

BiH Media Round-up, 28/2/2002

BiH State-related Issues

- Reuters: Bosnia village blocked in possible Karadzic move
- Reuters: NATO says Karadzic not found in Bosnia raid
- BiH Presidency completes consultations on the candidate for the new BiH Council of Ministers Chairman
- SBS' aim is to take control over the entire BiH's border by September
- BiH, Yugoslav interstate council discusses return of refugees
- Vecernji List: Interview with Beriz Belkic, Chairman of BiH Presidency

Constitutional Reform

- Dnevni Avaz: Reactions to the Tuesday's meeting of BiH political leaders on constitutional reforms
- RS NA Speaker expresses readiness to reach compromise on constitutional changes
- PDP to back constitutional changes conditionally
- Dodik hails High Representative's insistence on compromise
- The BiH Federation Government delivers draft amendments to the Entity Constitution into the parliamentary procedure

Federation

- SDP BiH on the judicial reform
- The BiH Federation House of representatives discusses situation in the Army
- Ruling coalition asks for dismissal of all judges in Federation
- Dnevni List: **Mostar and BiH have chances to join Europe**
- Slobodna Dalmacija: Will Mostar stay without 'its' electric power?
- Dnevni List: Illegal construction of facilities in Central Zone
- Slobodna Dalmacija: **International organizations on construction of facility on location of City Pharmacy**
- Dnevni List: **Neven's troubles**
- Vecernji List: **After Constitutional Court's decision regarding the authority for trying Ante Jelavic**

Republika Srpska

- The RS Constitutional Commission: Bosniaks veto the draft Election Law
- RS National Assembly to hold session on Thursday
- Large number of people from Sipovo refused to pay subscription fee to the RTRS
- USA agrees with dropping genocide charge against Karadzic if he surrenders and testifies against Milosevic
- AFP: UN court denies Karadzic deal

International Community

- Reuters: Milosevic trial shown alleged Kosovo hit list
- OHR organizes seminar on combating money laundering
- The Agreement on Succession to former SFRY brought into question
- OHR requests RSNA not to place the Draft Law on RTRS on the agenda
- AFP: UN official urges changes to Bosnia's Dayton peace accords

Headlines

BiH State-related Issues

Reuters: Bosnia village blocked in possible Karadzic move

NATO-led peacekeepers on Thursday blocked off a village in an area of southern BiH believed to harbor Bosnian Serb ex-leader and war crimes indictee Radovan Karadzic, a police official said. A heavy contingent of soldiers from BiH's SFOR force cut off all routes leading to the village of Celebici, a police officer in the town of Foca told Reuters by telephone. The officer, who declined to give his name, said people were not allowed to leave their houses and several helicopters had landed in the village.

A spokesman for SFOR confirmed the force was conducting an

operation but would not give its exact location or purpose. News of the operation immediately prompted speculation among local people that SFOR was trying to capture Karadzic. Western officials have said in recent months that they are stepping efforts to ensure Karadzic and his military chief Ratko Mladic end up at the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague, where their erstwhile patron, former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, is on trial. The Republika Srpska media reported that two strong detonations could be heard from the area of the operation. Celebici is some 10 km (six miles) from border with the Yugoslav republic of Montenegro, in the general area where Karadzic is widely believed to be hiding. SFOR troops sealed off an area with a radius of some 40 km (25 miles), searched a local school and church and forcibly entered some houses, RS radio reported. The radio station said SFOR armored personnel carriers and other vehicles were passing through Foca in the direction of Celebici, where telephone and radio lines had been cut. The radio said no further information was available as electric power in the village had also been cut off.

Reuters: NATO says Karadzic not found in Bosnia raid

NATO said on Thursday it had failed to find former Bosnian Serb leader and accused war criminal Radovan Karadzic during a raid on a Bosnian village, but the operation showed its determination to track him down. A statement issued by the NATO-led SFOR peacekeeping force in BiH said three weapons caches were found and seized during the operation around the village of Celebici in southern Bosnia. "Karadzic was not found at this location," said the statement, read to Reuters by a NATO spokesman. (Attached is the original [SFOR Press Release](#) on the operation)

