

BiH Media Round-up 8/10/2001

[BiH State-related Issues](#)

1. Los Angeles Times: Bosnia seen as hospitable base and sanctuary for terrorists
2. Lagumdzija meets with ambassadors of western countries and Russia
3. OHR considers Lagumdzija's initiative on replacement of international organizations with stable domestic institutions a long-term measure
4. Oslobodjenje: Lagumdzija reviews relation towards OHR and OSCE
5. BiH Council of Ministers prolongs discussion on the engagement of foreign experts in the privatization process
6. Brcko District Assembly adopts draft Budget rebalance

[Federation](#)

1. Jasmin Durakovic elected Director of the BiH Federation Television
2. HDZ BiH holds its Convention, Jelavic re-elected party President
3. OHR says reasons behind Jelavic's dismissal still exist
4. OSCE says HDZ will suffer consequences due to Jelavic's re-election
5. Dnevni List: Reflections of the 7th Extraordinary Congress of the HDZ BiH

6. Dnevni List: The Victory of the Wavering Challenger
7. Vecernji List: Greater applause for Boksic than for new President
8. Slobodna Dalmacija: Messages of the HDZ BiH Congress
9. Slobodna Dalmacija: **The 7th HDZ BiH Congress, at which Ante Jelavic was again elected the leader of the party, has not brought any surprises**
10. Slobodna Dalmacija: **Interview with Ante Jelavic after he was re-elected the President of the HDZ BiH**
11. Slobodna Dalmacija: SDA says SDP wants to take over control of media
12. Dnevni List: Director of AID, Kemo Ademovic, should go to The Hague as witness or even as indictee!
13. Three foreign citizens handed over to the Egyptian authorities

[Republika Srpska](#)

1. RS Defense Minister says formation of a joint BiH Army not possible
2. RS Prosecution Office to complete indictment against Izetbegovic in two weeks
3. Forensic experts unearth more than 500 bodies of Bosniak war victims in BiH
4. New resignations in the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska

5. RS President Mirko Sarovic says RS possesses evidence about certain individuals involved in the international terrorism
6. RS Premier Mladen Ivanic to face new crisis of his Government
7. Bosko Gvozden, Aid to the RS Minister of Defense, says the RS Army does not provide security to Karadzic and Mladic

International Community

1. U.S. launches military strikes in Afghanistan
2. FRY and RS establish Council and Permanent Committee for Cooperation
3. OSCE and OHR concerned over frequent political pressures-related complaints of journalist
4. SDP considers unfounded OHR and OSCE allegations that media are under its pressure
5. OHR says privatization of apartments for cash would discriminate returnees
6. Economic Task Force discusses urgent reforms in the RS

BiH State-related Issues

Los Angeles Times: Bosnia Seen as Hospitable Base

and Sanctuary for Terrorists

Hundreds of foreign Islamic extremists who became Bosnian citizens after battling Serbian and Croatian forces present a potential terrorist threat to Europe and the United States, according to a classified U.S. State Department report and interviews with international military and intelligence sources. The extremists include hard-core terrorists, some with ties to Osama bin Laden, protected by militant elements of the former Sarajevo government. Bosnia-Herzegovina is “a staging area and safe haven” for terrorists, said a former senior State Department official. The [LA Times report](#) was carried by BiH electronic media and Sunday’s Dnevni Avaz.

Lagumdzija meets with ambassadors of western countries and Russia

Dnevni Avaz reports on Saturday that Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers and BiH Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdzija had met on Friday, in separate meetings, with Ambassadors of Great Britain, Belgium, France, Russia, Germany and Italy to exchange views concerning the coordinated activities of the international community in combating terrorism, as well as concerning the economic reforms in BiH. Lagumdzija presented to the Ambassadors his initiative on the joint efforts to create stable BiH state institutions, which would in the future take over the role currently being played by certain international organizations. According to Monday’s Oslobodjenje, Lagumdzija will early next week present to the Ambassadors of the most powerful countries new modalities of the future cooperation with the international community particularly with the OHR and the OSCE Mission to BiH.

