BiH Media Round-up, 3/10/2001

BiH State-related Issues

- **Premier presents set of anti-terrorism measures**
- **Alliance for Changes to OHR: Urgent reorganization of TV BiH needed**
- **Haris Silajdzic and David Phillips for *The International Herald Tribune*: Bosnians Know What's to be done**

Federation

- **Possible changes of regulations pertaining to abandoned "military apartments"**
- **The proposal of three Pensioners' Associations for the position of the Head of the joint Pension-Disability Fund: Zarko Markic nominated for the President**
- **14 candidates for the position of the Head of the Federation TV**
- **Why did SFOR organize a spectacular action at Visoko airport: Chemical and biological weapons for terrorist activities found**
- **Ante Jelavic again President of HDZ BiH?**

Republika Srpska

- **RS National Assembly adopts the Law on Cooperation with the ICTY**

International Community

- **SFOR reveals nationalities of detained persons with suspected links to terrorists**
- **High Representative and Croatian Prime Ministers discuss situation in BiH**
- **OHR and European Commission announce the start of serial "From Idea to Business"**
- **Alexandra Stiglmayer Says OHR Satisfied with BiH**

Constitutional Court Decision on Constitutionality of BiH Court

Editorials

- ***Dnevni List*: Ballast for the Alliance**
- ***Slobodna Dalmacija*: Petritsch and Racan will strike against HDZ radicals?**
- ***Vjesnik*: Silajdzic's departure weakens the Alliance**

BiH State-related Issues

Premier presents set of anti-terrorism measures

The chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdzija, has called on the deputies of both houses of the state parliament to contribute suggestions to the plan of activities in the struggle against terrorism. He told the plenary session in Sarajevo on Tuesday that full consensus and preparedness existed at all government levels to get Bosnia-Hercegovina actively involved in the struggle against the global problem.

Lagumdzija said that the plan by the Council of Ministers consists of five groups of measures and activities. The first group is related to the package of laws linked to the CIPS [Citizens Identification Protection System] project and to a number of other activities in connection with legal regulation and registration of various documents. The necessary amendments and addenda to the laws on asylum and immigration also belong to this group of measures and activities.

The second group of measures and activities are related to the need for an integral approach to the setting up of civil aviation, stemming from the international commitments and conventions which we have signed. The third group is related to measures and activities regarding tasks of the state border service and tasks in which activities of the entity interior

ministries have to be coordinated. This group of measures and activities includes all necessary tasks regarding the issues of citizenship, passports, collection of customs duty etc.

The fourth group of measures and activities is related to a wide-ranging number of issues with an international dimension, including the organization of the visa regime in line with the Schengen standards, those providing for registration of international aid organizations and NGOs, those regulating establishment and intensification of international cooperation within the Stability Pact…. The fifth group is related to the definition of the entity plans for anti-terrorism measures to which the entity leaders have committed themselves.

Alliance for Changes to OHR: Urgent reorganization of TV BiH needed

At a regular meeting held on Monday evening, representatives of the Alliance for Changes expressed their dissatisfaction with the reconstruction of the electronic media in BiH. "We concluded that the state of electronic media in general, and in TV BiH in particular, is catastrophic. The consolidation process in this house has been lasting for too long, and small changes that took place did not contribute to the improvement of the situation," a source close to the Alliance told Oslobodjenje. He added that the Alliance addressed a letter to the OHR asking it to find an urgent solution for the TV BiH. "Structuring of electronic media, in particular of the TV BiH, is of great importance for the entire state," the same source said.

Haris Silajdzic and David Phillips for The International Herald Tribune: Bosnians Know What's to be done

All Sarajevo media carry an article written by Haris Silajdzic and David Phillips and which was published in October 2 edition of *The International Herald Tribune* under the title

[“Bosnains Know What’s to Be Done.”]

Federation

Possible changes of regulations pertaining to abandoned “military apartments”

OHR spokesperson Alexandra Stiglmayer told Dnevni Avaz that if the Human Rights Chamber rules that the provisions determining the limitation on purchase of the abandoned military apartments are discriminatory, the OHR could ask the Federation government to annul such provisions. The daily notes that the Article 3 of the Law on the termination of the Law on abandoned apartments prohibits individuals who have served in military forces outside of BiH after December 15, 1995 or who were employed in the Yugoslav National Army after April 1991 from returning their property. Stiglmayer said that until the final decision is made in the Human Rights Chamber, the High Representative will not consider this issue.