BiH Presidency completes consultations on the

candidate for the new BiH Council of Ministers Chairman

Oslobodjenje reports that the BiH Presidency on Wednesday completed consultations with the BiH political parties (SDP, Party for BiH, NHI, BPS, SDA, HDZ, DNZ, SDS, PDP, SNS, SPRS and ANSD) on the candidate for the new BiH Council of Ministers Chairman, which has to be of the Serb nationality. According to unofficial information, Dragan Mikerevic, the current BiH Minister for the European Integration, is most likely to be nominated for the post. According to the Nezavisne Novine, Mikerevic was proposed by the PDP and the RS Socialist Party as the SNS proposed Minister for Civil Affairs and Communication Svetozar Mihajlovic. The coalition SNSD-DSP will send their proposal prior to the session of the Presidency, though Radmanovic said that the SNSD-DSP coalition is more inclined to SBS's candidate, Svetozar Mihajlovic. An SDS representative, Momcilo Novakovic, said that it was unlikely that this party would support the Presidency's proposal, because according to the election results this position should be assumed by a candidate of this party. The SDP, NHI and the Party for BiH will support the proposal by the Presidency. The HDZ, whose representatives did not attend the consultations, will remain neutral. The Presidency is expected to decide on the issue on Thursday.

SBS' aim is to take control over the entire BiH's border by September

According to Oslobodjenje, at a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday, the BiH State Border Service (SBS) Director, Slavisa Vukovic, said that the SBS aim for this year was to take control over the entire state border by September. The Service currently control 75 percent of the border.

BiH, Yugoslav interstate council discusses return

of refugees

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the inter-state council for cooperation between BiH and Yugoslavia on discussed the issue return of refugees and displaced persons. BiH Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Refugees Vladislav Vladicic said after the meeting that the draft agreement on return of refugees from Yugoslavia to BiH and vice versa has been harmonized, and will be sent to the respective governments. A total of 214,000 BiH refugees are registered in Yugoslavia, out of whom 130,000 have not regulated their status, and nine per cent want to return to BiH. Some 30 per cent of them say they cannot make up their mind.

Vecernji List: Interview with Beriz Belkic, Chairman of BiH Presidency

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

'It is obvious that political structures, that dominate in the RS Assembly, are still supporting the idea to strengthen that entity, that is, to preserve some concept 'of a state' and create an illusion among the RS citizens that the RS is a state. They prevent everything, that goes in a direction of dissolution of that concept.

Arguments might change the current stands of the RS officials. The strongest argument is that we undertook an obligation, that we shall build a state according to universally accepted, democratic, European principles, that guarantee the same rights on the whole BiH territory.

If the arguments are not enough then there is the other way. Although the HR announces that he is not ready to do anything and that he leaves to the domestic officials to make constitutional changes, I believe that, at the end, he will have to intervene, in a way, that he should not look for a

compromise between a good and bad solution, but to impose the solutions that contain criteria of already known European standards.

Regarding the meeting in Zagreb, held between Croat parties and Croatian Prime Minister Racan, Belkic stated: 'Personally, I believe that such talks are not useful. Croats in BiH are not a national minority, but a constituent people, and politicians in Croatia, who show in their statements that their attitude towards the Croats is such as they are the national minority that should be protected by special measures, should be aware of it. To put it simply, I do not support this sort of consultations because according to this analogy, the parties with a Serb prefix should go to Belgrade for the consultations and then a tutor for Bosniaks should be found. Zdravko Tomac, a Vice President of the Croatian Parliament, has already hinted it when he mentioned Turkey.'

When questioned whether the September 11 event and events that followed in BiH changed the position of BiH in the world, Belkic said that they have changed the position to an extent because BiH had been labeled as a possible crisis spot and a possible source of terrorism without arguments. Belkic said that such attitude is gone following the swift action of BiH authorities, which put BiH alongside countries that contribute to fight against terrorism. With regards to BiH-Arabic countries rapport which has been allegedly compromised following the stories on involvement of Arabic humanitarian organizations in terrorist activities, Belkic said that the rapport has not been affected and that the good relationship with Arabic countries is one of key priorities. When asked to comment on the recent misunderstandings between BiH and Croatia and assess the policy of official Zagreb, Belkic said that the policy in the last year and a half has not brought much difference which is, in Belkic's opinion, a result of internal political situation in Croatia. "We expect that PMs Lagumdzija and Racan meet soon, when we will use arguments to

remove obstacles between the two countries", says Belkic, reads Vecernji List.

