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Federation

Aluminij management: Conclusions of the report are legally grounded

The press conference was held in Aluminij Factory in Mostar today. Jure Musa, the Assistant of the General Manager for Legal and Personnel Issues, Vladimir Bozic, the Assistant of the General Manager for Production Issues, Velimir Cavar, the President of the Steering Board, Zoran Buntic, the Legal Advisor and Vlado Ivankovic, the President of the Aluminij Independent Syndicate spoke to journalists. They stressed the basic lines of the audit report, whose work was supervised by the OHR audit team, and they announced that in seven days they will hand over an analytical review. "Conclusions of the finished audit report are legally grounded, objective and unbiased, although there are few objections," participants told the press.

HDZ confirms ousting Mostar mayor Neven Tomic from the party

The secretary of the Hercegovina-Neretva Cantonal Board of the HDZ, Marija Soldo, confirmed on Monday that the party's Court of Honour decided to oust the Mostar Mayor, Neven Tomic, from the HDZ. Soldo refused to elaborate on the Court decision, but she told Oslobodjenje that Tomic allegedly violated his party responsibilities. Headquarters of the HDZ could not confirm this information.

HNS official Petar Milic fails to appear before the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo

The founder of the Croatian Christian Democrats and a member of the Croat National Assembly (HNS) leadership, Petar Milic, failed yesterday to appear before the cantonal court in Sarajevo for a scheduled hearing. Milic, together with seven other senior HNS officials, stands accused of undermining the constitutional order of the BiH Federation and threatening its territorial sovereignty. In a statement for the Habena news agency, Milic said that he had never received the summons for the hearing, but added that he is not sure whether he would respond to the subpoena if he receives it. "Even if I appear before the Sarajevo County court, it will only be to show solidarity with other HNS leaders facing the same charges as myself," Milic said.

Croat Christian Democrats: Petritsch stands behind rigged trials

Petar Milic, the founder of the Croat Christian Democrats party, stated in a press conference yesterday that the investigative proceedings launched against Ante Jelavic and the other six Croat officials of Croat National Assembly, are an introduction into a rigged political trial against Croats in BiH.

In his words, it is the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch who stands behind this rigged trial. Milic called the High Representative "a worn-out communist" and "the last communist dictator." Speaking of the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office, Court and prison in Sarajevo, Milic said those are "a collective prison camp for Croats in BiH that Petritsch is in charge of."

"There BiH Croats that he selects have to stand trials contrary to the law on local jurisdiction, by which a clear message is conveyed to the Croat people, and that is, each of them will come to turn unless they behave 'well'," said Milic.

Miro Sutalo, the party's commissioner for the Municipality of Stolac, uttered a number of objections at the expense of the current authorities there because of their improper attitude to the displaced Croats residing in the Municipality who started building housing units there but now sell them for next to nothing and go abroad for good.

"The Municipality of Stolac is an example of how individuals, under the patronage of the party in power, can not only get wealthy, but also call into question the existence of Croats in this area due to their total lack of interest in the general national welfare," said Sutalo.

The Croat Christian Democrats commissioner for Capljina Mijo Pehar spoke about the social status of Croats there and the political pressure exerted on the Croat politicians who, in his words, have worked for the common good of Croats.

Zoran Ljoljo, the Secretary of the party's Branch Office in Mostar, said that the three Croat-majority municipalities should be transformed into one single municipality for practical and other reasons.

BiH Trade Union ask Federation authorities, OHR to annul all decisions made by Aluminij management

The BiH Trade Union sent a letter yesterday to the Federation government, the Federation Agency for Privatisation and to the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, asking them to annul all decisions made by the management of the Aluminij Factory in Mostar. The Union specifically pointed out the decisions relating to privatisation of this company, and suggested that the Federation Agency for Privatisation undertake a fair, legal and transparent privatisation of this Herzegovina giant. The Unions' president, Sulejman Hrle, also said in a statement that the recommendations of the international auditor, Wim Timmermans, were scandalous and immature.

Oslobodjenje: 2,000 BH Steel employees to be laid off?

Sarajevo Oslobodjenje reports that, at today's press conference, the general manager of the BH Steel Company, Seid Kapetanovic will most likely announce the Steering Board's decision to lay off about 2,000 workers employed in this company. The Board made this decision already in March, however, its implementation has been prolonged until September 18. The daily notes that this will be one more shock for Zenica, who is increasingly sinking deeper into a genuine social crisis as its industrial potential virtually withered away.

On the eve of the trial of Mladen Naletilic and Vinko Martinovic in The Hague – Tuta decides to “talk”?

Branko Seric, the attorney of Vinko Martinovic Stela who is facing a trial before the ICTY, told Slobodna Dalmacija: “It is completely incorrect that my client Vinko Martinovic ‘has talked’ or that we want to lay the responsibility on someone else.”

