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## BiH State-related Issues

### **Council of Ministers presents an Action Plan on fight against corruption**

The BiH Council of Ministers presented on Wednesday the Action Plan on the fight against corruption, which was drafted in a joint effort of the CoM, World Bank and the OHR. "For the first time in history, BiH has a plan of fight against corruption, which was produced in cooperation with international experts and all local institutions," said Azra Hadziahmetovic, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations. Hadziahmetovic said that corruption is perhaps the biggest reason for the lack of trust in local authorities by not only BiH citizens, but also foraying investors, who avoid coming to this country. She added that the World bank has suggested that BiH authorities ought to depoliticise the election of directors of state-owned companies and members of advisory boards in order to avoid the possible "conflict of interests."

Oslobodjenje quotes Manfred Dauster, the head of the OHR Anti-corruption Department as saying that a similar plan to fight

against corruption has already been adopted at the entity level, but warned that it was never more than a “dead letter on the paper.” He stressed that the reform of judiciary and the adoption of new laws, for example on money laundering, are a good foundation to fight against corruption. Dauster also talked about the necessity to establish a State court which would process cases of international and organized crime. (This was the top story in all Federation media)

## **Embezzlement charges filed against 29 former BiH FM officials**

Federation Finance Police filed criminal charges against 29 former ambassadors and other foreign ministry officials over misuse of public monies, a government source confirmed on Thursday to Dnevni Avaz. The officials, including former foreign minister Jadranko Prlic, are accused of misappropriating embassy fees collected between 1996 and 2000, said an official who asked not to be named. “These officials used the money to support the work of their embassies and consular offices, because of poor financial support from the state. But it was in violation of the law,” the same source told AFP. Consular fees should have been paid to the central account of the state, the official said, adding that no official personally benefited from the money.

## **End of the BiH-Croatia oil war**

The BiH Council of Ministers adopted on Wednesday a decision on temporary measures for the import of oil into BiH, whereby the border crossings of Izacic, Gradiska, Orasje, Kamensko and Crveni Grm are designated for the transport of oil and oil derivatives regardless of the country of origin. Federation and RS media report that the Council of Minister adopted the decision after concluding that certain changes occurred after the Croatian government had adopted the decision on the transport of oil and oil derivatives through the border crossing of Izacic, which came into force on March 4. “The

import of oil and oil derivatives into BiH can be made without restrictions via an oil-line, rail or river traffic, whereby an end is put on misunderstandings besetting the Zagreb-Sarajevo relations over the past two months in connection with the issue of transport of oil coming from the direction of Croatia," the statement by the BiH Ministry for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations says.

## **Bosnian, Croatian premiers resolve open issues**

"The arrival of the BiH state delegation in Zagreb indicates not only a more efficient way of resolving problems burdening the relations between the two countries for months, but also the further development of the partnership between the two countries" – this is the general assessment made after the meeting of BiH state delegation, led by Chairman of the Council of Ministers Zlatko Lagumdžija, and top officials of the Croatian government. They said that the problem of the port of Ploče would be resolved more speedily, that the deadline had been set for the opening of border crossings and bridges and that views on other important issues had been further coordinated.

After the meeting, Zlatko Lagumdžija and Croatian Prime Minister Ivica Račan noted several specific things which should promote better cooperation between the countries. When it comes to the port of Ploče, it was agreed, Lagumdžija said, that the problem should be resolved in line with the international and domestic regulations, and, as Račan said, without international influence.

"I am also pleased to say that we have agreed that the issue of the ratification of the agreement on Neum and Ploče, which had been debated for such a long time, should be taken off the agenda. I hope that in the course of tomorrow – this is at least what was agreed – we shall adopt an appropriate protocol to accompany the agreement on Neum and Ploče, and pave the way

for its ratification," Lagumdzija said.