OHR considers Lagumdzija’s initiative on replacement of international organizations with

stable domestic institutions a long-term measure

Head of the OHR Press Office Alexandra Stiglmayer told Sunday's Dnevni Avaz that the High Representative was supporting an initiative of BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdžija on creation of a plan for establishment of the stable state institutions to take over the role currently being played by the international organizations because this was in line with his concept of the responsibility. However, the OHR considers this action a long-term measure.

Oslobodjenje: Lagumdžija reviews relation towards OHR and OSCE (full translation of the article published in the Monday's issue of the newspaper)

Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers Zlatko Lagumdžija will early next week present the Ambassadors of the most influenced countries with the modalities of future cooperation with the international community, particularly with the Office of the High Representative and the OSCE Mission to BiH, Oslobodjenje learned. Such a Lagumdžija's decision was partly presented to the Ambassadors of Great Britain, Belgium, France, Russia, Germany and Italy at the separate meetings held on Friday. According to a press release distributed to media, on the day, Lagumdžija requested the Ambassadors to fully support a concept of partnership relations. He also emphasized that the domestic authorities should not be anymore held responsible for poor results achieved by the international organizations, as the international community could not be criticized for poor results of the local authorities. The release also said that Lagumdžija had expressed his dissatisfaction with a fact certain lowly-ranking officials working with the international community were not well informed about the essence of the partnership relation between the international community and the BiH authorities. According to the release, some of them, because they do not understand the new relation or they have still not

fully adapted to it, are more and more frequently publicly criticizing certain institutions of the BiH authorities for poor results in the spheres, which are still under the authority of the international community. An Oslobodjenje source explains Lagumdžija believes that a concept of partnership is becoming more and more bureaucratic in its essence, which can be confirmed by recent developments. "The partnership is not holding only a meeting per month, show up before cameras, and then go away in different directions, with all continuing their usual practice," the source said. The source particularly pointed out a few examples in which the partnership relation had not been reached in a way wanted by the BiH authorities. The obvious example, according to the Oslobodjenje source, is the process of the RTV BiH restructuring. "The state television is a monument of the international community's failures. And now they want to put names of the domestic official on the monument," said the source. He added that a bureaucratic structure inside the international organizations was making affairs in fear of losing the job. "The local authorities have better and better cooperation with certain Ambassadors but with the bureaucracy, with the lowly-ranking officials is harder and harder. They maintain that the entire process of partnership means annulment of their role. And this is slowing the process," said the source. Just due to these reasons, the source adds, Lagumdžija has decided to review a complete modality of the partnership. This means that it would be known next week what does the partnership exactly represent. "We are not against meetings and even against press statements. But only when something concrete is determined. A plan is that a program of activities with the economic, legal, human rights protection and media development aspects is jointly made. A plan is that once these activities are realized one can say that BiH is a self-sustainable, normal country, and that it is precisely defined when there is no need any more for certain international organizations," says the Oslobodjenje source. According to the source, Lagumdžija will focus on a few points

of the program. Primarily, all should realize that the partnership does not have any alternative, and that role of all actors in the process should be defined. This means that the concrete tasks must be defined, with deadlines for their implementation. "The goal is that the international community assists BiH authorities, arbitrate when we cannot reach the agreement, and then, only as a final step, impose the decisions. We are afraid the things are currently not going in this way. It happens that certain officials of the international community are ruling out even in cases in which we know what and how something must be done," the Oslobodjenje source concluded.

BiH Council of Ministers prolongs discussion on the engagement of foreign experts in the privatization process

Oslobodjenje reports on Saturday that the BiH Council of Ministers has prolonged the adoption of a proposed project of providing technical assistance in the privatization process. According to the project valued at \$20 millions which has been offered by the World Bank, the entity Governments would by these funds provided on the credit basis finance mainly foreign privatization experts providing assistance at selling enterprises to the strategic investors. At its session held on Thursday, the Council of Ministers discussed the issue of foreign experts engagement concluding to delay the adoption of the arrangement until the World Bank provides detailed information on the issue.

