BiH Media Round-up, 7/5/2002

BiH State-related Issues

- Belkic to attend special UN General Assembly session dedicated to children
- Belkic to participate in the work of donor's conference for Srebrenica in New York
- The first BHTV 1 evening news to be broadcast at 1900 on Tuesday

Federation

- PDHR Hays requested Halilovic, Behmen to urgently solve issue of the Federation Refugee Minister appointment
- BiH Federation Government supports the Financial Police findings in regard of the FDS privatization
- SDA Collegium did not made any decision on the status of removed officials
- *Dnevni List:* Hard fights for position of Ante Jelavic's successor
- *Slobodna Dalmacija:* Interview with Barisa Colak, a member of the HDZ BiH Presidency
- *Vecernji List:* More than 45 percent of Croats do not want to vote
- Serb returnee to Sarajevo arrested on war crime charges

Republika Srpska

- RS prime minister's advisor for cooperation with ICTY comments on new form of cooperation with ICTY
- SPRS president requests Bilic's resignation

International Community

- The PIC Steering Board opens its two-day session in Sarajevo
- PDHR Hays visits two small and medium-sized enterprises
- LDS calls on Petritsch to recommends abolishment of visa regime for BiH citizens
- *Dnevni Avaz:* Poll – 77 percent of citizens support LDS initiative for the abolishment of the visa regime for the BiH citizens

- **Paddy Ashdown meets with the German Foreign Minister: Dr.Gerhard Enver Schroembgens to be appointed new SDHR**
- **Ashdown: Karadzic de-stabilizes BiH**
- ***Reuters:* Rugova accuses Milosevic of lying to U.N. court**

Headlines

BiH State-related Issues

Belkic to attend special UN General Assembly session dedicated to children

According to Oslobodjenje, the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkic, is expected to leave on Tuesday for New York, where he will attend a special session of UN General Assembly dedicated to children. At a press conference in Sarajevo on Monday, Belkic said he would inform the Assembly about the implementation of the Convention on the Right of the Child in BiH.

Belkic to participate in the work of donor's conference for Srebrenica in New York

Oslobodjenje reports that, in the course of his stay in New York, the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkic, will attend a donor's conference for Srebrenica. The conference will be held on May 13 and is expected to provide $12.5 million to financially support the development of the region.

The first BHTV 1 evening news to be broadcast at 1900 on Tuesday

Oslobodjenje reports on another press conference, which took place in Sarajevo on Monday, in regard of the start of BHTV 1 central evening news program broadcasting at 1900 on Tuesday. The journalists were addressed by the BHTV 1 Director, Drago

Maric, the news program editor, Haris Kulenovic, the PBS Program Director, Lazar Petrovic and Plamenko Custovic, a member of the PBS Founding Board. Maric said that a group of young journalists would be promoted in the first evening news.

Federation

PDHR Hays requested Halilovic, Behmen to urgently solve issue of the Federation Refugee Minister appointment

At the end of March this year, the Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, requested the BiH Federation President, Safet Halilovic, and Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, to initiate urgent resolution of a dispute over the appointment of the entity Minister for Social Welfare, Refugees and Displaced Persons. “Behmen and myself discussed the issue with Sefer Halilovic (BPS leader who had left the post due to a war crime proceedings against him before The Hague Tribunal). He promised to us that his party would nominate a candidate, and we expect that the name is delivered into the parliamentary procedure at the next session of the Parliament,” Safet Halilovic told Dnevni Avaz. However, the BPS General Secretary, Sead Gajevic, said that h they had the name of the candidate, but that they would not announce it all until the Alliance for Change fulfills all BPS demands including those related to the appointment of directors in certain public enterprises.

BiH Federation Government supports the Financial Police findings in regard of the FDS privatization

According to Dnevni Avaz, at a session in Sarajevo on Monday, the BiH Federation Government supported the FDS (the Sarajevo Tobacco Factory) privatization-related findings of the Financial Police, according to which the factory was a hunder-

percent ownership of the state. This means that all privatization activities carried out so far have been illegal.

