Mostar-Southwest.

## **Vjesnik: Ungrounded stories about Mijo Anic's resignation**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vjesnik quotes the Federation Ministry of Defense's Spokesperson, Antun Mrkonjic, as saying that the stories presented in the media according to which the Federation Minister of Defense and Deputy Minister of Defense, Mijo Anic and Ferid Buljubasic respectively, were to resign because of "disagreements over the new Law on Defense," have been "blown out of proportion". Mrkonjic considered Anic and Buljubasic's positions stable pointing out that the only debatable issue when it comes to the new Law on Defense was the number of components within the Federation Army adding that the Croat officials in the Federation Ministry of Defense and Federation Army are resolute that "the abolishment of the components is out of question" (...), reads Vjesnik.

**Republika Srpska**

## **RS President's statement in regard of NATO delegation visit to Banja Luka scheduled for Thursday**

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

"NATO delegation is meeting in Banja Luka with the RS top leadership in order to discuss the issues important for the admission of BiH to the Partnership for Peace", states the press release issued by the Cabinet of the RS President.

"These talks will address the issue of certain European standards that have to be met and also the issue of joint coordination – establishment of one body at BiH level that would be in charge of joint coordination. The RS stick to its view – it supports joining the Partnership for Peace, but only in line with the BiH Constitution, that is, in line with the fact that there are two armies. We will also discuss the issue of the re-structuring of the armed forces in BiH, which is one of the important issues and conditions for the admission of BiH to the Partnership for Peace. We will also review the re-organization that has been made so far – the reduction of the military resources, fulfillment of the obligations and standards that we accepted, the reduction of armament and military equipment, etc."

## **Harmonization of election laws' provisions – Serbs from Croatia eligible to vote**

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies quote RS Deputy Prime Minister, Petar Kunic, as saying that the Serbs from Croatia, who acquired RS/BiH citizenship, will be eligible to vote at the elections scheduled for September 2002. After the meeting with president of the BiH Central election commission (CEC), Lidija Koric, which took place in Banja Luka yesterday, Kunic told journalists that there are 5.000 persons from Croatia who acquired BiH citizenship. As to harmonization of disputable

provisions of the RS election law with the BiH election law, Kunic said that the objections, presented by the CEC president are absolutely acceptable for the RS. He explained that these objections pertain to Article 4 of the RS election law according to which a person has to be registered in the municipality in which he/she will vote for at least 6 months prior to elections. Another objection pertains to issue of competencies of the RS election commission. According to the BiH election law, the BiH Election commission determines the competencies of election commissions from both entities.

## **DNS officials says Ivanic and the Alliance are destroying the RS**

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne Novine carries press release, issued by the Democratic National Alliance (DNS) which states that the political concept that the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic has is not only unserious but also so dangerous that it can destroy the RS, since all attacks aimed at elimination of the RS come from the ruling Alliance for changes, and Ivanic's PDP supports the Alliance. "Without the support of Ivanic and the PDP, the Alliance cannot rule the country and therefore cannot jeopardize the RS", states the press release.

## **Interview with Mirko Banjac – New people for new image of SDS**

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne Novine carries a short interview with member of the SDS Executive Board, Mirko Banjac in which he explains his views on reshuffle within the SDS and his possible expulsion from the party. As to the reshuffle within the SDS, Banjac says that SDS, just like any other party, can have a new image only with new people. "A change of clothing looks nice but a person who wears it remains the same. I expect that the SDS will agree on new reformed action plan and let true democrats

to carry it out", said Banjac. When asked whether he will accept the place of SDS president if SDS municipal boards vote for him, Banjac said he would and added he would never run for SDS president.

## **Brdjanin and Talic pleaded not guilty**

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Radoslav Brdjanin and General Momir Talic, indicted by the ICTY, pleaded not guilty, Glas Srpski and Nezavisne report. Brdjanin and Talic are indicted for genocide against non-Serb population in the region of Banja Luka, Prijedor and Sanski Most in 1992. At that time General Talic was the Commander of the RS Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Krajiski Corps and Brdjanin was the acting Premier of the RS and the Commander of the Crisis HQ of the autonomous area of Bos. Krajina.

## **International Community**

### **Reuters: INTERVIEW-Bosnia envoy sees new will to grab Karadzic**

By Andrew Gray

SARAJEVO, Jan 24 (Reuters) – The top international official charged with bringing lasting peace to Bosnia said on Thursday he detected a new determination among major powers to bring Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic to justice. High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch also urged local leaders to build on the Dayton agreement which ended the 1992-95 war and make greater efforts to turn Bosnia into a viable state rather than an international protectorate.