Brcko District Assembly adopts draft Budget rebalance

The Transitional Assembly of the Brcko District, in whose work five delegates of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) did not participate, adopted on Friday the draft rebalance of the budget for the year of 2001 in the amount of 112 million

marks, which is a 20-percent increase comparing the initially planned budget. At the continuation of the 27th regular session, it was concluded that delegates deliver amendments in a written form until the next session of the Assembly, when a final decision on the revision of the budget for this year is expected to be made.

Federation

Jasmin Durakovic elected Director of the BiH Federation Television

Slavo Kukic, the President of the BiH Federation TV Council, told Saturday's *Oslobodjenje* that Jasmin Durakovic had been elected BiH Federation Television Director on Friday. According to Kukic, Durakovic was elected unanimously since he had been the only candidate for the post. Kukic explained that the second candidate, Haris Pasovic, had not submitted his plan of action as he had been requested, and that is why he had not been taken into consideration as a nominee. However, Pasovic claims that he informed the Council members about his views concerning the work and development of the broadcaster, which should start its program at the end of October. According to *Oslobodjenje*, he did so both in written and verbal form on September 11 at a two-hour long interview for the post. Certain Council members assessed him fully appropriate candidate, and he was told he would be informed about the Council's decision in three days. The Federation Government has also been involved in the election process. Last summer, its representatives met with the High Representative and it was agreed that Dubravko Lovrenovic, the BiH Federation Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, is included in the process of the TV transformation. A series of meetings followed and it was agreed that Haris Pasovic is nominated as the candidate for

the BiH Federation TV Director. However, unexpectedly a new decision to nominate Durakovic was made at the next sessions of the Council, which were not attended by all of its members. But, the newspaper emphasized that almost all the sessions of the Council were attended by Chris Riley, the Head of the OHR Department for Media Development, and John Shearer, the High Representative's Broadcasting Agent. However, the decision to elect Durakovic was made by the local members of the Council. Oslobodjenje journalist Amra Kebo concludes that such the election of the head of the Federation TV will surely provoke reactions. She wrote that the Federation Government was to hold a special press conference on the issue, as certain members of the Council were preparing their resignations.

HDZ BiH holds its Convention, Jelavic re-elected party President

The BiH Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) is fully prepared to return to the both Parliaments and look for the resolution of the open issues through an institutional political struggle, said Ante Jelavic, who was re-elected President of the party at its seventh convention held on Saturday in Mostar. According to Sunday's Oslobodjenje, Jelavic in this way ignored the High Representative's decision banning him to perform such the public duties. In his address to the attendees at the convention, Jelavic also said that the time had come for the HDZ to open itself towards the international community and discuss all the problems but in a transparent way. He emphasized that the entire BiH should be organized on the basis of cantons, or the three equal federal units should be established. Jelavic added that the work on the upcoming constitutional reforms was also among the HDZ priorities. Habena reported that Ivo Andric Luzanski, Dragan Covic, Zdravko Batinic, Martin Raguz and Marko Tokic (all nominated by Jelavic) were elected HDZ Vice-presidents late on Saturday. [\(See here for more information about the HDZ Congress\)](#)

OHR says reasons behind Jelavic's dismissal still exist

The reasons underlying the decision made in spring by the High Representative in BiH, Wolfgang Petritsch, to sack Ante Jelavic from his post of president of the BiH Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) are still topical, ONASA was told on Saturday by OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic. Milisic said Jelavic was not considered to be the leader of the party even before and that nothing changed in that regard with his re-election. The OHR finds it disturbing that Jelavic was the only candidate for the

party's leader and said that by re-electing Jelavic party's president the HDZ only weakens its own position.