Constitutional Reform

Dnevni Avaz: Reactions to the Tuesday's meeting of BiH political leaders on constitutional reforms

Dnevni Avaz carries reactions to the Tuesday meeting of the High Representative with the leaders of the eight leading BiH political parties on the constitutional reforms. SDP Vice-president Sead Avdic said the meeting was just another attempt, which had been condemned in advance to fail. "I believe that the agreement made by local political representatives would strengthen dignity of BiH as a state," he emphasized. Party for BiH Presidency Chairman Safet Halilovic said he was not sure in readiness of the BiH political forces to consistently implement the BiH Constitutional Court's ruling. "I am afraid Petritsch just wants to complete the job before he leaves the office and that the quality of this work is less important for him," Halilovic said.

RS NA Speaker expresses readiness to reach compromise on constitutional changes

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski quotes RS NA Speaker and President of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS), Dragan Kalinic, as saying that representatives of some political parties compete in setting maximum demands and raise disputable issues, while the other show readiness to reach a realistic compromise. Commenting on the Tuesday's meeting of representatives of the leading BiH parties with the High Representative for BiH, Kalinic said that by insisting on maximal demands, the representatives of some political parties want to provoke the reaction of the

High Representative and other representatives of the international community. "By doing that they would show that the main political parties in BiH have irreconcilable views which would make the High Representative make some partial decisions that would not be a good constitutional solution for BiH", said Kalinic. He also said that there is a room to reach a good agreement with regards to definition of vital national interest, issues that will be defined as vital national interest and mechanisms of their protection. "Obviously, the current situation is not ripe for the vital national interests to be protected at the level of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly since many think that this would open up some other issues pertaining to the revision of the BiH Constitution. The issues of the language and fair representation are still remained open. As far as the SDS is concerned, we shall endeavour to reach a compromise but not to reach it at the expense of interests of the RS", said Kalinic. The next inter-party meeting is scheduled to take place on Sunday in Sarajevo.

PDP to back constitutional changes conditionally

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

The Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) stated on Tuesday that it would accept only those solutions of constitutional changes adopted in a regulated democratic procedure which ensure a concept of protection of human rights through a just representation of all three nations and those of other citizens of the RS and all of BiH in all government institutions on the basis of election results. "The PDP estimates that any kind of imposed solution would be harmful to the progress which has so far been established in relations within BiH. Solutions imposed on the PDP will not create an obligation to implement them, neither will the PDP have any responsibility for the consequences such solutions might cause," the statement said, adding that the PDP main committee had been discussing this at a session held on 24 February in Srpsko Sarajevo. The PDP expresses its concern over the

“double standards” on the issue of the constitutionality of certain peoples in the newly-created states on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, as well as over “petitions by certain political representatives or power centers or imposing solutions based on the 1991 census or any other criterion other than election results”. This party considers that preservation of special characteristics of both entities which make up BiH – the RS and the BiH Federation – is a guarantee of the prospects of BiH on the basis of the Dayton Peace Accord. “The PDP accepts only solutions reached in a regulated democratic procedure for constitutional changes which ensure equality of every nation’s language, defining the use of those through a law, as well as integration implemented on the principle of voluntary choice,” the statement said. It is outlined at the end that the preservation of vital interests of all three peoples and all the rest, through its definition, shows that the existence of a House of Peoples in the RS parliament is unjustified.

Dodik hails High Representative’s insistence on compromise

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

The chairman of the Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Milorad Dodik, on Wednesday said in an interview with the Banja Luka-based Radio Nes that the meeting held on Tuesday evening between the international community’s High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch and leaders of BiH parties at which they discussed constitutional changes had not resulted in anything new. “They generally repeated already known facts with regard to the changes,” Dodik said. He said that what was news at the talks was the optimism which the High Representative breathed in when he expressed his desire that compromise and agreement be reached. “The efforts of some representatives of political parties, above all the Bosniak and Croat ones, to point towards their compactness, he described as efforts to impose certain solutions,” Dodik said,

adding that he welcomed the High Representative's insistence on compromise and agreement no matter what.

The BiH Federation Government delivers draft amendments to the Entity Constitution into the parliamentary procedure

Oslobodjenje reports that the BiH Federation Government has delivered the draft amendments to the Entity Constitution into the parliamentary procedure. Regardless of what will be the essence of the amendments to be proposed in the Republika Srpska, the Federation Government has decided to initiate through the proposed amendments a full implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court's ruling on the constituency of the peoples. Such a position was confirmed at a Wednesday's press conference in Sarajevo, at which the journalists were addressed by Federation Justice Minister Zvonko Mijan and Federation Constitutional Commission Chairman Sahbaz Dzihanovic. Commenting on the move for the FTV, RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic said late on Wednesday that this was about a premature action by the Federation Government, which might have a negative influence on the process of constitutional reforms in the RS. (Attached is a more comprehensive [Fena news agency report](#) on the issue)

Federation

SDP BiH on the judicial reform

According to Oslobodjenje, at a regular SDP BiH press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday, Mahmut Alagic, the party's deputy to the BiH Federation House of Representatives, addressed the issue of the judicial reform in BiH. He said that although it was about a priority of the international community in BiH, the reform was being carried out with a major lateness.

