

BiH Media Round-up, 31/1/2002

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BiH State-related Issues

State, Entity officials met in Bosanski/Srpski Brod to discuss revival of the oil derivatives production in BiH

BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagmdzija, BiH Treasury Minister and an oil economic expert Anto Domazet, Republika Srpska Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and a number of authorized ministers from the both entities met on Wednesday in Bosanski/Srpski Brod to discuss the development of the oil derivatives production in the town's refinery. The refinery general manager, Vojin Mujicic, told Oslobodjenje that the first amounts of the lead-free gas produced in Brod might be placed in the market in June this year. "We expect financial support to the project, and we are prepared to invest a part of our own funds in it," Mujicic said. The State and Entity officials also discussed how to better arrange the oil and oil derivatives market in the country.

Slovenian Foreign Minister visits BiH

According to BiH media, Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel on Wednesday visited Sarajevo, where he met with his BiH counterpart Zlatko Lagumdžija to discuss bilateral relations between the two countries. The two ministers agreed to intensify consultation at the level of the deputy foreign ministers in the coming period in order that disputed issues are solved in a more accelerated way, such as the implementation of the inter-state agreement on the rights of the foreign employees and the mutual property claims resolution. In the course of his official visit to BiH, Rupel also met with the BiH Presidency members. He reiterated at the meeting that Slovenia would continue to support BiH's development.

Petritsch meets with Rupel

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, held talks on Wednesday with Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel during his visit to Sarajevo. The High Representative informed Mr. Rupel about the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on the present status of implementing the Constitutional Court's Decision on the Constituency of Peoples in BiH. Implementation, now at a crucial phase, will define the degree to which BiH politicians can show maturity and demonstrate a capacity to take ownership of the challenges facing the country, the High Representative said. (Dnevni Avaz and Jutarnje Novine carried the [Press Release](#))

Holding of the 2002 elections brought into question

Oslobodjenje reports that the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at its session held on 29 and 30 January 2002, considered, among other things, the issue of funding the work and activities that must be conducted by the BiH Election Commission for the purpose of organising the 2002 elections.

The BiH Election Commission concluded it is necessary that the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, entity parliaments and governments begin immediately ensuring the resources determined in the proposal of the budget for the elections 2002. If the competent institutions do not ensure necessary resources by 8 February 2002, established European standards of electoral process, as well as the work of the BiH Election Commission, will come into question, the Commission said in a [press release](#).

Slavo Kukic leaves BiH Helsinki Committee

Mostar University professor Slavko Kukic said on Wednesday that he was leaving the BiH Helsinki Human Rights Committee, ONASA reports. "I do not want to give (Committee president) Srdjan Dizdarevic the satisfaction to expel me at the Committee session on February 15, thus I am quitting," Kukic said. He added that he would continue his fight for respecting of human rights through some other non-governmental organization which deals with such issues. The conflict in the Committee started when Dizdarevic condemned the extradition of "Algerian group" to the US authorities on January 18 this year, pointing out this condemnation as a position of the committee. The condemnation was opposed by Kukic. Dizdarevic told ONASA that he had heard about Kukic's decision from media. "So far, I have not received his resignation or any written request, so it is news for me too," he said. Commenting Kukic's statement that he would give him the "the satisfaction to expel him", Dizdarevic said that such move was never considered. "I do not know where he got that idea. We have so far discussed the problem of the Algerian group, but I do not remember that anyone mentioned any expulsion," Dizdarevic said.

FIPA Director says foreign investments in BiH increase

At a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday, BiH Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA) Director Mirza Hajric denied certain media speculations on the alleged stagnation in foreign investing in the country. Quite opposite, Hajric said, results of the research by some of the prominent international economic houses including the Economic Intelligence Unit, showed that this was about ungrounded claims, and that the foreign investments had actually increased amounting up to \$164 million in 2001 (for comparison, the 2000 investments amounted up to \$150 million, as in 1999, they amounted up to \$90 million).

Federation

Federation House of Representatives holds session in Sarajevo

According to Oslobodjenje, at its session in Sarajevo on Wednesday, the BiH Federation House of Representatives ordered the Entity President, Safet Halilovic, Prime Minister Alija Behmen and Interior Minister Ramo Maslesa to urgently prepare an information on the current political and security situation in the entity, following more and more frequent robberies and murders. The House failed to adopt the Government-proposed amendments to the Law on the Judicial and Prosecutorial Service.

Storm in the SDA Presidency: 400 SDA members are currently being prosecuted

SDA Vice-president Elmir Jahic told Dnevni Avaz that approximately 400 SDA members were currently being prosecuted by the domestic judicial bodies on the basis of office abuse and other crimes committed. Following a stormy session of SDA

Presidency held in Sarajevo on Tuesday, which decided to remove these members from the party, Jahic said that this list was not final, since the Presidency had still not received complete data on the SDA members being tried.