OSCE says HDZ will suffer consequences due to Jelavic's re-election

The Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) BiH will bear consequences due to re-election of Ante Jelavic for its president, Onasa learned from official sources in the OSCE Mission to BiH. The OSCE Mission thinks the Jelavic's re-election presents a "clear sign of non-readiness of the political party to cooperate with the international community and an ignoring relation towards the work of the international community in BiH." The OSCE is dissatisfied that a man who was expelled from the political life of BiH is elected the HDZBiH president. According to the organization, HDZ will bear consequences because of that, but did not precise them.

Dnevni List: Reflections of the 7th Extraordinary Congress of the HDZ BiH

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List quotes **Joso Skara, the Secretary General of the Croatian HDZ**, as saying: "Contribution of BiH Croats to the

creation of the State of Croatia is immeasurable. The HDZ will be assisting Croats in BiH at all times. The arrival of the new structure to power in Croatia has brought about some changes in the attitude towards them (Croats). They do not see that the International Community (IC) is installing puppets to power instead of the democratically elected individuals, they do not see the rigged trials from BiH to The Hague, and they are blind to the fact that Croats could become a minority in unitarized and Islamized BiH."

Zdravko Hrstic, the President of the HSP BiH said the Croat people should not be tricked by the recommendations of their caretakers that they should better be assimilated into Serbs and Bosniaks and divided into rightists, leftists, liberals and others, and they especially should not let those caretakers teach Croats how to work for prosperity.

Ante Paponja, the President of the HKDP (Croat Christian Democratic Revival): "The creators of the world order did not assign Croats a dignified role. We have to fight to achieve it!"

Monsignor Luka Pavlovic, the Vicar General of the Herzegovina Dioceses: "The Church's response to your question about the Croat issue was declared by Bishop Peric in his speech at the HNS that was held in Mostar this March, and it is up to you to bring the Bishop's speech to life."

Fra Slavko Soldo, the Franciscan Provincial of Herzegovina: "I was listening to the Bishop's speech at the HNS session in Mostar from Chicago. We were proud of what he said. He only asked for what he wishes others to have."

Branimir Luksic, the Governor of the Split-Dalmatia County: "The Croatian block will soon replace the current authorities in Croatia by democratic means. The IC must realize that the Croat people in BiH are not just the first victim, but also the first barrier and the first defense from international

terrorism.”

Milan Kovac, the representative of the Croat(ian) citizens living outside of the Republic of Croatia in the Croatian Parliament: “The Croat people must not accept that its sovereignty, constituency, etc. are proclaimed on the paper, and it has been a dead letter on the paper, so far, but this sovereignty should come to life, and the Croat people must tell the IC what they want, instead of always listening to the wishes of others and then defending themselves by saying that it is not right. The Croat people have to practice everything that the Constitution guarantees to them through Municipalities, Cantons, Union of Cantons, until we see a future organization of BiH, because BiH in its present form cannot survive because the Croat people have become a minority in a half of BiH, and it has almost disappeared in the RS. When during the Ottoman Empire the Turkish Authorities were persecuting and impaling us on stakes they failed to assimilate us. There is no chance to assimilate the Croat people. The IC should be aware of this, and the other two peoples in BiH already are. **(on the relation of the new Croatian authorities towards the Croats in BiH)** Well, I believe that it is clear to everyone which kind of relation it is. The Authority in Zagreb led by Mesic, Racan and Tomcic has accepted methods and instructions of the IC to give up on the Croat people in BiH and this is against the Croatian Constitution and the DPA.”

Jozo Maric, the Governor of West Herzegovina Canton: “There is no peace in BiH without equality with Bosniaks and Serbs. What form this equality will have, we shall see through the political struggle ahead of us.”

Maja Freundlich, a journalist and a Vice President of the Croatian HDZ: “You see, many of us, HDZ members, came from Croatia to attend the Congress, which is a clear sign that the unity of the Croat(ian) people is the priority. Realization of the Croat(ian) unity is inconceivable without Croats in BiH.”