The proposal of three Pensioners’ Associations for the position of the Head of the joint Pension-Disability Fund: Zarko Markic nominated for the President

The Presidency of the Union of the Pensioners of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton sent a letter to Alija Behmen, the President of the BiH Federation Government, Nikola Grabovac, the Deputy President of the Government and the Minister of Finances, Josip Merdzo, the President of the HN Canton Government, Mijat Tuka, the Deputy Minister for Refugees and Social Affairs and Mr. Salihbegovic, the Minister’s Assistant, in which they informed them that their candidate for the Head of the Mostar Federation Pension -Disability Bureau is Zarko Markic.

The leaderships of three Pensioners’ Associations (the

Associations of the Pensioners of the West Herzegovina, Herzegovina Neretva and Herceg Bosna Cantons) stress that Zarko Markic has all qualifications and experience necessary for this position because before the war he worked as the Deputy Head of the BiH Pension-Disability Fund.

14 candidates for the position of the Head of the Federation TV

Slavo Kukic, the president of the Federation TV Council, said that the Council has had talks with 14 possible candidates for the Fed TV Director since March this year, but added that he/she will not be elected this week. Kukic also said that the deadline for the starting of the broadcasting of the Federation TV program has been postponed and is now expected to start at the end of the next month.

Why did SFOR organize a spectacular action at Visoko airport: Chemical and biological weapons for terrorist activities found (provided by OHR Mostar)

Last week's action of the American SFOR and Italian Carabinieri at the Visoko airport was organized because of identifying of biological-chemical weapons. In a rapid action, in which airborne helicopter troops participated, Hasan Cengic, a senior SDA official and the ex Deputy Minister of Defense of BiH and his father Halid Cengic were kept in for questioning although this was not publicly reported. The Cengic family is suspected of smuggling arms from BiH to Kosovo and Macedonia although the Federation authorities and SFOR are staying silent about it. Although the SFOR spokesman, Captain Daryll Morrell denied that an armament warehouse was found at the airport, our source claims that an unknown quantity of biological-chemical substance was found. Most probably it was supposed to be used for terrorist diversions in BiH. Sarajevo-based media are trying to belittle the whole action. Arrests of four men whose names are linked to

international terrorism and the silence of the Federation MoI speak best about the SFOR action that it was not a routine weapons inspection as reported by the SFOR HQ in Sarajevo. SFOR has planned the raid with great attention on the basis of their intelligence data and data of intelligence services that warned that armament for organizing of terrorist activities in BiH or organizing of armament smuggling to Kosovo and Macedonia is in the warehouse. On the basis of the data, the Italian Carabinieri raided the Saudi High Committee office at Ilidza. Nihad Plavcic and Alen Harabusa, BiH citizens, were arrested during the action. 120.000 DEM that belonged to the organization were confiscated during the action. Fhad Al Zakari, deputy director of the High Saudi Committee, reacted in a paid advertisement in "Dnevni Avaz" yesterday, calling upon the Allah. The organization points out that it is embittered with the treatment they received from the Italian special troops and that arrests of their safeguard and cook is an uncivilized gesture and calls on the Italian troops to publicly apologize. The 120.000 belonged, according to their explanation, to "jetimas" (orphans) helped by the Saudi Committee. The embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been informed about the incident that could turn into a diplomatic incident at highest levels, so it is expected the embassy send a protest note to Italian authorities and NATO, reads Vecernji List.

Ante Jelavic again President of HDZ BiH?

According to Marko Tokic, President of the HNS, (dismissed) Vice President of the HDZ BiH and the President of the HDZ's committee for making of the program declaration for the emergency Convention of the HDZ BiH, a candidate who stands the biggest chance of becoming the President of the party at the next convention is the current President Ante Jelavic. The emergency convention is going to be held because of the HDZ being in the political isolation due to the ban on officiating public duties imposed on Ante Jelavic and other senior party

officials. High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch, who called upon his authorities determined in the Dayton Agreement and decisions by the Peace Implementation Council, imposed the ban. Tokic says that the new program declaration will not see any changes apart from some amendments from the Declaration on Rights and Position of Croats in BIH and the Platform for Democratic and Self-sustainable BiH of the HNS, reads Jutarnji List.

Republika Srpska

RS National Assembly adopts the Law on Cooperation with the ICTY

The RS National Assembly adopted on Tuesday a law on cooperating with the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague that could lead to the handover of the two most wanted suspects, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. The law spells out procedures for cooperation between the Republika Srpska and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In The Hague, the ICTY welcomed the decision but spokesman Jim Landale

added that it was time for RS authorities to take concrete steps and hand over war crimes suspects. “We would like to see action rather than words,” said Landale. The tribunal wants “immediate and concrete signs of cooperation” from the RS, he added. “This means the apprehension and transfer of all individuals accused of war crimes currently residing in the Republika Srpska,” Landale said.