Dnevni List: After accession of BiH to the Council of Europe – 165 Croats will fill lawsuits against Wolfgang Petritsch

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List in a front-page story says all of the 165 dismissed Croat officials were removed from their positions without having the right to appeal. Such decisions, produced at the OHR, are in direct contravention with the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention of Human Rights and the OSCE Final Document from Copenhagen.

Dr. Stijepo Andrijic, who was removed from the position of Chairman of the Steering Board of the Federation Privatization Agency, says his case is specific in that he is the only person removed from a non-political position. In his words, "no dictator in the 20th century took even as closely drastic decisions as Mr. Petritsch."

Petar Milic, the founder of the Croat Christian Democrats, who was removed from the position of Party President, says all institutional instruments should be used, and especially the International Court of Human Rights, but it is necessary to wait until BiH has been admitted to the Council of Europe. However, he thinks that the BiH diplomacy, helped by the OHR, will reach an agreement to make sure that the matters that happened before the accession to the Council of Europe are not even be discussed. He thinks their chances are very small. Milic calls the High Representative "the last communist dictator in this part of Europe."

Ante Jelavic, the dismissed Member of the BiH Presidency, is

quoted as saying in his letter to Srdjan Dizdarevic, the President of the BiH Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, that the administrative decisions applied by the High Representative cannot and must not limit the right to vote or the general civil rights. Jelavic says that is exactly what happened and yet, the Helsinki Committee has not once protested in public against those violations.

Josip Muselimovic, Jelavic's attorney and President of Matica Hrvatska, says there are still no legal prerequisites for a suit against the High Representative before the International Human Rights Court in Strasbourg because BiH is still not a member of the Council of Europe.

Marko Tokic, the dismissed Vice President of the HDZ, thinks that all of the officials removed without the right to appeal should sue those who took those decisions.

Republika Srpska

RTRS supports PBS news program

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

RT RS radio reported that at Wednesday's meeting with representatives of the OHR, the Steering Board and the management of the RTRS supported the establishment of the news program of the BiH Public Broadcast Service, in line with the decision of the High Representative. The President of the RTRS Steering Board, Milos Babic, said that it has been agreed that the RTRS starts broadcasting PBS news at 19:00. Babic said that the RTRS and OHR representatives talked about the difficult financial situation in the RTRS, which according to him, was caused by low rate of subscription fee collection. Head of the OHR Media Development Section, Chris Riley pointed out that it was necessary to include the RS Government into the process of overcoming this situation. According to him,

the RS Government was responsible for this situation in the RTRS.

RS National Assembly to discuss budget and veto

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski quotes Spokesman for the BiH Presidency, Boris Kujundzic, as saying that the BiH Presidency Chair, Jozo Krizanovic forwarded to the RS NA the Zivko Radisic's decision to veto proposed budget of BiH common institutions. The paper reports that this information has also been confirmed by the RS NA administration, but they could not get more details about the contents of the Krizanovic's letter since RS NA Speaker, Dragan Kalinic was not in the office today. The Article 5, paragraph 3, item d) of the BiH Constitution states that the BiH Presidency has to immediately forward a vetoed decision to the RS National Assembly so that the RS NA can discuss it and come up with its own stand on it within 10 days. The paper concludes that the RS NA met all necessary conditions to include the item on Radisic's veto in the agenda. RTRS radio quotes SDA president and Deputy RS NA Speaker, Sulejman Tihic, as saying that the SDA stand on the proposed RS budget for the year of 2002 will depend on how much money the RS Government proposes for return of refugees and DPs. Tihic says that the SDS does not understand the OHR decision, which allows the RS NA to resume discussion on the RS budget for 2002 and at the same time states that the refugee return process is of vital national interest. RTRS Radio also quotes NHI deputy with the RS NA, Tomislav Tomljanovic, as saying that the NHI will support the draft RS budget for 2002 if the RS Government proposes 10 million KM for the return of refugees and DPs.

Former RS Premier says Alliance of Independent Social Democrats will come up with new proposal of

constitutional amendments in 10 days

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies quote former RS Premier and leader of Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Milorad Dodik, as saying that the Alliance of independent social democrats (Alliance of independent social democrats = SNSD & DSP) will in the next 10 day come up with a new proposal on constitutional amendments. "We have come to a conclusion to come up with our proposal of constitutional amendments and to present it to public", said Dodik after the meeting of the Alliance Executive Board. He says that the SNSD Executive Board came to conclusion that a huge procedural mistake has been made when the amendments to the RS Constitution were forwarded for public debate and that the Constitution and the RS NA Standing Orders were violated as well.