SDA Collegium did not made any decision on the status of removed officials

Dnevni Avaz learned from well-informed sources that the SDA Collegium had not made on Monday any decision on the status of the SDA officials removed from offices by the High Representative, because the Election Commission had still not sent a precise list with names of the officials whom the High Representative's Decision referred to. The status of the removed officials will be on the agenda of the SDA Presidency session scheduled for Wednesday, as the final decision on the issue could be made by the party's Main Board on Saturday, May 11.

Dnevni List: Hard fights for position of Ante Jelavic's successor

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List says that the most serious candidates for the position of the acting head of HDZ BiH, until Extraordinary Convention is held in mid-June, are Bozo Ljubic and Dragan Covic. Giving history of possible candidates for HDZ President position, the article says that after Jelavic, Tokic, Andric-Luzanski and Batinic's resignations, the same is to be expected on Friday from Lozancic, Bacak, Colak and others. Saying that Vinko Zoric, the current Governor of West Herzegovina Canton, has support of founders of HDZ, the article adds that Wolfgang Petritsch would like to see Miro Grabovac Titan in the position of HDZ President, and daily says that Titan's group, that has no influence at all, is even called "Petritsch's HDZ". Article says that very loud group within HDZ coming from Siroki Brijeg is favoring Bozo Ljubic, and many members of HDZ Central Board from Mostar would like to see Dragan Covic as new President of HDZ. The daily says

that Covic is an informal favorite, but he has to face some obstacles like: criminal charges in drawers of Sarajevo judges, removal from election list because of active engagement in Samouprava (Self-rule) project, application forms for exams filled in Cyrillic letters in the time Covic was a student… The text says that Josip Merdzo is worn down after a conflict with Jelavic, and nobody takes him for serious.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Barisa Colak, a member of the HDZ BiH Presidency

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Slobodna Dalmacija carries an interview with Barisa Colak, a member of the HDZ BiH Presidency, who talks about the situation in relation to the HDZ BiH.

Speaking about the election of a new leader of the party, Colak says that the Presidency did not forward a name of its candidate to the HDZ Central Board which is to appoint an acting leader of the party. Colak also does not know whether the Presidency will come up with a name at its next session that is scheduled prior to the Friday's session of the Central Board. Regarding the registration, Barisa Colak stresses that he is convinced that all the persons under the OHR's sanctions will step down. In relation to alleged statements by the senior party officials that hundred or so persons must leave the HDZ BiH, Colak says that the party does not comprehend which politicians that might be i.e. which politicians ought to withdraw so the HDZ BiH could register. "Those who have been erased from the HDZ lists at last elections, were stripped down not because of their personal acts but because of the OSCE sanctions against the party. In other words, I do not believe that those people are under sanctions now and that they should step down", says Colak. Regarding the participation in the elections, Colak says that majority within the HDZ BiH believes that the party should take part

regardless of the fact that they know in advance that they are destined to be an opposition. “For the interests of the Croat people, in other words, for the interests of those who elect you, one must fight through the institutions”, says Colak. Colak also talks about the lifetime ban to Ante Jelavic to be engaged in the politics. According to Colak, this and other bans simply cannot go on for a longer period of time. “With the admission of BiH into the Council of Europe, all those bans will be abolished”, concludes Barisa Colak.

Vecernji List: More than 45 percent of Croats do not want to vote

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List reads that opinion polls conducted by international organizations in BiH show that more than 45% of the Croat electorate will not vote in the October elections and that the biggest number of abstainers has been recorded among younger people, however the population of 55 years and over improves the situation. According to VL this is a product of catastrophic moves made by some political parties, political repression that has been imposed by the IC through the ruling Alliance in the Federation and ever deteriorating social status. According to Washington-based National Institute for International Affairs, as much as 49% of the Croat electorate in BiH are not planning to vote. VL goes on to say that moves of the High Representative convince the Croat electorate that regardless of election results, the Croat political parties will be able to do nothing without consent of the IC. A separate article reads that the HDZ BiH will, regardless of internal divisions and changes within the party cadre, win most of the votes at this year’s elections.