The bill was adopted by a vote of 42 to 9 with 25 abstentions. A total of 76 deputies were present at the session of the 83-seat parliament. Media notes it was not immediately known which political parties backed the law.

International Community

SFOR reveals nationalities of detained persons with suspected links to terrorists

All BiH media reported that the SFOR revealed on Tuesday the nationalities of four people its troops detained last week in Sarajevo for suspected links with Islamic terrorists, saying they comprised an Egyptian, a Jordanian and two Bosnians. The Egyptian and the Jordanian were arrested on September 25 at a hotel in the Sarajevo's suburb of Ilidza, while two Bosnian citizens were detained a day later in the vicinity of the Saudi High Commission for Relief located in the same suburb, Daryl Morrell, SFOR spokesman told journalists. However, Morrell did not want to reveal the identity of the suspects. He only said that they were "suspected of involvement with support for terrorist activities."

High Representative and Croatian Prime Ministers discuss situation in BiH

Slobodna Dalmacija quotes a source close to the Croatian Government as saying that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, met with the Croatian Prime Minister, Ivica Racan, last weekend. The two, reportedly, talked about the results of the audit in Hercegovacka Banka and the co-operation between the HRT and the Federation TV in the view of 'technical obstacles in the use of the HRT transmitters.' According to the source, the HDZ Convention was not a special topic of their conversation and the Action Plan in Mostar was not mentioned at all. The daily notes that OHR Spokesperson Oleg Milisic confirmed for Nezavisne Novine that Wolfgang Petritsch and Ivica Racan did meet to discuss the implementation of the Peace Agreement with a special accent on the status of Croats in BiH.

In a separate article, however, Slobodna Dalmacija reports

that Racan and Petritsch did discuss the HDZ Convention and possible consequences of radical decisions that may be taken by the HDZ leadership and of the Hercegovacka Banka investigation. The daily says Nezavisne Novine found out that the Federation Government and the OHR will soon take actions against the criminal elements within the HDZ related to the Hercegovacka Banka case. (see also editorial section)

OHR and European Commission announce the start of serial "From Idea to Business"

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the chief of the EC (European Commission) Delegation in BiH, Hansjoerg Kretschmer, announced on Tuesday the start of the broadcasting of the radio and television serial "From idea to business" which is aimed at encouraging economic development in BiH. The serial is designed as a form of a guide for starting and running small and medium businesses in BiH. (All Federation and RS media carried reported on the serial – quite prominently)

Alexandra Stiglmayer Says OHR Satisfied with BiH Constitutional Court Decision on Constitutionality of BiH Court

Today's edition of "Nezavisne novine" quotes OHR Spokesperson, Alexandra Stiglmayer, as saying that the Office of the High Representative for BiH is satisfied that the BiH Constitutional Court passed a decision according to which the Law on BiH Court, imposed by the High Representative in November last year, is in keeping with the BiH Constitution. "We must say that we did not expect the BiH Constitutional Court to come to a different conclusion since the High Representative always takes care that laws, he imposes, are in line with the BiH Constitution", says Stiglmayer. She also says that the BiH Court provides for judicial remedies in matters that under the Constitution are within the competence of the state such as foreign trade and investment, passports

and ID cards, illegal immigration, human trafficking or inter-Entity crime.

Editorials

Dnevni List: Ballast for the Alliance (provided by OHR Mostar)

"Early this year, when the Alliance for Changes was formed at the SDP's initiative, it was pointed, and for a reason, that one of the crucial issues that will serve as a test of this coalition will be the attitude to the national issue. Led by the formally multiethnic SDP, the Alliance promised to abolish the 'parallelisms,' primarily the two practically separate and parallel systems that the SDA and the HDZ created in the Federation which, for years, were the basis of power in the bigger BiH entity.

While the NHI Ministers Grabovac and Anic were on the first lines of the struggle against the self-styled Croat autonomy, the matter of 'parallelism'-abolishing was functioning well. The Ministries of Finance and Defense acted unanimously by blocking the attempts of creating a parallel financial and defensive system in the Croat-majority territories.

However, cracks appeared as soon as some Bosniak-related problems came to turn. For instance, the Defense Ministry issued two different press releases regarding the ICTY indictment against Generals Alagic, Hadzihasanovic and Kubura. Problems also appeared at the Ministry of Finance between the Minister and his Deputy in their public polemic on the payment of pensions…

Differences in views exist today as well. For example, that is the case with the trial against 'Zepce Group.' The impression is that the SDP and the Party for BiH find the Croat parties within the Alliance more and more of a ballast, especially

because they have shown that, despite being against the HDZ, they will not give up on the protection of the principle of equality of all constituent peoples in our country and its entities," reads the editorial.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Petritsch and Racan will strike against HDZ radicals? (provided by OHR Mostar)

In the light of the 7th Emergency HDZ BiH Convention, the IC in BiH is faced with possible excess problems, whose culmination might cause serious problems in the state and thus create a new crisis territory in the heart of Europe.

