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BiH State-related Issues

Top BiH State and Entity officials meet to discuss fight against terrorism

Top BiH State and Entity officials met on Monday in Sarajevo to discuss coordination of the joint efforts in fight against international terrorism. This is the first meeting at such level since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The BiH Presidency members (Jozo Krizanovic, Beriz Belkic and Zivko Radisic), BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdzija, BiH Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic, BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Azra Hadziahmetovic, BiH Minister of Human Rights and Refugees Kresimir Zubak, BiH Treasury Minister Ante Domazet, Head of the BiH Team for Fight against Terrorism Ivica Misic, Republika Srpska President Mirko Sarovic, RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic, RS Deputy Interior Minister Zeljko Janjetovic, BiH Federation President Karlo Filipovic, his Deputy Safet Halilovic and BiH Federation Interior Minister Muhamed Besic agreed that BiH should, in his full capacity, join the international alliance for fight against all forms of terrorism.

***Vecernji List:* Joint presentation at the Zagreb Fair contributes to opening of the BiH economy**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

BiH economists can analyze results following the recently ended Zagreb fair. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the partner country, was successfully represented at the international economic gathering. It was the first time that the both

Entities participated together, so the new markets, not only the Croatian one, are being opened. Although it is traditional that the Herzegovina-based companies are represented well at the fair, this year that was not the case. But, economy will make new routes. You can already buy “Klas'”(Sarajevo-based food industry) products in the Zagreb shops. Companies from the RS are represented well at the fair with “Jelsingrad” of Banja Luka as the leader among them. It offered the market its hydraulic machines, and its representatives talked to both Croatian and European buyers.

Privatization process starts in the Brcko District

According to Oslobodjenje, the privatization Office of the Brcko District Administration made a decision to publish tenders for sale of 67 percent of capital in six state-owned enterprises. The decision followed the International Supervisor Henry Clarke’s order on the issue issued last week.

Federation

Sefer Halilovic voluntarily surrenders to The Hague Tribunal

Sefer Halilovic, the current BiH Federation Minister for Refugees and Displaced Persons and the wartime BiH Army Commander, left early on Tuesday for Netherlands where he will voluntarily turn himself in to The Hague Tribunal. BiH Federation Interior Minister Muhamed Besic told Oslobodjenje that the BiH Foreign Ministry had received only sealed indictment against Halilovic seven days ago. He was indicted for his alleged involvement in war crimes committed against Croat civilians in the Herzegovina village of Grabovica during the war. Besic described as media speculations the allegations that Ramiz Celo Delalic, Zulfikar Alispago, Dzevad Mlaco, Safet Cibo, Jadranko Prlic, Pero Markovic, Bruno Stojic, Valentin Coric and Zatan Mijo Jelic would join Halilovic in The Hague. However, Besic added this did not mean that their

names could not be in some other sealed envelopes to be sent from The Hague. The Alliance for Changes leaders and the BiH Federation Government members welcomed the Halilovic's decision to voluntarily surrender to The Hague Tribunal.

Reuters: Ex-BiH Army chief in UN custody

A BiH Federation Government minister who commanded the wartime Republic of BiH Army during the 1992-95 war surrendered to The Hague war crimes tribunal on Tuesday to face charges of violating the laws and customs of war. Sefer Halilovic was taken to the United Nations war crimes detention center in The Hague after flying to the Netherlands from Sarajevo, a prosecution spokeswoman said. He is Minister for Refugees and Social Affairs in BiH Federation. Halilovic is accused of failing to prevent the killing of 33 Croat civilians in the village of Grabovica in September 1993 during a Bosniak-led army offensive against Croat troops, the court said in a statement. Halilovic said he is innocent. He will become the seventh and the highest-ranking Bosniak to face trial at the International Criminal Court for former Yugoslavia (ICTY). He was charged under a sealed indictment, which was opened after his surrender on Tuesday.