The BiH Federation House of representatives discusses situation in the Army

Oslobodjenje reports that, at its session in Sarajevo on Wednesday, the BiH Federation House of Representatives discussed the information on the situation in the Entity's Army. The Federation Defense Minister, Mijo Anic, promised to the deputies that the soldiers, who would be dismissed in the coming period, would not end up in the street. The House is expected to discuss the draft Federation Budget for 2002 at the session on Thursday.

Ruling coalition asks for dismissal of all judges in Federation

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

"The ruling Alliance for changes has requested from the High Representative to carry out a radical reform of the judicial system and remove all 558 judges in the Federation BiH because, allegedly, there are evidence that show their ineffectiveness and corruption", said an Alliance official from the BiH Council of Ministers. The Chair of the CoM, Zlatko Lagumdzija, recently said that the BiH judiciary is a den of corruption. "If Petritsch does not use his authorities and remove the corrupt judges, he will face an avalanche of charges from the ruling Alliance at the end of his tenure because he did not have the courage to bring order into the BiH judiciary", says the Alliance official who wanted to stay anonymous. "The charges will be unbearable for Petritsch", adds the official. Judges of the ICTY have recently reiterated that the ICTY could give its consent to the BiH courts to try 15000 suspects. The Council of Ministers fears that the great number of cases could result in judges being subjects of bribes in order to pass less strict sentences against the suspects, reads Dnevni List.

Dnevni List: Mostar and BiH have chances to join Europe

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

During the three-day visit to BiH, the Coordinator of the State Department for US Aid for Europe and Eurasia William Taylor and Deputy Assistant of the US Treasury for Eurasia, Nancy Lee, visited Mostar. The senior officials were accompanied by the US Ambassador to BiH Clifford Bond and Head of American (Embassy) Office in Mostar Ann Carson. After the meeting with Mostar Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Neven Tomic and Hamdija Jahic respectively, Ambassador Bond said that it was important that people, who come to visit BiH, leave Sarajevo and see other parts of the country. "That is why these American officials visited Mostar in order to meet people and inform themselves about projects supported by the American Government", says Bond. Ambassador Taylor did not go into details of talks with the Mostar principles adding that BiH and Mostar have a great potential which gives them great chances to integrate into Europe. He sent a message to BiH authorities that there were many serious steps that need to be taken in order to have BiH joining European integration. Mayor Tomic said that he was pleased with the interest of American officials for the City of Mostar which should "be realized in concrete actions".

Slobodna Dalmacija: Will Mostar stay without 'its' electric power?

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Slobodna Dalmacija carries that unlike international officials, referring to Donald Hays, the Principle Deputy High Representative, Clifford Bond, the American Ambassador in BiH, and Bernard Bajolet, the French Ambassador to BiH, who have responded to the letter sent by Neven Tomic, a Mostar Mayor, and Hamdija Jahic, his Deputy, regarding their demand that

some institutions of the BiH power-supply system be seated in Mostar, and who supported this initiative, domestic officials have not declared themselves on this issue yet. The Federation Government, or its other institutions, has not had an official stand on this issue yet. For this reason the coming of Zlatko Lagumdjia, the Chair of the BiH Council of Ministers, and Alija Behmen, the Federation Prime Minister, was eagerly awaited. Namely, there were fears, that Lagumdija might be manipulated, as it was the case in a few other similar situations before, by a nationally oriented Party for BiH. However, constant SDP conflicts with this party regarding many issues, have made possible that Lagumdzia realize the real intentions of the Silajdzic's supporters, who changed their uniforms after the last elections.

For this reason, during his recent visit, Lagumdzija said Tomic and Jahic that he will not allow that they bypass Mostar with regard to this issue. In this way, he indicated to Tomic and Jahic that their request will bear fruits. Now, the Federation Government should make a move and it will be interesting to see as to how long it will take the officials of this Government to fulfill the demands of Mostarians, on which a silent consensus of all moderate BiH forces, but also of the International Community, has been reached.