Petritsch said in an interview with Reuters that the arrest of Karadzic, charged with genocide by the United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague, was a key part of the process of

drawing a line under the war and moving towards normality.

"The longer I'm here, the more I'm convinced – unless Karadzic ends up in The Hague, people will not be able to turn the page on the war and look towards the future," Petritsch said. "Eventual reconciliation will be impossible."

Karadzic and his wartime military commander Ratko Mladic have been indicted by the tribunal for the 1995 mass killing of up to 8,000 Muslim men and boys and for the three-and-a-half year siege of Sarajevo which killed around 12,000 people.

Karadzic is widely believed to be hiding in mountainous eastern Bosnia close to the border with the Yugoslav republic of Montenegro while Western and local sources have said Mladic is in Belgrade under the protection of the Yugoslav army.

Western leaders have often stressed the importance of their arrest but Petritsch, who visited NATO's decision-making North Atlantic Council last week, indicated there was now a stronger will to make it happen.

Diplomats say any operation to arrest Karadzic would have to be carried out by NATO, which commands and dominates an 18,000-strong peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

"It's too sensitive to go into details but I can assure you that there is a renewed resolve on the part of the international community to bring this issue to an end," Petritsch said.

## DAYTON DEFENDED

Petritsch, an Austrian diplomat who has been the international community's high representative in Sarajevo since 1999, said the Dayton deal had provided a good foundation for postwar Bosnia and local leaders had to build on it.

Some analysts contend that Dayton itself is at the root of the West's problems in making Bosnia a viable state.



They argue the peace pact, named after the U.S. Air Force base in Ohio where it was negotiated, gives too much power to the Balkan state's highly autonomous entities – the Serb Republic and a federation made up largely of Muslims and Croats.

But Petritsch cited a decision last year by Bosnia's Constitutional Court, which ruled the entities had to treat all peoples equally, as proof institutions created by Dayton could push the country forward towards modern European standards.

"Dayton is a far more intelligent model than one would maybe, in a superficial way, see it," he said.

The court ruling effectively means the entities should no longer be seen as ethnically-based. In practice, it would mean more rights and positions of authority for Serbs in the federation and for Muslims and Croats in the Serb Republic.

"The two entity governments will become truly multi-ethnic," Petritsch said. "This will be an enormous boost for the ultimate goal... of Dayton, and that is the re-establishment of the multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Local leaders have long been debating how to change the constitutions of the two entities to comply with the court's decision. Some analysts believe Petritsch will finally have to use his sweeping powers to impose a solution.

Petritsch acknowledged time was running out to agree and implement the changes, which international officials say have to be in place in time for general elections expected in October.

He said decisions would have to be made by March and urged local leaders to redouble their efforts to reach a deal.

"It is very clear that now things have to happen, and progress has to be made, and talks have to take place, on an almost

daily basis," Petritsch said.

## **OHR: Deadline for the constitutional reforms determined by the elections time frame**

In a statement with Dnevni Avaz, Head of the OHR Press Office Alexandra Stiglmayer said that a deadline for the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's decision on the equal constitutional status of all peoples in the entire country's territory was actually determined by a time frame for the this year's BiH elections. "The elections are scheduled for October and the Election Commission must announce (confirm) their carrying out 180 days earlier, which means that, by the beginning of April, we should have an election law without any undefined provisions," Stiglmayer said. She emphasized that all options were opened if, by the end of March, the entity parliaments do not adopt necessary amendment to the Constitutions. "In that case, it may happen that the High Representative decides to impose the constitutional solutions and, then, it would not be excluded that someone is punished due to non-implementation of the Constitutional Court's decision on the issue," Stiglmayer concluded.

(Note that below is a OHR Spokesman Kevin Sullivan's statement at a press conference of the international organizations held in Sarajevo on Thursday concerning the issue.)

"We saw the opinion poll in Dnevni Avaz this morning, asking citizens whether the HR should use his powers in the implementation of the of the Constitutional Court's ruling on the constituent status of BiH peoples in both Entities. ( 67% said yes, 11% no, and 22% didn't have an opinion), and Avaz carried a story in which Alexandra Stiglmayer was not fully quoted. OHR would like to put the record straight regarding implementation of this ruling. The Decision of the Constitutional Court is historic. It is up to the Entity parliaments to display the political maturity and skill which

are required to implement this historic decision. This is not an option but a necessity. Intensive debate over coming weeks must produce practical proposals. It is not a question of what will happen if solutions are not found.. It's a question of which solutions will be found. It is very strange that two days after the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recommended BiH accession to the Council the option of implementation is being mulled. The Council of Europe clearly expects BiH to be able to implement this important ruling. It should also be borne in mind that BiH is not yet a member of the Council. This decision still needs to be made by the Council's Committee of Ministers and it would be counterproductive if the local authorities fail to show a suitable sense of ownership."