Banja Luka Mayor says he is not familiar with Islamic Community demands for re-location of the School of Electrical Engineering

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Both Banja Luka dailies quote Banja Luka Mayor, Dragoljub Davidovic, as saying that he is not familiar with the demands of the Medzlis Executive Board of the Banja Luka Islamic Community according to which the building of the School of Electrical Engineering should be relocated from its current site because it will ruin the view on Ferhadija mosque. "There was only one discussion in the Urban planning institute with regard to the regulatory plan "South 7", because there has been a talk that the building of the School of Electrical Engineering should not have been at its current location or that it is in the way", said Davidovic and added that the re-location of the building is a very serious matter.

Dodik says SDS and Momcilo Mandic are falling together

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Milorad Dodik, leader of SNSD, denied accusations of Momcilo Mandic who said that Milorad Dodik is responsible for attacks on him, because Mandic was involved in toppling Dodik. Dodik says that Momcilo Mandic controls and finances the SDS. "Now when Momcilo Mandic is unmasked the truth about the SDS is coming out. Mandic has been in contact with pre-war boss, Alija Delimustafic. Mandic was bragging that he financed the DSS (DSS is led by FRY President Kostunica) and Prst magazine", said Dodik.

Rangers surrounded Karadzic

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne Novine reports that Radovan Karadzic is hiding in a monastery in the Vilusina region where he is writing his book and preparing his defense before the ICTY. The paper learns from an anonymous source close to SFOR that movements of Karadzic and his bodyguards are reduced to minimum and that US Rangers know where Karadzic is hiding. The source tells that Karadzic is in BiH, not in Monte Negro.

Korac: Karadzic's brother touring army barracks in Serbia

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Serbian Vice Premier Zarko Korac, member of the State Security Council, told *Radio B92* on Tuesday that Luka Karadzic, brother of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, had visited southern Serbia earlier this month, distributing books by his brother to the troops, and had done the same in some villages in Kosovo. Korac was speaking in support of a thesis that there is a Milosevic-Karadzic protected lobby in Serbia.

Nebojsa Covic, who heads the government's coordinating body for southern Serbia, has confirmed for *Radio B92* that he has himself heard such reports, and that they are being checked. "If this is true, then it is both extremely complex and extremely dangerous," Covic said, warning that such reports might destabilize the situation in southern Serbia.

Asked how reliable was the source that reported Luka Karadzic had toured army barracks, Covic replied these were "highly relevant sources by which the coordinating body was briefed." Asked if the State Security Council would concern itself with claims frequently voiced by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia that RS General Ratko Mladic is in Belgrade, Zarko Korac said this was a question for the competent institutions. "I believe it is the duty of the Serbian Interior Ministry to give the information to the Serbian government bodies. This question needs to be answered for the sake of honor of this nation, as well as another and much more difficult question – if he is indeed in Serbia, then who is harboring him? I am not addressing this question to the MUP alone, but to the FRY institutions and the Yugoslav Army as well," Korac said.

International Community

UN Agencies in BiH present their study on the BiH's development

Six years after the end of its war BiH spends more of its resources on the military than any other country and should instead focus on economic development, international officials said on Wednesday, Reuters reports. They urged the impoverished Balkan country, which has received billions of dollars in Western aid, to look beyond the Dayton peace treaty that ended the 1992-95 conflict and deal with challenges in creating a Western-style market economy. "We cannot deal only

with Dayton to bring this country forward,” Henrik Kolstrup, coordinator of U.N. activities in BiH, told a news conference presenting a country study by U.N. development agencies. Joseph Ingram, head of the World Bank mission in BiH, said reducing the government sector was a priority, adding that military expenditure accounted for 10.5 percent of gross domestic product in the Federation and for six to seven percent in the Republika Srpska. “That’s higher than in any country anywhere in the world. That’s ridiculous and unsustainable,” he told the news conference. The European average was around 2.5 percent and the U.S. average was 4.6 percent, he said. Kolstrup said the U.N. study should contribute to a long-needed debate on challenges facing BiH which were not a direct consequence of the conflict or of Dayton, citing poor development, huge bureaucracies and large unemployment. “We are arguing that there is another foot on which we need to stand, another base: the development challenges and transition challenges that really have very little to do with Dayton,” he said.