Lagumdzija, who held tete-a-tete talks with the Croatian prime minister for half an hour before the official talks, said that, regardless of all the past problems, the relations between the two countries are improving. "The overall relations between the Republic of Croatia and BiH could only improve in the future. We can say that the past year marked a turning point in making the relations better and more vigorous. The BiH state delegation also met the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Zlatko Tomcic.

## **Constitutional Reform**

### **Sulejman Tihic on SDA attitude towards constitutional changes: Petritsch was not decisive**

BiH would have the Republic in its name again, Serb entity in BiH would no longer be called Republika Srpska and the Council of Ministers would become a real Government which would have Ministries of Defense and Interior, joint intelligence service would exist as well as Customs administration on the state level. In a nutshell, this is essence of the initiative of the SDA Main Board, explained by the Party President, Sulejman Tihic. In an interview to Nezavisne novine, Tihic stated that he would no longer participate in party talks on constitutional changes. Commenting of the position of the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch regarding the attempts to accord constitutions of the entities, Tihic said: "In my view, a mistake was made at the very beginning when two separate commissions were established for one decision of the Constitutional Court. Through his associates, the High Representative was informed about the work of the commissions but he tolerated delays and extended deadlines. I think that he should have been more involved and call upon the responsibility of those in charged for this issue."

## **POLL: Public believe that Petritsch will impose constitutional changes**

According to a poll conducted by Avaz agency, 77% of the Federation citizens believe that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, will impose constitutional changes in the RS and in line with the Constitutional Court ruling on constituency of peoples. The same poll indicates that only 15% of the population in the entity does not think that Petritsch will impose the constitutional solutions, while 8% had no opinion on the matter.

The telephone poll was conducted among 300 persons in Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Mostar using a method of random sampling.

## **Federation**

### **Mostar Mayor offers his resignation to the Town Council**

At a hastily organised press conference in Mostar on Wednesday, the city's Mayor, Neven Tomic, announced that he has offered his resignation to the Town Council. The immediate reason for his resignation, Tomic said, was the illegal construction of a building in place of a pre-war pharmacy in the central zone of Mostar. After building permission was unlawfully issued, Tomic demanded the resignation of the head of the town's urban planning department, Sead Pintul. Deputy Mayor Hamdija Jahic did not accept this and that is when the first public disagreement of Mostar's leading officials ensued. Tomic says that he can no longer impose law and order and implement the principles which he promised to promote as mayor. "I think it is logical to offer my resignation to the town council because of the principles which I have always pursued and which caused me to come under constant pressure in the past year. The move is just a reflection of these

principles, and of my desire to put a stop to such a way of doing things.” Tomic said.

## **Head of Mostar dept for urban planning steps down**

The head of the Mostar City department for urban planning, Sead Pintul, stepped down on Wednesday because, as he put it, he does not want to see his name connected with any obstructions to the continued assistance of the United States to Mostar, Pintul’s office said in a press release. “The (5 March) press release from The United States Embassy in BiH, regretting that questionable approvals for building construction have interrupted progress made toward the regeneration of Mostar, prompted me to step down, for I do not wish that my name be connected with any kind of obstruction to the U.S. assistance to Mostar”, Pintul said in the press release.

## **What’s behind Mostar Mayor Neven Tomic’s resignation: From projectile on Slezak to Tomic’s resignation**

In relation to the resignation of the Mostar Mayor, Neven Tomic, Dnevni List reads that the reason Tomic stated for his resignation (illegal construction at the site of former City Pharmacy) might not be the real reason for his resignation saying that the recent events when Dinko Slezak’s betting shops and his private house came under attack were warnings dispatched to Slezak, Tomic and Jadranko Prlic, who are in the daily’s opinion a well-trained team with Tomic and Prlic offering political support and Slezak being in charge of making money. “Who has the guts to attack Dika (Slezak)?”, wonder some Mostarians. Connoisseurs point fingers at one of former Mostar Mayors, who did not make a career for himself in Sarajevo (and in Moscow) and who wants to return to his former town. Is the projectile on Slezak’s house a coincidence?, asks the daily.