Dnevni List: Illegal construction of facilities in Central Zone

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The Press Office of the City of Mostar issued a press release saying that Hamdija Jahic, a Mostar Deputy Mayor, has demanded from the City Public Legal Officer to launch an investigation into all registered cases of disputable construction in the Mostar Central Zone. The press release says that the Deputy Mayor Jahic sent a letter to the Head of OHR South, Deputy High Representative Jean-Pierre Bercot, informing him of the already registered illegal construction in the (Mostar's)

Central Zone for which there are evidence that they are results of criminal behavior, which are not dealt with because of various obstruction. In Jahic's opinion, the practice creates an image that the criminal has been protected which could be detrimental to positive processes in the City of Mostar. All this triggered Jahic to demand from the representatives of the International Community to form an Independent Legal Commission that should, as soon as possible, reexamine all cases of disputable construction in this zone. The press release says that during the talks with the representatives of OHR and American Embassy in BiH, Hamdija Jahic received support to form that Commission, reads Dnevni List.

Slobodna Dalmacija: International organizations on construction of facility on location of City Pharmacy

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Avis Benes, an OHR Spokesperson, stated: 'OHR did not stop the construction of the facility on the location of City Pharmacy in Mostar, because it is not competent to do it. However, the Head of OHR Mostar sent a letter to Neven Tomic, the Mostar Mayor, and Hamdija Jahic, the Deputy Mayor, in which he stressed that there are certain doubts regarding the legality of the whole process of the construction of a disputable facility and suggested a temporary suspension of works, until the investigation on this case is completed.'

She stated that OHR will not go into demanded removals of the officials in the Mostar City Administration, because it is in the competence of legal bodies of that institution, and that OHR will not deal with individual cases of illegal construction.

She announced that a few Ministries of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, that have been disunited so far, will finally unify

its work until March 15. Apart from the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Finances, the other Ministries in the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton have been working separately so far, that is, the Ministries of the Croat and Bosniak part of the Canton have been working paralelly.

Prime Minister Miroslav Coric and his Deputy Omer Macic informed the Head of the OHR South in a written form, about the realization of the Action Plan on the unification of the Cantonal Ministries according to which, by March 10 this year, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Welfare will be integrated (in Lacina Street 8 in Mostar East), as well as, the Ministry of Traffic and Communications (Osman Djikic Street in Mostar East). According to the same plan, by March 15, in the premises of Djacki Dom (Mostar West) the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Construction, Urban Planning and Environment will unify.

Avis Benes also stated that Mr. Bercot, the Head of the OHR Mostar, appreciates the efforts, exerted in order to reach this compromise.

Although it is still necessary to resolve many issues, he believes that this is a big step made in a right direction, which has brought a concrete result and which has shown that Cantonal officials are able to change the direction from an obstructionist one towards a constructive one, when the fulfilling of their obligations is in question. The Head of OHR Mostar expects that this process will be continued and that aforementioned Ministries will implement provisions of the Action Plan without a delay.

Dnevni List: Neven's troubles

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni list carries that Neven Tomic stated for TV Hayat that out of all HDZ dissidents he is in the most difficult situation, because he stayed in Mostar. Tomic also said that

salaries that he and his wife receive are not enough and for this reason he needs additional sources of income (Tomic gets 1400 KMs a month for being the Mostar Mayor). Dnevni List says that the additional sources of income are Tomic's shares in a big company dealing with the production of software. He also said that due to his parting with HDZ, his financially powerful friend have suffered the most. According to Tomic, they were all under some sort of "regime and surveillance". He stressed that Prlic is his great friend also saying that he had a great time during his work in Sarajevo. Dnevni List comments that they have received an information that for his work in Sarajevo he was awarded with a big flat in this city, next to the flat Jadranko Prlic was also awarded with one.

Vecernji List: After Constitutional Court's decision regarding the authority for trying Ante Jelavic

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

With regards to the entrance visa that was denied to the unrecognized HDZ President Ante Jelavic, today's Vecernji List reads that the Croatian Americans Association (CAA) has managed through lobbying with a few US Congressmen and Senators to raise their voice in the matter. The daily says that a Democrat from Illinois William Lipinski, together with a few colleagues of his, has asked the Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage as well as US Ambassador to BiH Clifford Bond to reconsider the issuance of the visa to Ante Jelavic. Lipinski's letter reads that they, being members of the Congress, follow events in BiH and would like to get his (Jelavic's) opinion about the current position of Croats in BiH.