***Slobodna Dalmacija:* Faruk Balijagic, the defender of Sefer Halilovic, says the crime in Grabovica is an act of the BiH leadership**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Together with my client Sefer Halilovic I will make a flight to The Hague in the UN plane on Tuesday. We shall appear before The Hague Court for the first time on Friday when Sefer Halilovic is supposed to declare himself on the counts of the bill of indictment issued against him. He is charged with the commanding responsibility for the crimes committed in Grabovica when 33 Croat civilians were killed by the Special Units from Sarajevo, which came to this area. Our defense will

be based on the fact that this crime was organized and committed by the highest state leadership at that time and that my client is not related to these crimes in any way. Alija Behmen, the Federation Prime Minister, stated that he regrets that 'the Minister of Social Welfare, Displaced Persons and Refugees leaves an excellent job that he started on the realization of the plan for the return of all people to their homes'.

Jutarnji list carries on the same issue: Authorities in Sarajevo are yet to receive sealed indictments against BiH Croats suspected of committing crimes in prison camps in Herzegovina, Jutarnji List learns from a pretty reliable source, but an investigation against Valentin Coric, Bruno Stojic, Mijo Zlatan Jelic and Pero Markovic is in its final stage. Jadranko Prlic, in the capacity of the Prime Minister of Herzeg-Bosnia who made a decision to open the prison camps was on top of the pyramid, the person The Hague wants to collect more information about, and according to Jutarnji List's findings, Prlic should meet The Hague investigators on his own request. Unofficial sources say that Prlic planned to go to The Hague in a few weeks time to meet the investigators and that the Head of the UN Mission in BiH Jacques Klein and the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch offered themselves to mediate in the organization of the trip. Prlic has often supported the work of the Tribunal in public, and Jutarnji List learns hat Prlic has intensely been preparing himself for the talks with the investigators lately and that he is ready to reveal everything he knows about the opening of the prison camps and people who are responsible for it. Since Prlic is believed to be a BiH politician prone to cooperating with the International Community, who officiates his new duty in the BiH Government in an orderly fashion and does not intend to run away, it would be strange that the Hague investigators had not contacted him personally to try and find out what he knows about the culprits for war crimes against Bosniaks in the Herzegovina-based prison camps prior to sending of the sealed

indictment. Moreover Prlic does not have a good relationship with the HDZ hard-liners, reads Jutarnji List.

***Slobodna Dalmacija:* Neven Tomic reports on the execution of the Mostar budget**

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

At the regular session of the Mostar City Council, which was held in the City Administration on Monday, the most topical issue was the report on the execution of the budget for the City of Mostar for the first half-year, that was stated by Neven Tomic, the Mostar Mayor. He stressed that this is the first report that the City Administration has made so far and that the budget was realistic in all its aspects apart from the funds that they expected from the privatization. Tomic pointed to the problem of the taxpayers in the Central Zone where the tax office does not exist and this caused the reduction of income on this basis. Tomic stressed that with its budget money the City Administration participated in the reconstruction of the houses and the return of displaced persons because they want to encourage the return process and participate in the reconstruction of the houses of the category that that none wants to reconstruct and it turned out that the City of Mostar can be a serious partner. Milan Jovicic, the President of the City Council, stressed the importance of the financial support in the segments that are not directly within the city competence.

The most of the HDZ Councilors did not attend the session while a part of them justified their presence. Ivan Musa, the President of the HDZ Caucus in the City Council, reiterated the earlier stand that the HDZ Councilors will not participate in the work of the Council until Neven Tomic is removed. After this Musa left the session and did not want to hear the reply of President Jovicic who stated that according to the Statute of the City of Mostar Musa’s request is groundless and Mayor Tomic is not responsible to the party but to the City Council,

whose members elected him. After the session Tomic stated that the Mostar City Council elected him and that it is enough that he has the support of the City Council, citizens and a part of the HDZ Councilors in the City Council.

Asked whether the obstruction of the part of the HDZ Councilors might endanger some great projects in the City, Tomic gave an affirmative answer, but he added that he does not believe that someone will, for instance, prevent the buses, that the City will get from the Japanese Government, to operate through the whole City.

Newly-appointed BiH Federation Supreme Court judges take an oath

The newly-appointed judges of the BiH Federation Supreme Court took an oath on Monday before the entity President Karlo Filipovic and his Deputy Safet Halilovic. According to Jutarnje Novine, Filipovic said on the occasion that the Alliance for Changes' strategic goal was the establishment of a de-politicized and independent judiciary.