Another political speculation, reads the daily, is that the resignation is only a preparatory work for Tomic to run for the BiH Presidency for which he has the support of the American Embassy and the SDP BiH. Dnevni List also speculates with names of Tomic's successors, saying that Nada Dalipagic, a Judge of Mostar Cantonal Court, Josip Merdzo, the HDZ BiH General Secretary and Dragan Covic, Vice President of the HDZ are likely candidates to succeed Tomic.

**On the same issue, *Vecernji List* reads that Dragan Covic is the most probable candidate to succeed Tomic, and that the names of Nada Dalipagic and Josip Merdzo are being talked about as the candidates.**

Slobodna Dalmacija which carries a report from the Neven Tomic's press conference at which Tomic told the public that he had submitted his resignation to the Mostar City Council, carries Neven Tomic as saying that he informed the OHR and its Anti Fraud Department about the whole deal pertaining to the construction at the site of the former City Pharmacy.

## **Remains of seven WWII German soldiers found near Sarajevo**

BiH forensic experts have uncovered the remains of seven German soldiers from World War II near Sarajevo, the head of the investigation team said on Thursday. "There is no doubt that the remains are those of German soldiers from World War II," said Amor Masovic, who heads the BiH commission for missing persons. He said several identity tags, German mark coins minted in 1931 and Nazi swastikas were also found with the bodies in the village of Svrake, just north of Sarajevo. Since 1996, the commission has found around 100 remains of German soldiers killed in Bosnia, and handed them over to German authorities. (All Sarajevo newspapers carry this item)

## **Federation House of Representatives adopts budget**



## **for 2002**

The Federation House of Representatives late on Wednesday adopted the Federation 2002 budget. A total of 72 delegates voted in favor of the budget. Although it was adopted in text different from that adopted by the House of Peoples, Federation Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Nikola Grabovac explained to the reporters that the changes are minor and of technical nature. He added that the harmonization will not be a problem.

## **Republika Srpska**

### **RS Politician says High Representative should be taken to court for Karadic statement**

The chairman of the RS Serb Party, Predrag Lazarevic, said on Wednesday that the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch should be taken to a European Court because of his statement that Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic are two of the worst war criminals. Lazarevic told the Banja Luka-based Big radio that Petritsch is causing rifts and inciting hatred among the Serb people. Commenting on the initiative aimed at transforming BiH into a republic, Lazarevic said that Bosniak politicians were often demonstrating a lack of intelligence and asked what would they really get if BiH did become a republic. "The RS can still exist within a republic," Lazarevic said.

### **RS Government sees Srebrenica resolution as illegal**

After yesterday's session, the RS Government announced the resolution of special status of Srebrenica as illegal. As emphasized, the municipality of Srebrenica is within the RS constitutional and legal system and, same as with all other

local communities, RS laws and regulations are applicable to it. Glas srpski quotes the Head of RS Government Press Bureau, Cvijeta Kovacevic as saying that the Government is ready to participate in the economic and all other spheres of life in Srebrenica, as it did before.

Srebrenica officials, Serb and Bosniak, say they are not surprised with Sarovic's statements. Oslobodjenje quotes Desnica Radivojevic (Serb), the president of the Municipal Assembly in Srebrenica as saying that Sarovic has never shown even a minimum of interest for this municipality and has never visited Srebrenica. Radivojevic said that Sarovic and his SDS have never made any effort to improve the difficult economic situation in this municipality, but have always been diligent in insisting that its cadres are named to all important post in Srebrenica companies. Radivojevic expressed hope that the adopted resolution will help alleviate consequences of economic stagnation and unemployment in the municipality. "We are expecting a better and faster natural social growth because Srebrenica will have control over its natural resources," Radivojevic said.

## **New Karadzic posters defying NATO appear in Foca**

New posters, featuring a photo of Radovan Karadzic appeared in Foca-Srbinje on Wednesday. The text accompanying the photo reads "As long as Raso [Karadzic's nickname] is promenading in Celebici, SFOR will never seize him". No official statements on who might have put up the posters have been released yet, but SRNA has learnt from unofficial sources that the local police ordered the local municipal services to remove them saying that it was "their responsibility to do it".