Mathew Glavin, a Chief of Staff of Senator Richard Durbin, at his request, received on Tuesday a Jelavic's authorization to renew an application for the issuance of visa in Jelavic's name together with State Department officials.

At the same time the Association of American Croats sent a letter to President Bush and warned him that the decision on the rejection of the entrance visa to Jelavic, who was supposed to attend an annual gathering of this Association, shocked the whole Croat community. The letter also says that the moves, that the American Administration has made towards the BiH Croats, so far, were unjust.

The CAA is happy with the Constitutional Court's decision, which has suspended the procedure against Jelavic assessing that the moment could result in Jelavic getting the visa. With regards to that matter, VL carries Jelavic's attorney, Josip Muselimovic, as saying that the Constitutional Court would make a final ruling when it would confirm that Jelavic could be tried before the Mostar Cantonal Court, if the local Prosecutor deems that there are enough elements to raise an indictment.

With regard to this issue, Ante Jelavic reiterated that this is about a useless, politically rigged process that will be counter-productive for those who ordered it. He added: 'I respect institutions of Judicial and Executive Authority and for this reason I appeared at each hearing before the Sarajevo Cantonal Court. Simply there are no arguments to press charges against me.'

Asked about the media speculations regarding new divisions within HDZ, Jelavic concluded that there are different views within the biggest Croat party, however, that there is no division of HDZ in three groups. People within HDZ ,who come out with such thesis, are probably concerned about their possible positions on HDZ lists. He added that at the next elections HDZ will disappoint ill-intentioned ones and achieve good results, denying the information that HDZ will elect new leadership at the next session of the HDZ Central Board on March 9.

Republika Srpska

The RS Constitutional Commission: Bosniaks veto the draft Election Law

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies quote RS National Assembly Speaker, Dragan Kalinic, as saying that Bosniak members of the RS National Assembly Constitutional Commission vetoed the RS Election Law explaining that the Law jeopardizes their vital national interests. Kalinic said that the Bosniak members of the RS NA Constitutional Commission do not agree with provisions of the law according to which RS citizens should be eligible to vote. They think that "RS citizens" should be replaced with "BiH citizens". According to Kalinic, the Bosniak members of the RS NA Constitutional Commission also object to the composition of the RS Election Commission. "They think that the Law should include the provision according to which the ethnic composition of municipal election commissions should be in line with the 1991 Census. They also think that the expression 'state authorities' should be replaced with 'entity authorities'", said Kalinic. Kalinic thinks that these objections are aimed at preventing the law from passing before the harmonization of the RS Constitution with the BiH Constitutional Court on constituent status of all three peoples is finished. The RS NA Speaker also commented on the Law on RTRS (Radio Television of the RS). He said that upon the request of the High Representative for BiH, the Law on RTRS will probably be stripped off the agenda despite the RS Government's insistence to forward the law to the RS NA. Commenting on reaction of the OHR on the Law on RTRS, Kalinic said that the High Representative intervened because the RS Government's version of the law on RTRS does not match with the version of the law drafted by the OHR working group. "The High Representative is of the opinion that the law on RTRS does not conform to the highest European standards according to which any sort of political influence to media should be

eliminated. The High Representative advocates professionalism and elimination of political influence on RTRS. He also objects to the provisions pertaining to founder of RTRS, appointment of RTRS Board of Governors and TV subscription", said Kalinic. Kalinic confirmed he had received the letter from the RS Government which requested that the draft law on RTRS is included in the agenda.

RS National Assembly to hold session on Thursday

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

RTRS radio reports that the 13th session of the RS National Assembly is scheduled to begin at 10:00 today in Banja Luka. Out of 23 proposed items of the agenda, 2 are contentious. The Bosniak members of the RS Constitutional Commission are requesting that the proposed RS Electoral Law be withdrawn, because they are not satisfied with the national structure of electoral commissions. They are of the view that this law should not be adopted before constitutional changes. The High Representative to BiH requests that the agenda of today's session should not include the draft Law on *RTRS*, because of differences between the contents of the draft sent by the Government and the version established earlier by a joint working group. However, the RS Government concluded at yesterday's session that it would not give up a discussion on this draft Law at today's session and that all objections should be presented during a public debate. RS Parliament Speaker stated that he would inform the RS NA collegium of these issues prior to the session. Of other items on today's agenda, the interesting are the draft Law on University, changes and amendments to the Law on Internal Management and legal solutions to the privatization of business premises. The agenda also incorporates changes and amendment to the Law on the Use of Abandoned Property and Law on Refugees, DPs and Returnees.