Seric is positive that the defense will prove there is a disproportion between the responsibility ascribed to Stela in the bill of indictment and the realistic responsibility Stela had during the conflict in Mostar. Seric has already arrived in The Hague in order to prepare himself for his client's trial that is due to start on 10 September.

The daily says Mladen Naletilic Tuta's attorney Kresimir Krsnik spent some time in Tuta's native soil in Herzegovina before leaving for The Hague. According to sources in Scheveningen, Tuta has recently decided to co-operate with the Hague Tribunal and speak openly about the events and the chain of command during the war between Bosniaks and Croats in Herzegovina. Since Krsnik remains unavailable to the press, Slobodna Dalmacija could not get his comment on this allegation.

Federation Minister of Refugees and Displaced Persons Sefer

Halilovic visits Mostar – 300 houses to be reconstructed

A delegation of the Federation Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons headed by Minister Sefer Halilovic met with representatives of the municipalities of Mostar to discuss the results of the Property Law implementation, sustainable returns and the security situation.

“We are not satisfied with either the refugee return or the Property Law implementation in Herzegovina. As far as Mostar is concerned, we do not think there is any special reason why the return process should be developing at such a slow rate,” stated Minister Halilovic.

Speaking of the future plans of the Ministry, Halilovic said they plan the reconstruction of 300 houses in the territory from Ivan Sedlo to Neum.

He suggested to the mayors of Mostar municipalities to come up with reconstruction programmes and present them to the Ministry. In Halilovic’s words, the reconstruction of a 100 housing units has been planned in the territory of the City of Mostar in the following period.

Tomislav Limov, the Federation Deputy Minister of Interior, pointed to the importance of the establishment of the multi-ethnic police across BiH and said he was pleased with the security situation of the returnees in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, reports Slobodna Dalmacija.

Republika Srpska

Bosniak, Serb returnees to south-eastern BiH protest in front of the OHR

More than 200 returnees to southeastern BiH protested in front of the OHR building in Sarajevo on Monday because of their hard living conditions in tent settlements and the failure of

local and international agencies to help rebuild their homes before the end of the summer. They represent 2,500 of those who returned to their pre-war places of residence, but not to their actual homes. Media report that both the Serbs and the Bosniaks were protesting in Sarajevo yesterday as they face similar problems. Heads of a refugee association held talks with the OHR, but media report that not much progress had been made. Member of the regional committee for displaced people Dusko Tribinovic said that they received firm assurances that constructive measures for the refugee situation in southeastern BiH will be discussed on September 7 when a meeting with the international community will take place. "We were not able to get any other information today," said Tribinovic, and added that the people gathered in front of the OHR were disappointed with the outcome of yesterday's talks. OHR spokesman Oleg Milisic said the OHR is aware of the problems facing the returnees and is ready to work with them on resolving those problems. However, he noted that the international aid for BiH is drastically being reduced, which also contributes to the slow reconstruction. The protest of over 200 Bosniak and Serb returnees to south-eastern BiH was the top story in all Federation media.

POLL: According to a poll conducted by Avaz agency, nearly 83% of Federation citizens support the demands of returnees to south-eastern BiH. Only 8% said were against, while 9% of the polled citizens said they had no opinion on the matter. The poll was conducted among 400 individuals in Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla and Mostar using a method of random sampling.

RS President and Vice President Mirko Sarovic and Dragan Cavic Met with OSCE Head of Mission Robert Beecroft

Both RS dailies report on the meeting between the RS President and Vice President Mirko Sarovic and Dragan Cavic with the Head of the OSCE Mission in BiH Robert Beecroft, in Banja Luka yesterday. The main topics discussed at the meeting were Election law and organizing of elections next year.

Sarovic said that the way for correcting of certain provisions of the Election Law "which are not democratic or jeopardize human rights" would be looked for.

Beecroft stressed that the OSCE mission would actively support elections in October the following year expressing hope that the first elections to be carried out by BiH institutions would be successful.

Beecroft also met with Banja Luka Mayor Dragoljub Davidovic with who he discussed problems of the town and development of the Youth Parliament project.

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic Took Part in Seminar on Cooperation in South-eastern Europe

Nezavisne novine write that the RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic returned to Banja Luka from Athens yesterday, where he took part in the Seminar "Models of cooperation in South-eastern Europe and Black Sea Region".

At the seminar Ivanic stated that the Situation in the RS was much better than it used to be and that, regardless of all problems existing in its functioning, the Dayton Peace Agreement is the basis which should be followed. Ivanic explained to SRNA news agency that three key issues in the segment "Security in South-eastern Europe" were discussed: BiH, Macedonia and Kosovo.