## **NATO delegation visits Sarajevo**

Oslobodjenje reports that a high-level NATO delegation headed by the Alliance Director for the Balkans, Robert Serry, visited Sarajevo on Wednesday to meet with the state and entity officials and discuss the fulfillment of the pre-conditions for the BiH's accession to the Partnership for Peace Program. At the meetings with the members of the BiH Presidency, BiH Council of Ministers, Standing Committee for Military Matters, and Foreign Affairs Commission of the BiH Parliament, as well as the senior officials of the BiH Federation Army and Defense Ministry, Serry reiterated that the main pre-accession conditions included the existence of military commanding structure at the state level, establishment of a single BiH defense identity towards the world, and the establishment of a democratic control over the armed forces.

## **Brcko supervisor urges Croatia to lift traffic ban over border bridge**

The supervisor of the Brcko District, Henry Clarke, urged the

Croatian government today to lift the ban on traffic over the border bridge on the Sava River for vehicles with a load capacity exceeding six tonnes. Clarke said at a news conference that Croatia was obliged to respect its responsibilities as outlined in the bilateral agreement on border crossings, which it signed with Bosnia-Hercegovina last year. He expressed readiness to establish direct contacts with the authorities in Zagreb, if it helps find a solution to this problem. Clarke said that "competition among refineries, petrol distributors and dealers" and not security concerns was the real reason for the ban, without wanting to specify to whom he was referring. "The international community's readiness to reconstruct the whole of the Sava bridge will depend on the result of the expert analysis of the bridge," Clarke said...

## **Dnevni List: OHR concerned about the fact that Interinvest ignored the legal decision**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

"The Office of the High Representative (OHR) is concerned about the fact that 'Interinvest' company has neglected the legal decision issued by the Mostar Municipality West and continued the construction works on the residential-business facility at the site of the Mostar Electro-Mechanical School" Avis Benes, the OHR Mostar Spokesperson stated.

"Regarding the construction of the residential-business centre, the OHR representatives held a meeting last December with the officials of the Mostar Municipality West and its Mayor, Mr. Ljubo Golemac. Following the meeting, on December 12, Municipality West issued an inspection decision by which immediate cease of the works on the building was requested. However, the works continued until January 20. The OHR calls upon all the responsible persons to abide by the Law and call for the works on the residential-business premises to cease", Benes said.

## **Vecernji List: Mate Granic says Petritsch is High Representative for BiH, not for Croatia**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

“Nobody in the world, apart from Petritsch, I guess, questions the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia. Mr. Petritsch is the High Representative for BiH and not for Croatia. Croatia, being a signatory of the Dayton Peace Agreement, has a right and duty to voice its opinions about the implementation of the DPA through the legitimate mechanisms of the Dayton Peace Agreement, including the Peace Implementation Conference and at bilateral levels”, says Mate Granic, a member of the Croatian Parliament and President of the DC (Democratic Centre).

## **Editorials**

### **Oslobodjenje and Jutarnje Novine**

In the Oslobodjenje In Focus editorial, Zija Dizdarevic wrote that the recommendation of the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly for the BiH’s admission into the organization was leading the country out of the current difficult situation. However, with the domination of SDS, HDZ and SDA it could not be democratization of the country according to the European standards. Dizdarevic therefore concludes that if the citizens again elect the nationalist political parties in October, they will by their own make the country’s accession to the Council senseless. In another Oslobodjenje editorial, Gojko Beric wrote that the disputes over the deportation of the Algerian Group were proving that this country was still being shaken with ethnic and religious emotions. Indira Tabucic wrote in the Jutarnje Novine The Seal editorial that Republika Srpska should improve rate of the property laws implementation reaching at least the one achieved by the BiH Federation.

## **Headlines**

### **Vecernjii List**

- Detonations disturbed Siroki Brijeg: Two bombs planted under Sport's Hall

### **Oslobodjenje**

- US Ambassador on extradition of "Algerian Group": We did not press on BiH authorities

### **Dnevni Avaz**

- New York Times claims: Bensayah was the Head of Al-Qaeda for Europe
- US Ambassador Clifford Bond on "Algerian Group": BiH authorities did the right thing

### **Jutarnje Novine**

- Following the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation: A privilege but also an obligation

### **Glas Srpski**

- Bijeljina: Dead baby in a garbage container;
- Serb from Croatia eligible to vote;

### **Nezavisne Novine**

- NATO delegation visiting BiH – State is the only partner to NATO;
- Interview with Mirko Banjac -New people for new image of SDS;