Large number of people from Sipovo refused to pay subscription fee to the RTRS

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski reports that a large number of people from villages of Stojnice, Pribeljci and Babici (Sipovo municipality) refused to pay RTRS subscription fee for January. The people from these villages say they are extremely dissatisfied with RTRS because the entity TV station (RTRS) sent bills to households which do not have TV sets as well as to those who died long time ago. They also say that in this area it is very difficult to watch RTRS because there are no adequate transmitters. The TV-signal comes and goes every now and then and we cannot watch RTRS normally. "That is why we have been forced to watch Croatian Television (HRT) and the TV Federation", say the villagers.

USA agrees with dropping genocide charge against Karadzic if he surrenders and testifies against Milosevic

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

All Banja Luka-based TV-stations carried an article that appeared in the latest edition of the Bijeljina-based Ekstra Magazin. The Hague war crimes tribunal and the US administration have sent an offer to former Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadzic to surrender and testify before the tribunal as the key witness against Slobodan Milosevic, according to a Bosnian magazine. Citing unnamed Western diplomatic sources, the magazine claimed that the tribunal and the US administration had agreed that if Karadzic were to accept the proposal, the genocide charge against him would be withdrawn and he would be exonerated of any responsibility for the crimes in Srebrenica. These would be ascribed to Gen Ratko Mladic and other Bosnian Serb army officers. Two weeks ago the Hague tribunal and the US administration sent what is probably

the last offer to former RS President Radovan Karadzic to surrender and testify before the tribunal as the key witness against Slobodan Milosevic, in the portion of the indictment referring to BiH. Citing unnamed Western diplomatic sources in Sarajevo, this paper claims that the tribunal and the US administration have agreed that if Karadzic were to accept the proposal, the genocide charge against him would be withdrawn. Furthermore, Karadzic would be exonerated of any responsibility for the crimes in Srebrenica. These would be ascribed to General Ratko Mladic and his Knin group of the Serb Republic Army officers. In this case, Ekstra Magazin reports, the prosecution would also withdraw the genocide charge against former RS Speaker Momcilo Krajisnik and former RS vice-president and later president Biljana Plavsic. They, together with Karadzic, would undergo a joint trial in October 2002. The paper further reports that "a senior State Department official launched this initiative at the start of February. This official visited Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro over several days in utmost secrecy. During his visit he also held talks with Karadzic's wife Ljiljana in Pale. In Belgrade and Niksic, he twice contacted Radovan's brother Luka Karadzic." The US official, according to Ekstra Magazin, even visited Karadzic's mother, who lives in Niksic, and some other people in Pale, Banja Luka, Podgorica and Belgrade, who, the administration believes, regularly or occasionally contact the former RS president. The US-Hague offer to Karadzic, of which some leaders in the RS, BiH and Serbia have been informed through US embassies, is open until the end of March, following which we can expect to witness arrests by British SAS troops, with Americans involved in the support and logistical tasks.

AFP: UN court denies Karadzic deal

UN war crimes prosecutors denied Wednesday a report they had offered to drop genocide charges against Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic if he surrendered and testified

against ex-Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic. "There are no negotiations. There is no deal. You can't change the indictment," said Florence Hartmann, spokeswoman for the prosecution at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Ekstra magazine in the Bosnian city of Banja Luka had reported that the United States and the UN court had made the offer in early February to the family of Karadzic, still at large nearly seven years after his indictment. Quoting a Western diplomat from Sarajevo, it said that Karadzic was asked to surrender to the tribunal here and become a key witness against Milosevic, who went on trial for genocide and crimes against humanity on February 12. In return, the magazine said, the ICTY and US administration would drop charges against Karadzic for genocide and any responsibility for the massacre of some 7,000 Bosniaks in the enclave of Srebrenica in July 1995. It said there was no response so far from Karadzic. "It's just allegations in the press," Hartmann said of the report. "It's not coming from us." The ICTY indicted Karadzic and his military chief Ratko Mladic on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes during Bosnia's 1992-95 conflict that left more than 200,000 people dead. Milosevic is being tried for his alleged responsibility in the 1990s wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. For Bosnia, he faces genocide charges. Ekstra said that if Karadzic turned himself in, only Mladic and his army officers involved in the Srebrenica massacre would be charged and processed for genocide. It said the offer was delivered by a senior State Department official to Karadzic's wife Ljiljana and his brother Luka, and was valid until the end of March. Afterwards, the magazine said, a British Special Air Service (SAS) unit would seek to arrest Karadzic with US special forces providing logistical support.