ICTY spokesperson says Serbian Justice Minister called for talks on the Mladic’s extradition

According to Dnevni Avaz, the ICTY Spokesperson, Florence Hartman said that the Tribunal Representatives would meet with Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic in The Hague on Thursday to discuss the extradition of the Republika Srpska Army wartime commander Ratko Mladic. According to Hartman, Mladic lives near Belgrade and is under protection of the FRY Army. She reiterated that Radovan Karadzic was currently sheltering in the Republika Srpska.

OHR: Municipalities which decide to stop evictions might be sanctioned

Paul Prettitore, the OHR coordinator for property issues, told Dnevni Avaz that the municipalities which decide to temporary

stop evictions of people having right to the alternative accommodation according to the recent BiH Federation Government's recommendation might face economic sanctions to be imposed by the international organizations and donors dealing with the reconstruction process.

Vecernji List: Interview with the High Representative

Vecernji List carries an interview with the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, under the title 'Third entity would be the worst solution for Croats.' He stated that he is in contact with the HDZ and that some members of this party realize what he is doing for the Croat people here, is very positive and significant. Speaking about Mladen Ivanic's statement that he would have nothing against a third entity, the High Representative said a third entity would be contravene Dayton and lead to a division of Croats since they inhabit different parts of BiH, from Posavina to Neum. In his opinion, a third entity would be the worst possible solution for Croats. (See attachment for full translation of the interview)

Vecernji List: Head of the OHR South meets with HN Canton leaders

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Jean-Pierre Bercot, Deputy High Representative and Head of the OHR South, talked with Mr. Dziho, the Governor of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, Mr. Vrankic, his Deputy, Mr. Coric, the President of the Cantonal Government, and Mr. Macic, his Deputy, about the process of the establishment of joint seats in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. Bercot believes that the time has come to complete this process and he expressed his satisfaction because the Cantonal officials are sharing this stand. He stressed that one of the priorities is to find the joint seats for the Governor, Prime Minister,

President of the Cantonal Assembly and their Deputies, and immediately afterwards the joint seats for 8 Cantonal Ministries. Cantonal officials promised that, by the end of this week, they will make a concrete and comprehensive action plan for the establishment of the joint seats for all Government Authority bodies that are divided at the moment. One of the key priorities of the OHR South is the establishment of the joint Cantonal Government and the joint budget, reads Vecernji List, carrying, in fact the statement by the Spokesperson of the OHR Mostar, Avis Benes. Dnevni List carries a similar article.

Editorials

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz

In the Oslobodjenje In Focus column, Zija Dizdarevic wrote that Mladen Ivanic did not mind the third entity believing that it means establishment of a new structure with the Croat domination. However, Dizdarevic concludes that, actually, the establishment of the third entity would verify the genocide and ethnic cleansing results thereby creating conditions for future wars. Gojko Beric wrote in another Oslobodjenje editorial that if The Hag was a metaphor of at least some sort of justice, the Guantanamo US military basis has become a metaphor of a "justice in cage." "Human rights are needed to Russia, China and Islamic countries, as a bit changed rules are applied for America. All depends on concrete 'house needs. It is a pity for us, who already experienced a great utopia called communism, and who were prepared to believe there was another one," Beric wrote referring to the establishment of a democratic society under the western standards. Husein Orahovac concluded in the Dnevni Avaz Commentary of the Day that the (non) collection of the funds for the elections unveiled all the controversies of the our countries political system, meaning its absolute economic depending on he

Entities.

Dnevni List: Robbers follow the example of SFOR and Petritsch

Written by Marko Markovic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Referring to the recent robberies in Kresevo and Jablanica, Dnevni List reads that the most interesting thing, many people say, is that the public is on the side of the robbers. Other people say the robbers followed the example of the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch and his action of tank attack on Hercegovacka Banka, and once they realized that a bank robbery is a normal occurrence in Herzegovina which anyone can get away with, they decided to take the things in their own hands.

Dnevni List: Case of Ana, a high school student

Written by Ante Matic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List speaks about one Ana, a high school student in Mostar, whose parents, displaced persons, did not have enough money to pay for her school excursion to Prague. They deposited the money for Ana on an account in Hercegovacka Banka.

“And then, you guess. Petritsch orders the tanks to raid the Bank treasury! And so it was! Ana’s money went away together with tank barrels. Come May, open letters are written to the ‘tank commander’ Petritsch and to a number of ‘independent journalists,’ but everyone is silent. Ana’s classmates get together without her knowledge and collect money for her excursion. That could be the end of the story! That would be a happy ending in the ‘Western way.’ However, by the end of 2001, there appears the other side of the medal. A number of journalists speak about a big ‘humane action’ of the happy family of ‘Petritsch Wolfgang.’ He and his wife donated around 2,000 KM to the Croat Cultural Society ‘Napredak’ for the

education of children, or something similar. 'Napredak' publishes an extensive press release. Almost all the newspapers, from the least significant ones to the Federation TV and Radio, note that as big news. The Gentleman's big 'humanity' is praised. The Gentleman himself gives statements that the assistance was for the purpose of education of Croat children. People say 'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth'! Exactly! But... we must ask!