Petar Milic, the founder of Croat Christian Democrats: "As far as the HDZ is concerned, it is always too early for forecasts because even when the Congress is over and 6 months after that, because the cards are shuffled all the time, they are not saying clearly what they want. We have our Platform for a Federal BiH that the HDZ adopted. I hope they will start implementing what we adopted at the HNS session of 3 March."

Ivic Pasalic, a member of Croatian HDZ: "It is clear that the current situation is untenable and that new models ought to be found. The division of BiH into the Republic of Srpska and Federation of BiH (FBiH) is too evident, with the FBiH becoming a more or less Muslim-dominated entity and that is the situation that puts Croats on the margins in BiH and other models need to be sought. Is it BiH established with more entities, more cantons, I do not know, but in its essence, it needs to have distinctive federation, confederation features that would guarantee rights to all constituent peoples and those are theoretical models that are being applied everywhere in the world, and a new constitutional-legal model that is being applied in BiH is not functioning.

(on the attitude of the new Croatian authorities towards the BiH Croats)

The attitude is old-fashioned, irresponsible and does not take care of the future of the people in BiH. I think that is a short-lasting policy and the recent events in these areas show that if a state wants to support international factors that apply an European, correct and pro-western policy, then the country must have the strength, must function and take care after its system."

Dnevni List says none of the Alliance representatives were present at the Congress and no one of the current representatives of the Croatia attended, either.

The daily says Zoran Tomic, the HDZ Spokesperson, arranged

with Jelavic that as of today he is no longer the Spokesperson. He told Dnevni List off the record that there have been rumors as to who is the Editor-in-chief of Dnevni List – Martin Raguz or Milan Sutalo. He said he finally read the paper and stressed the Editor-in-chief is Sutalo after all.

Ante Jelavic about Dnevni List: 'It is as if we have realized one beautiful dream.'

Dnevni List: The Victory of the Wavering Challenger

Written by Milan Sutalo

(Full translation provided by OHR Mostar)

The Croat issue has once again remained unanswered – this is how most briefly the effects of the 7th General Congress of the HDZ BiH and the implications that the re-election of the old, new party leadership, headed by Jelavic, could be sublimated. To tell the truth, a tactic turn in the political struggle for re-shaping of Bosnia-Herzegovina into a state in which Croats would be returned the status of the constituent people equal to the status that Bosniaks and Serbs have was proclaimed. Instead of the struggle outside the Parliament and deepening the conflict with the International Community, return to the Parliament and a dialogue with the International Community was announced. If the HDZ genuinely believes that the Croat issue can be resolved through a dialogue with Petritsch and Beecroft, the tactic turn should then have been made on the personnel level too. No policy can gain authenticity without that. It is indisputable that Jelavic has charisma, a clear vision and strongly argued proposals for the restructuring of BiH in which Croats would have the rights equal to the ones that others have. He also has strong ambitions of a leader, but they are in conflict with his indecisiveness to "go all the way". These features of his are

a personification of the HDZ policy which does not know how to realistically assess the circumstances and to make only the moves it can implement.

The proclamation of the Croat self-rule that was followed by giving the project up, the recommendation to the HVO to deny loyalty to illegitimate Croat commanders, Krizanovic, Anic and Lozancic, and then the appeal to the soldiers to return and place themselves under their command, semi-public acknowledgment of mistakes in terms of selection of closest associates who do not have the "guts" to implement party decisions and proposing and electing to the party leadership again the same ones – these are the defeating effects of Jelavic's policy and indications of his and the HDZ's wavering and inconsistency.

Jelavic is like a boxer in a ring, who threatens with a hard blow and challenges the rival but then hides and protects his head with his hands and withdraws into a corner. In the political arena, only strong and decisive politicians, ready to go "all the way" or to honorably withdraw from the scene are respected. Jelavic is obviously not ready for either. It is therefore not surprising that the OHR and the OSCE, despite the proclamatory change of the HDZ policy, discarded Jelavic as a political partner although they do not have the right to that. And this would not be tragic if the bill to collect is not submitted to the BiH Croats, reads the Dnevni List editorial.