International Community

Carla del Ponte to arrive in Banja Luka later today

All media report that the Chief Prosecutor of the ICTY, Carla del Ponte, is to arrive in Banja Luka later today in an official state visit to BiH authorities. The Hague Tribunal spokesperson, Florence Hartmann, told the press that Del Ponte is to meet with the chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers,

Zlatko Lagumdžija, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and other senior international officials. According to Hartmann, Del Ponte will stress during her visit that the law on co-operation with the ICTY does not only stipulate the arrest and extradition of indicted war criminals, but also other forms of co-operation. "This means that we should be enabled to gain access to relevant documents, archives and information related to war crimes committed in this area," said Hartmann obviously referring to transcripts of all BiH Presidency sessions that have been declared missing.

Council of Europe Political Committee: BiH accession to CoE on the Agenda of Assembly's session

Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimmer, (sp?) announced yesterday that he would undertake all necessary measures in order to ensure that the accession of BiH to the Council is included into the agenda of the CoE Political Committee's Assembly which will be held in Georgia. Schwimmer also expressed his satisfaction that BiH authorities finally adopted its Election Law thereby meeting one of the main criteria for the accession to the Council.

HTV Mostar Oscar-C Poll: Only 16% of persons polled think OHR's work is of quality

Written by M. Landeka

HTV Mostar Oscar-C conducted a telephone survey among the citizens of Mostar in which the persons calling in were to express their opinion on whether the Regional Office of the High Representative in Mostar is doing its job adequately and correctly.

Of the 205 persons polled, 32, i.e. only 16% think the OHR is doing its job adequately and correctly and as many as 154 of them, i.e. 75% think the opposite, reports Slobodna Dalmacija. 19 of the persons polled (9%) had no opinion on the matter.

“It is safe to say that the results of the survey were not unexpected at all because there has never been much “love” between citizens of Mostar and representatives of the International Community, the OHR in particular.

The first EU Administrator in Mostar, Hans Koschnick experienced an assassination attempt, whereas the Spanish diplomat Peres Casado by his own will stayed in Mostar for less than a month.

His successor Sir Martin Garrod, a British Army General, was at the helm of the OHR for a full five years. Soon after he was declared a persona non grata, Garrod left Mostar, too.

He was succeeded by the German diplomat Richard Ellerkmann who failed to make good in his post in Mostar, and his successor is the former British Ambassador to Croatia, Colin Munro who is still officiating as the Head of the OHR in Mostar,” reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

The UN Mission is examining the second candidate for the position of the Chief of Police in the Herzeg Bosnia Canton

The Herzeg-Bosnia Canton is one of those that still do not have the Chief of Police, i.e. Police Commissioner, and it is still uncertain as to who will be appointed to this position, reads Vecernji List.

According to the paper’s source in the Cantonal Ministry of Interior who wanted to remain anonymous, the first five candidates did not get the approval of Vincent Couerderoy, the IPTF Chief Commissioner. They are Rafael Pivic, Ivan Peric, Drasko Dalic, Bozo Galesic and Milan Jurisic.

The same source said that only Rafael Pivic met all conditions, apart from the one on the cooperation with international organizations, for which reason he earlier received a letter from the IPTF. Because of this, Ivan Cosic, the Minister of Interior in Canton 10, handed over to the IPTF

Chief Commissioner a list with three new names. New candidates for the position of the Chief of the Police in the Ministry of Interior of the Herzeg-Bosnia Canton are Marko Grgic, Miran Kristo and Ilija Jakic, says the daily.

In order to check what stage the process of the selection of the Chief of Police is at, Vecernji List contacted the seat of the UN Mission in BiH in Sarajevo and the Spokesperson Stefo Lehmann confirmed the information that there were eight names on the list, that the first five were disqualified and that they are currently examining the second proposal.

Dodson on the Establishment of the Army of BiH

Glas srpski on the cover page carries excerpts of former SFOR Commander Dodson's letter addressed as a memo to ambassadors:

"The future of BiH lies in connections with Europe and European institutions, and in order to establish it BiH has to develop normal institutions at state level, including the Defense Ministry.

RS President Mirko Sarovic, in regard to this letter, stated that if the contents of the letter were truth it would have represented his personal political lobby for something that was not in his mandate".

Brcko District

Serb, Bosniak, Croat children in Brcko: After ten year, together in classroom

The school year for around 7,000 primary school pupils and 3,200 secondary school pupils began in Brcko District on Monday morning, in line with the law on primary and secondary school education imposed by Brcko Supervisor Henry Clarke. According to headmasters, classes in all of 15 primary and four secondary schools took place without major problems. The

education programme drawn up by the District's interim government stipulates that the composition of the year one pupils in the primary and secondary schools will be multiethnic, and teachers from all ethnic groups will be teaching all years.

The implementation of the multiethnic education system was only marred by protests of parents of Croat secondary school pupils, who refused to send their children to joint schools, saying that "it is still too early for multiethnicity". Only after an agreement with the District officials and the OHR that Croat pupils should start school in Dubrave suburb with a majority Croat population within 10 days, did the parents agree to send their children to the schools in the town.