Dear Gentleman, how come that, in this 'hungry and barefooted' country where you are establishing democracy, you have not explained to the media the 'silence' about Ana's painstakingly spared money and how would you explain the media 'choir-like trumpeting' about Your 'humanity' when it is well known that you donated only two thousand Marks and your salary is at least 25 times as big! We know, dear Gentleman, you will say it is not your problem, but the problem of those who 'trumpeted.' The answer would be clear even to completely naïve persons which we doubt still exist in this country.

A great poet Mirko Miljanov wrote at a time: 'It takes courage to defend oneself from another, but defending others from oneself is HUMANITY.' It may be difficult to translate this into the language you speak or live. Another poet said: 'One who holds laws in his mace leaves stinking trails of INHUMANITY behind him!'

What does this have to do with the little (now big) Ana. Yes, it does have much to do with her! Dear Gentleman, do not give us any gifts! But do not take what is ours, either: Ana's gift from her friends or the people's fundamental rights.

In the case of the contrary, you will remain the hero of the verse, now modernized: 'One who holds laws in tanks...'

Ana's case is true story. We only changed the girl's name for the sake of her dignity. As far as you, Gentleman, are concerned, if you want to know her full name and the name of

her school, feel free to call us," says Dnevni List.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Croats on the way to third entity

Written by Marijan Puntaric; partial translation (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Tomorrow, when the second round of the negotiations, arranged in Kozara, starts in Sarajevo, the public will get the information that Slobodna Dalmacija exclusively publishes. The International Community has definitely given up the plan that the High Representative imposes the implementation of the Constitutional Court Decision on constituency of all three BiH peoples. Practically, this means that the Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board, under a direct influence of France, Russia and United Kingdom, has concluded that they will not order the High Representative to impose the introduction of the House of Peoples in the RS National Assembly. Thus the IC has practically given up the BiH future and ensuring of an equal position of all three constituent peoples, putting hot potatoes in the hands of domestic politicians. Due to this denouement, that announces unjust solutions, the Croats, the smallest in number of BiH peoples, for whose destiny the official Zagreb has shown a complete lack of interest, will find itself in the most difficult position. In a survey organized by the HTV more than two thirds of the Croatian Parliament members did not know as to who is the Croat Member of the BiH Presidency. Serbs are aware that the implementation of the Constitutional Court Decision, by which the House of Peoples would be introduced in the RS National Assembly, would mean the return of all Croat and Bosniak refugees and, actually, it would be a beginning of the RS end. If in the RS they only establish the Commission for the Protection of National Interests and if they establish the House of Peoples with two or three Caucuses in the Federation, Croats might demand the launching of the process of the Croat-Bosniak disassociation within the Federation. In other words, in such

a situation Croat requests for the establishment of a third, Croat entity are inevitable. Mladen Ivanic, the RS prime Minister, stated a few days ago: 'Serbs are not against the third entity if it does not damage the RS.'

All Serb parties in BiH have been brought together to support the existence of the RS. All political forces in Serbia from President Kostunica to Vojislav Seselj also support Serbs in BiH. And in this situation none of the Serb politicians is afraid of international sanctions. Croat politicians and the Croat people in BiH have been left to their own resources. Perhaps, the talks in Sarajevo tomorrow will turn a new page.

Headlines

Oslobodjenje

- Domestic gas to be produced by June

Dnevni Avaz

- 400 SDA officials under investigation

Jutarnje Novine

- Meeting of Lagumdžija and Ivanic in Bosanski/Srpski Brod: BiH to fight back with new measures (to Croatia)

Glas Srpski

- Vojislav Kostunica held a news conference – Delimustafic causes new rifts;
- ICTY – Milosevic requested the ICTY to be temporary released;

Nezavisne Novine

- Floods in Indonesia – 18 people died;
- Rangers surrounded Karadzic;

Dnevni List

- After BiH admittance to Council of Europe: 165 removed Croats prepare charges against Wolfgang Petritsch
- Mayor Tomic's Office: Does HDZ Youth still exist?

Vecernji List

- Interview with Wolfgang Petritsch, the High Representative of the international community and Vecernjak's Media Personality of the Year 2001 – BiH has many politicians, but few of those who work
- Ceremony at the Ero Hotel in Mostar – Presentation of 'Vecernjak's Seal to take place tonight