Serb returnee to Sarajevo arrested on war crime charges

A Serb returnee to Sarajevo, Vlastimir Pusara, aged 48, has

been arrested on the basis of a court order issued by the canton prosecutor for the initiation of an investigation into war crimes that he is believed to have committed against the civilian population, with consent from the Hague tribunal, Sarajevo Canton Court investigative judge Ibrahim Hadzic said, Nezavisne novine reports. According to him, once the investigative operations are over, the results will be sent to the canton prosecutor, who will on this basis decide whether to press charges or not. Two years ago Pusara and his family returned to Sarajevo. Pusara was arrested on 30 April on the BiH border at Orasje.

Republika Srpska

RS prime minister's advisor for cooperation with ICTY comments on new form of cooperation with ICTY

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Glas Srpski reports that the RS prime minister's advisor for cooperation with the ICTY, Sinisa Djordjevic, recently stated that the RS is preparing a surprise when it comes to cooperation with the ICTY. When asked to clarify his statement, Djordjevic said that the RS is working on a proposal of the agreement on cooperation with the ICTY whose objective is to make known that the RS does not hide that the documentation, important for the ICTY, exists. He said that assessments that the RS's cooperation with the ICTY is very bad because the RS authorities have not arrested all indictees – regardless of the fact that these persons are not on the RS territory- brings the RS to an absurd situation. "Objectively speaking, the RS cannot meet some requests, but it is ready to enable all parties, which want to assess the facts pertaining to the existence or non-existence of some documentation, to come and see for themselves", said Djordjevic. According to him, the cooperation with the ICTY will not be broken off even

if the ICTY does not issue the indictment against Alija Izetbegovic. “As long as the ICTY exists, all possibilities have to be exploited in order to prove the undisputed fact that all three sides in the BiH war committed war crimes. When I said that nothing will be same if the ICTY fails to issue indictment against Alija Izetbegovic, I meant that, in that case, war crimes committed against Serbs, will not be placed on the same level with crimes committed against other peoples and that the way in which things, that happened during the war, will be seen will depend on circumstances that some political structures find suitable at some point. In that case, the politics will overcome the truth”, said Djordjevic.

SPRS president requests Bilic’s resignation

(Provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Nezavisne Novine reports that the SPRS president, Petar Djokic requested that RS Defence Minister, Slobodan Bilic, resigns because he left the SPRS and joined the People’s Party of Socialists (NPS), given that Bilic ran for that post as an SPRS member. He said that it was still too early to say when the SPRS will ask the RS prime minister, Mladen Ivanic, to return the post of RS defence minister to the SPRS. Djokic said that no SPRS member will be allowed to be a member of SPRS and some other party at the same time.

International Community

The PIC Steering Board opens its two-day session in Sarajevo

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, is meeting with the political directors of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council in Sarajevo on May 6 and 7. “During the two days of talks the High Representative and the Steering Board will discuss, among other things, the amendments to the

Entity Constitutions put in place last month, judicial reform and public service broadcasting," the OHR Spokesman, Oleg Milisic, told Fena news agency (Dnevni Avaz carried the statement). On the second day of what will be his last meeting with the Steering Board at the level of political directors during his mandate as the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the Steering Board will also meet with the leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina and both its Entities.

PDHR Hays visits two small and medium-sized enterprises

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Don Hays, on Monday visited two successful postwar start-up companies which have become profitable and created jobs by identifying and exploiting niche markets. The object of Ambassador Hays' visit, to a furniture manufacturer in Hadzici and a producer of dental supplies in Sarajevo, was to identify the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Fena news agency, Dnevni Avaz and Dnevni List carried the Press Release)

LDS calls on Petritsch to recommends abolishment of visa regime for BiH citizens

Dnevni Avaz, Oslobodjenje and ONASA report that the BiH Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) called on the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to in his final address to the PIC Steering Board recommend abolishment of visa regime for the BiH citizens. At a press conference in Sarajevo on Tuesday, the LDS General Secretary, Nijaz Nurkovic, said that, since BiH had met majority of the criteria for abolishment of the current visa regime, his party expected Petritsch fulfill "a promise" he had given at the beginning of his mandate almost three years ago.