A source, close to the OHR, stated for Nezavisne Novine that Western diplomats in BiH are trying to prevent it at all costs. He also added that 'the IC representatives have taken important actions so that they leave nothing to chance'. The same source confirmed that the HR and Ivica Racan met in Zagreb on Saturday, however, he could not say anything more about the details from this meeting. He only stated that he supposes that two of them talked about the HDZ Convention, the consequences, that possible radical decisions of the HDZ leadership might cause, and the investigation on Hercegovacka Bank.

Nezavisne Novine found out that these days the Federation Government and OHR will start with the activities against criminal elements within the HDZ BiH, in relation to the case of Hercegovacka Bank. The last statements of the HR, who stated that the investigation on Hercegovacka Bank is about its end and who announced that evidence against some people will come to light soon, prove that this move could have been predicted before.

In this sense, the misuse of money that the Croatian Government allocated as assistance for the BiH Croats and HVO is being mentioned more than anything else. During the last

few days, Nikola Grabovac, the Federation Minister of Finances, stressed the problem caused by the fact that pension insurance for the Croat component of the Federation Army soldiers has not been paid in, and this happened during the time when the HDZ cadre ruled the Ministry of Defense.

Mijo Anic, the Minister of Defense and Grabovac's party colleague, during his visit to Mostar also announced that the BiH public 'will have a chance to see robbers very soon', those who were systematically robbing the HVO soldiers for years.

According to some information, filing of criminal charges against some high-ranked BiH officials for serious criminal activities might be expected soon.

The investigation on Hercegovacka Bank and on the Federation Ministry of Defense have shown that very suspicious activities were taking place while Ante Jelavic, and Miroslav Prce were at the head of the Ministry.

Vjesnik: Silajdzic's departure weakens the Alliance

Editorial by Ivan Sabic

Alliance for changes is facing serious difficulties these days. Actually it has been facing difficulties since its beginning from the times when they could not agree on distribution of posts after it took over the authority and these days we are seeing some events that remind us of that situation. One of the events is Haris Silajdzic's decision to leave the presidential post at the Party for BiH, second strongest party in the Alliance for changes, which is according to many assessments a great loss for the coalition. Party for BiH is practically headless since Silajdzic's departure. There is not a prominent figure in the party who

could take over the leader's position so the party's leadership, to be more exact its outgoing president, decided to reinstate the forgotten "collective work and responsibility". If it's to judge by that, Silajdzic's departure, albeit he has not been publicly active in the last year, is a great loss for the Alliance. Considering the fact that other members of the Alliance, excluding the SDP, are small party with small support from the electorate, President of the SDP becomes (remains) its only leader. It is also true that Lagumdzija does not loathe the role. In many situation he has acted as the unanimous leader of the Alliance and he is often seen like that by the BiH public as well as by the IC in that country. But the role hides many dangers including the greatest of them all – possibility that the electorate identify Lagumdzija and his party as guilty persons for the failure of the current authority to lead BiH out of the crisis, foremost out of the economic crisis. The Alliance is also facing a danger to lose its hardly gained multi-ethnic character. Most members of the coalition are Bosniak parties, and considering the fact that it governs a multi-ethnic society, it is necessary to have a Croat party (parties) participating in it. So far it has somewhat functioned – you have NHI and HSS in the Alliance but some events, especially events surrounding the Zepce case before the Zenica Court, open a possibility that some parties (albeit small parties) leave the coalition. On the other hand, Kresimir Zubak told Dnevni Avaz that the NHI would not repeat HDZ's mistakes from 1992 and leave the institutions. But NHI sees the Zepce process as yet another attempt to chase the NHI away from the Alliance. Departure of the NHI would suit someone, as Vjesnik learns from a source from the NHI, because the SDP has its own Croats now. In the same time that would be a dangerous step for the coalition because the NHI, although it has only two MPs in the Federation Parliament, is the only member of the Alliance that has a support of the Croat people. SDP succeeded to bring some Croats into the Parliament, but some trifles, like the one in central Bosnia where the leader of the SDP

list did not become an MP but did the Bosniaks who were behind him on list, owing it to the system of open lists, spoil the overall image of the SDP multi-ethnicity, reads Vjesnik.