Meanwhile, Foca mayor, Nedeljko Pavlovic, issued a press release saying that neither the Foca Municipality authorities, nor the RS government have any information on whereabouts of Radovan Karadzic. "This municipality is not harbouring the indicted war criminals, nor it supports them in any way, and

we fully follow and consistently implement the policy of the RS government regarding this issue and the co-operation with The Hague Tribunal,” said Foca mayor in a statement for the press.

## **RS Socialist Party and Party of Independent Social Democrats will support Mikerevic's nomination**

Glas srpski reports that the RS Socialist Party (SP) and Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) will support the nomination of Dragan Mikerevic for the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers (CoM). The attitude of the Serb People's Alliance (SNS) will be known in a week. President of the SP, Petar Djokic stated, after yesterday's consultations with Mikerevic that his party was ready to offer its candidates for the CoM. President of the SNSD, Milorad Dodik stated that he expected further stabilization of the relations in the RS, as well as on the level of joint BiH institutions.

## **RS Government asks FRY to extradite ICTY indictees**

Nezavisne novine quote the Head of the RS Government Press Bureau, Cvijeta Kovacevic, as saying that the RS Government, through the RS Interior Ministry (MUP), requested the Interior Ministry of FRY to extradite individuals publicly indicted by the ICTY, if they are found in the FRY territory. Kovacevic added that she did not know whether the request arrived to Belgrade. “It would not be the first time that some document or a request does not arrive officially and that what is requested is carried out.” – Kovacevic added. The FRY Interior Minister, Zoran Zivkovic stated on Monday the FRY Government did not receive any requests from the RS Government related to the extradition of the ICTY indictees and that therefore, in his eyes, such request does not exist. The RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic stated that it was not request, but an appeal.

## **International Community**

### **Wolfgang Petritsch: BiH could be a sovereign country**

Oslobodjenje, Jutrarnje Novine and OBN Television carry excerpts of the High Representative's interview with SENSE news agency, in which he expresses his optimism about the future of BiH and the intensified European engagement. For a comprehensive summary, [click here](#).

### **UN Security Council on situation in BiH**

Nezavisne novine carries an extensive report about the UN Security Council session on BiH and full size front-page photo of the Wolfgang Petritsch and Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for Foreign Policy and Security. All news agencies also carry the [OHR press release](#).

### **Kofi Annan: UN mission in BiH at the end of its mandate and challenges still lay ahead**

Dnevni Avaz and Jutarnje Novine carries excerpts of the speech delivered by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan before the UN Security Council on Tuesday in New York. Annan stressed in his address that this latest session of the SC marked an important moment in the transition and consolidation of BiH and commended the work of its Special Representative in this country, Jacques Paul Klein, as well as the cooperation with the OHR and other international organizations. "I believe that the Council can be very satisfied with the work of the UNMIBH as an advocate of reconciliation and an agent of rule of law and, of course, with everything else achieved thus far," said Annan.

### **US Ambassador to the UN: BiH authorities have not**

## **yet implemented important changes**

The US Ambassador to the UN, James Cunningham (Sp!), stressed in his address to the UN Security Council on Tuesday that the authorities in BiH must do significantly more on the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in order to build a progressive and safe state for all its citizens. Cunningham said that the streamlining exercise of international organizations in BiH is necessary for the next phase of the implementation of the DPA. "However, this plan, nor the international assistance will not change the central role which leaders in BiH and its people must play in the implementation of Dayton and building of a prosperous and safe nation. We know our priorities: strengthening of state institutions, return of refugees and economic reform," Cunningham said, and urged local authorities to take necessary steps in the implementation of the Constitutional Court decision of constituency of peoples. (Jutarnje Novine and Dnevni Avaz carry the press release)