Vjesnik: Trials of Ante Jelavic influenced by politics

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Josip Muselimovic, Ante Jelavic's attorney, told Vjesnik that he was both surprised and disappointed with the Supreme Court of the Federation of BiH's (SCFBiH) decision to dismiss the motion aimed at dismissal of the President of the Supreme Court of the Federation of BiH, Suada Selimovic, and judges of the Sarajevo Cantonal Court. Decision made by the judges "shows partiality and persistence to continue this rigged process that also carries elements of politics in it", says Muselimovic (…) Commenting the Supreme Court's decision, Muselimovic refers to the Constitutional Court's decision from June this year, the Supreme Court of the Federation of BiH's (decision) from August this year, opinion of the Criminal Department of the Supreme Court of the Federation of BiH and

the Declaration on Rights of Man. Muselimovic asks how is it possible that the SCFBiH, when acting in the "Jelavic case", did not observe its own opinion from August this year, as well as the opinion of its Criminal Department. Although he previously announced that he would cease to be Jelavic's attorney if the motion were to be dismissed, Muselimovic told Vjesnik that "he would remain Jelavic's attorney, even before the European Court in Strasbourg if necessary. When it comes to the forthcoming steps, following the "shocking decision", Muselimovic says that he has sent another memorandum to the Investigative Judge of the Sarajevo Cantonal Court to reconsider its decision and declare himself incompetent, and also to leaders of BiH and Federation, Jozo Krizanovic and Karlo Filipovic, Federation Prosecutor Marinko Jurcevic and Justice Minister Zvonko Mijan asking them to "get interested in the case and eliminate the evident lawlessness" within their authorities. When asked whether he would defend Croat officials before The Hague Court, in light of new indictments against them and the media speculations, Muselimovic says that he cannot answer that since there are certain obligations towards the Statute of The Hague Tribunal, reads Vjesnik."

Republika Srpska

Reactions of the senior RS officials to the indictment against Sefer Halilovic

RS President Mirko Sarovic:

"This process represents a positive development and it will show that there was no aggression against BiH, as well as that nobody can blame one nation or a leader for the war in BiH. Responsibility for committed war crimes, to a great extent falls on the current Bosniak authorities."

Serb member of the BiH Presidency Zivko Radisic:

“Raising of the indictment against Safer Halilovic confirms that The Hague Tribunal is finally acting in accordance with the criteria that all accused should be processed under same conditions.”

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic:

“Indictment against Halilovic shows the need for and the justification of the cooperation with The Hague, because it is the only way in which all victims of the war may have the same treatment.”

The Republika Srpska National Assembly to continue its 9th session on Wednesday

The RS dailies announce that the 9th RS National Assembly session will be resumed on Wednesday. The main issues to be considered at this part of the session will include the set of tax laws, the draft Law on Cooperation with the ICTY, and the BiH Defense Policy.

SDA Srebrenica protests slowness in preparations for the Potocari Memorial Center construction

The SDA BiH Srebrenica branch expressed its concern over the slowness in preparations for the construction of the Potocari Memorial Center. The party said in a press release that the international and domestic organizations tasked with the issue had still not prepared even initial project documentation for the Center.

RS Minister for Trade and Tourism Zeljko Tadic says the Education Ministry responsible for student excursions

In a short interview with the Nezavisne Novine, the Republika Srpska Minister for Trade and Tourism, Zeljko Tadic, said that his Ministry bore no responsibility for the tragedy that happened at the excursion in Budva recently in which four students and a teacher got killed. Tadic added that the

approval for organizing excursions was being given by the entity Education Ministry.

International Community

Senior Deputy High Representative meets with Collegia of BiH Parliament

The Senior Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Matthias Sonn, on Monday met with five members of the Collegia of both Houses of the BiH Parliament including the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Houses: Zeljko Mirjanic, Sead Avdic, Mariofil Ljubic, Ilija Simic and Nikola Spiric – to discuss the work of the Parliamentary Assembly in the upcoming period. (Oslobodjenje carried the Press Release)

Surjan's report on BiH's accession to the Council of Europe to be discussed on September 26-27

Members of the BiH parliamentary delegation attending the session of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg met on Monday with representatives of the European Democratic Group gathering political center parties to gain support for the BiH's accession to the Council. The Assembly is expected on September 26 and 27 to discuss a report of Laszlo Surjan on the issue.