Dnevni Avaz: Poll – 77 percent of citizens support

LDS initiative for the abolishment of the visa regime for the BiH citizens

According to an Avaz poll, 77 percent of citizens support BiH LDS' appeal on the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to recommend abolishment of the visa regime for the BiH citizens. The poll was conducted by phone on a sample of 300 randomly selected citizens in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar. Only three percent of the polled citizens denied their support to the appeal, as 20 percent did not answer either positively or negatively to the question.

Paddy Ashdown meets with the German Foreign Minister: Dr.Gerhard Enver Schroembgens to be appointed new SDHR

According to Dnevni Avaz, the current German Ambassador to Estonia, Gerhard Enver Schroembgens, will be appointed new Senior Deputy High Representative in BiH. At the beginning of upcoming summer, Schroembgens is expected to replace in the office current SDHR Matthias Sonn. The newspaper reports that the incoming High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, met on Monday in Berlin with the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer. Ashdown's Spokesman, Julian Braithwaite, told Avaz that the two officials had discussed priorities of the future High Representative in BiH.

Ashdown: Karadzic de-stabilizes BiH

The future High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, assessed in Berlin yesterday that the former RS President, Radovan Karadzic, charged with genocide in BiH, was de-stabilizing BiH, Beta news agency reported. Ashdown said that there could be no peace without justice and expressed hope that Karadzic would soon be arrested. According to the future High Representative, BiH is not facing a threat of a new ethnic conflict, but a threat of falling deeper into crime and corruption. Ashdown stated that the priority in his work would

be the establishment of the rule of law.

Reuters: Rugova accuses Milosevic of lying to U.N. court

Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova accused ex-Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic on Monday of lying at his war crimes trial as the two long-time adversaries locked horns in dramatic courtroom exchanges. Milosevic challenged Rugova, a mild-mannered academic who led passive resistance by Kosovo's Albanian majority against Milosevic's rule in the 1990s, about his witness testimony. Rugova in turn accused Milosevic of lying and mixing up facts. Milosevic, accused of responsibility for the killing of more than 900 Kosovo Albanians and expulsion of around 800,000 during a violent Serb crackdown in 1999 that triggered NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, is conducting his own defence. Milosevic and Rugova presented sharply contradictory accounts of events surrounding their face-to-face meetings in 1999 as Kosovo Albanian refugees massed at the border with Macedonia and NATO planes pounded Yugoslav targets. Rugova said Milosevic's forces had kept him under house arrest in Pristina, the Kosovo capital, in April 1999 and he had feared the Serb government would murder him. Milosevic said he had protected Rugova from assassination by Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) separatist guerrillas. (Oslobodjenje prominently reports on the trial)

Headlines

Oslobodjenje

- Control of accounts of IGASA, AIO, High Saudi Committee…

Dnevni Avaz

- Financial Police in Tuzla-based Polihem Company

Jutarnje Novine

- Srebrenica citizens cannot be represented by Mladen Ivanic

Dnevni List

- Let’s protect environment and let’s not allow further ecological catastrophes: Whose guinea pigs we are?
- Zdravko Jurkovic and Mile Coko on the occasion of anniversary of the Banja Luka riots: We are sentenced only because we are Croats from Stolac!

Vecernji List

- Independent Trade Union of Aluminij Mostar accuses: Silajdzic wants to destroy Aluminij!
- Survey on elections in BiH: Half of Croats does not want to vote
- Drvar: Street vandalism with Chetnik songs

Glas Srpski

- Enam Arnaut arrested – A benefactor for terrorists
- RS Education Ministry – Entrance examination still requirement;

Nezavisne Novine

- Privatization of the Sarajevo Tobacco Factory cancelled
- Djokic requests Bilic’s resignation;