## **BiH Ambassador to the UN: BiH is finally in position to decide on its own fate**

In an interview with Dnevni Avaz, the BiH ambassador to the UN, Mirza Kusljugic, said that Tuesday's session of the UN Security Council was a very special session, which was also confirmed by all other participants. It was special, Kusljugic explained, because it marked the beginning of a new phase of the Dayton implementation and a new engagement of the International Community. "At the session, the appointment of the new High Representative was confirmed, which also implied the endorsement of a new model, which was earlier determined at a session of the Peace Implementation Council," said Kusljugic. He explained that this would be the first time that the EU, together with the UN, take part in one peace-building mission. Kusljugic added, however, that this intensification of European presence and engagement will not mean the simultaneous withdrawal of the UN.

## **PDHR Donald Hays: Some judges and prosecutors will be removed**

Dnevni Avaz carries a shorter interview with the Principle Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, in which he talks mostly about the ongoing judicial reform in BiH and the formation of a new cabinet of the High Representative in the process of streamlining of international organizations in BiH. (Full translation to follow)

## **Reuters: ICTY will not close until Karadzic and Mladic brought to justice**

The Hague war crimes tribunal will not close before its most wanted men, Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic and his military commander Ratko Mladic, are brought to the court, a top U.S. official said on Wednesday. "Karadzic and Mladic will come to The Hague. It could happen tomorrow, it could be next year," U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes, Pierre-Richard Prosper, told a news conference at the U.N. Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, Reuters reported.

"The tribunal will not close before they are brought to justice in The Hague," he added. Prosper was softening his line significantly, after slamming the Hague-based Yugoslavia court and its sister Rwanda Tribunal before the U.S. Congress last week for lapses in professionalism and management and saying they should be wrapped up by 2008. His verbal attack on the tribunal coincided with NATO troops' failed attempts to arrest Karadzic, whom U.N. prosecutors have charged with genocide, in southeastern Bosnia.

The U.S. criticism of the court, now trying former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic and other alleged Balkans and Rwandan war criminals, set it at odds with U.S. Democrats and allies abroad who support the international process.

The U.S. administration believes the ad hoc tribunals, created in the 1990s to deal with specific horrors in Yugoslavia and

Rwanda, should not become permanent fixtures and that war crimes jurisdiction should be shifted to national courts.

Sitting beside Prosper on Wednesday, U.N. Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte said: "I welcome the renewed public commitment from the United States to supporting the arrest and transfer of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic."

The U.N. reacted to Prosper's criticism last week by saying it had intended to wind up the Yugoslavia tribunal by 2007-8 anyway. Prosper said on Wednesday that the U.S. supported the court but recognized there were problems facing it.

He said Washington's most serious concern was the practice of "fee-splitting" in which defense lawyers at the Hague court share some of their tribunal-paid fees with defendants' families. Prosper told Congress last week that "the professionalism of some of the personnel has been called into question, with allegations of mismanagement and abuse.

"The process at times has been costly, has lacked efficiency, has been too slow and has been too removed from the everyday experience of the people and the victims."

## **Tonino Picula, Croatian Foreign Minister: Our interlocutor is State government in BiH**

When questioned to comment on the recent attacks that are coming from the RS against him and the Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament Zdravko Tomac, Croatian Foreign Minister Tonino Picula said that he informed BiH Croats and international representatives in Croatia that he would like to have representatives of the RS in Zagreb in order to raise the level of exchange of information and ease the tensions. "Diplomatic representatives of our country have been given instructions to try and arrange these talks. Will they take place, I do not know. But the Croatian Government wants to have talks with representative of the RS authorities. But our main interlocutor is the Government in Sarajevo i.e. the

Council of Ministers”, says Picula. When questioned as to what happened to the announced joint statement between the two Governments on constitutional changes in BiH, Picula said that the initiative should not be dropped because it was a result of a joint meeting when both sides supported it. “I do not know how much BiH coordinated itself about the initiative and I do not want to comment on that, but it was not a forgery. I still believe that we should have gone one step further in its realization. We wanted to reach a compromise on the constitutional changes because it is not an issue of daily politics but rather a key issue. It is in our interest that BiH grows into a more stable state with consolidated democracy and economy”, says Picula.