The ICTY recently said that Karadzic was hiding somewhere in the Republika Srpska (RS) and Mladic near Belgrade.

International Community

Reuters: Milosevic trial shown alleged Kosovo hit list

Serbian security forces primed death squads in Kosovo to wipe out ethnic Albanians during a targeted ethnic cleansing drive in 1999, a human rights activist said at Slobodan Milosevic's war crimes trial on Wednesday. Serbs drew up a hit list in February 1999 of people to be shot during a crackdown on the majority population of the disputed province, Kosovo Albanian human-rights campaigner Halit Barani told the war crimes court in The Hague. [Reuters article](#)

OHR organizes seminar on combating money laundering

Participants at a seminar organized on Wednesday by OHR's Anti-Fraud Department (AFD) adopted an action plan aimed at strengthening the mechanisms currently used in BiH to combat money laundering. The main elements of the action plan include the necessary legal reform, system improvement, capacity building, raising of awareness, and presenting the action plan to the governments. "Money laundering is an inseparable part of corruption, organized crime, fraud, smuggling and other commercial crimes," AFD Head Manfred Dauster told seminar participants. He noted that the global money-laundering problem disproportionately affects transition countries, such as BiH, threatening their political and economic stability and scaring off legitimate, long-term investment. "The ability of criminals to assemble and legitimize wealth has the potential to undermine democratic institutions and subvert entire economies," Mr. Dauster said. (Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz prominently report on a Wednesday's press conference on the issue) [OHR Press Release](#)

The Agreement on Succession to former SFRY brought into question

According to the Dnevni Avaz front-page story, the Agreement on the Succession to the former SFRY signed last spring might be annulled due to unexplained ways in which the SFRY National Bank's deposits in the foreign banks were reduced from 645.5 to 56.7 millions US dollars. The FRY Central Bank provided the Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement's Annex C just with an explanation how \$25 million and DEM 25 million of these funds had been spent.

OHR requests RSNA not to place the Draft Law on RTRS on the agenda

The High Representative is concerned that the RS Government has forwarded to the RS National Assembly a Draft Law on RTRS which is not the version drafted and agreed upon by a Joint Working Group made up of representatives of the RS Government, RTRS and the OHR. The High Representative on Tuesday sent a letter to the Speaker of the RSNA asking for discussions on the presented draft to be postponed. (Dnevni Avaz carried the [Press Release](#))

AFP: UN official urges changes to Bosnia's Dayton peace accords

The UN special envoy to Bosnia said Wednesday that the country needed to set up its own national convention without a foreign presence to oversee a major overhaul of the Dayton peace accords that ended Bosnia's 1992-95 war. "This country desperately needs a national convention without foreigners where the three peoples sit down," Jacques Klein told AFP, proposing a convention made up of 150 members representing ethnic Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats equally. "Dayton is the floor and not the ceiling. It has to be amended," Klein said in the interview, given on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Bosnia's independence.

Headlines

Oslobodjenje

- The arms smuggling trial continues: Sabanovic accuses Jamakovic and Babic

Dnevni Avaz

- Agreement on Succession to former SFRY brought into question: \$589 million stolen

Jutarnje Novine

- The Federation Government seeks loan to compensate the dismissed soldiers

Glas Srpski

- Bosniak members of the RS National Assembly Constitutional Commission vetoed the RS election law;
- Sipovo – No signal, no TV-subscription;

Nezavisne Novine

- BiH Presidency will propose new CoM Chairman – Mihajlovic and Mikerevic;
- BiH Federation Government adopted the draft amendments to the BiH Federation Constitution – Distribution of power in line with the 1991 Census;

Dnevni List

- Exclusive: How have the loans been shared in the West Herzegovina Canton
- Neven in troubles: I am in the most difficult position of all HDZ dissidents
- After Silajdzic's statement that BiH Judiciary is a hotbed of crime: The Alliance demands removal of 588 Judges

Vecernji List

- Beriz Belkic, a Chairman of the BiH Presidency: Neighbors are interfering in our internal affairs

- Ante Jelavic, an Unrecognized HDZ President: We shall surprise them all at the elections