## **Editorials**

### **Dnevni List: HVO and Holbrooke**

By Miro Nikolic

The editorial carries that Richard Holbrooke, a creator of the Dayton Peace Agreement, gave lecture at a reputable Washington University John Hopkins on the topic ‘Situation in Macedonia, Kosovo and BiH’.

‘According to him the DPA has two failures:

- 1) a joint Army has not been formed, and three Armies remained in BiH
- 2) more powers should have been vested in the Central Government

The biggest failures are in the implementation of the DPA. He sent a message to the next HR to be aggressive, because people in BiH only understand aggressiveness. He said that the Army of the RS is corrupted, composed of a useless group of people, killers and rapists, whose Commanders were war criminals, and



some of them are still members of this Army. According to him, HVO is a Mafia Army, like the one in Columbia, it is involved in smuggling, especially the smuggling of the cars stolen in Western Europe. The Croats are very much involved in it, from Mostar to the border with Croatia. For BiH Army he only said that it has to be reformed (?!) without any other explanations.'

The author of the editorial says that Holbrooke 'blessed' the aggression and annexing of Eastern Timor to Indonesia. As a Clinton' Special Envoy for Kosovo and Cyprus, he was negotiating with Milosevic and these negotiations ended up with the bombing of Serbia, while he has not achieved any results in Cyprus. The author also says that CATO institute judged his DPA as disastrous.

'With such description of the RS Army and the conclusion that Serbs are aggressors, he and the policy that he represents awarded the same Serbs with 49% of the BiH territory. Blaming of one whole people for smuggling is racism. Criminalization of HVO and comparisons with the Colombian Mafia and not mentioning of the BiH Army, whose officers have been standing trials, is something that we have seen before. Does the Western world really support Bosniaks and is it really against the Croats? It is not an issue of love and justice, it is about interests. The judgment is that Bosniaks are stronger, that they will succeed to separate from fundamentalism, that it is easier to manipulate with them because they do not have a national identity and, for this reason, they will be a better and more reliable ally. The Croats are weaker, focused on their own interests, disunited, often arrogant, they do not know how to rule (to control a territory) and they are not a reliable partner and ally. The Croats are responsible for this situation to a large extent, and if there were no the Croats in BiH it is just one problem less. There is plenty of space in North Sweden.'

# **Headlines**

## **Glas srpski**

- What's being spoken of in Srbinje: Bosniacs attempted to arrest Karadzic
- Republics Statistics Bureau: salaries growing

## **Nezavisne novine**

- UN Security Council on situation in BiH: The Hague is a test for SDS
- BiH Council of Minister delegation in visit to Croatia: reached an agreement on Ploce harbor and the border
- Mostar: Neven Tomic offers resignation
- Criminal charges against 29 employees of the BiH Foreign Affairs Ministry: Ambassadors indicted for millions

## **Oslobodjenje**

- Council of Ministers presents Action Plan on fight against corruption
- Zagreb – Sarajevo: Problems turn into solutions

## **Dnevni Avaz**

- Why are pensions late again?

## **Jutarnje Novine**

- Compensation for laid off soldiers in three instalments

## **Dnevni List**

- Background of Mostar Mayor Neven Tomic's resignation: Projectile on Dika's house is cause of Tomic's resignation
- Miro Grabovac Titan promised to representatives of international community: If Jelavic stays, I am leaving HDZ with 5 MPs
- Trials at Mostar Cantonal Court: Bosko Previsic of Capljina suspected of war crimes

## **Vecernji List**

- Cardinal Puljic at meeting of Bishops from Croatia and BiH: In six years 130.000 Croats have left BiH

- Crisis of City authorities in Mostar reaches summit: Neven Tomic resigns
- Zagreb meeting between Lagumdzija and Racan: Oil and Ploce problems solved