Vecernji List: Greater applause for Boksic than for new President

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Vecernji List reports that the 7th Congress of the HDZ BiH was interrupted because of the Croatia v Belgium football match. Deputies at the convention were very emotional during the match and when Alen Boksic scored for Croatia he was awarded

with a greater applause than Ante Jelavic received when he was confirmed the new President of the HDZ. Chair of the Congress even had troubles with a lack of quorum because the deputies went off to celebrate the Croatian victory over Belgium instead of attending the Congress.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Messages of the HDZ BiH Congress

Written by Boris Curkovic

(Full translation provided by OHR Mostar)

The general assessment of the 7th Congress of the HDZ BiH is that the re-election of Ante Jelavic as the President of the party meant throwing the gauntlet into the face of the International Community. However, that is only partly true. It is true that the HDZ wanted to provoke the IC in order to open important issues (as a sign of good will they offered the return of their delegates to the Parliaments), but one should not have any illusions that the IC would have anything to do with Jelavic or the party he is leading. The status quo remains, and anyone with but a little political common sense, finds it clear that the status quo was the very objective of the HDZ leadership headed by Jelavic.

Why was the Congress convened? Definitely not for the reason of electing new leadership bearing in mind the fact that the former President had no counter-candidate. It is obvious that the change of policy was not their objective because a new policy requires new people. The answer might be the new Program Declaration of the HDZ, which is a document of good quality, but all of HDZ Declarations were documents of good quality, but they have never been complied with. In fact, it is absolutely unclear what the objective of the Congress was.

The Congress is actually a paradigm and the highest point of HDZ's bad moves that took this party to opposition and brought

it to the threshold of illegal activity. The HDZ BiH, after ten years of existence and ruling, is left without any political influence in BiH and is not even acting as an opposition party.

Since Jelavic was elected the President, the HDZ has been abandoned by a number of its reputable members who have become the most vehement critics of the HDZ – it started with Kresimir Zubak, who was followed by dozens of very competent persons (one should not forget that Mijo Anic, for instance, was one of the HDZ founders), it went on with the departure of Jadranko Prlic, and the latest, as Jelavic himself admitted, is that Bozo Ljubic wants to distance himself from this policy. It is very hard to escape the impression that those who left were all wrong. What seems closer to the truth is that they were, in fact, driven away!

When the things start going downhill (and the erosion of the HDZ will continue after the 7th Congress), the easiest thing to do is blame someone else. Such a role perfectly suits the International Community, which is already traditionally disinclined to the HDZ and is eager to see any changes. Even if the HDZ leaders were right in saying that the International Community aims at bringing Croats into a completely inferior status, the party that considers itself the leader of those people, should have come up with an answer to such challenges. The episode with Croat self-rule (Jelavic himself qualified the self-rule as a failed project) was definitely not the adequate answer.

The goal of the leadership should not be ruling one people within that people because no people, and Croats in BiH in particular, lives alone without any surroundings. The new-old structure of the HDZ BiH has so far only shown a total disorientation in their own surroundings. Why would anyone believe it will be different in the future?

Slobodna Dalmacija: The 7th HDZ BiH Congress, at which Ante Jelavic was again elected the leader of the party, has not brought any surprises

Written by Marijan Sivric

(Full translation provided by OHR Mostar)

Ante Jelavic was the only person who could prepare and bring to an end this gathering of the strongest Croat party. Any other candidate, if they had taken part in this election match, but under the condition that Jelavic had not run for the office, would have inevitably caused a split at the Congress.

The Congress took place and the party, as some people announced, did not split after all. This is the good side of this Congress. However, the negative side is the fact that a misunderstanding and conflict with the IC in BiH is still present and it might have even become more intensified. Of the President and five Vice Presidents only one has not been removed by the decision of the High Representative. To be more precise, they were excluded from the political life and deprived of basic human and political rights. For this reason reconciling tones and invitations for contacts with the IC representatives, coming from Ante Jelavic, are completely understandable.

Indeed, it is the most logical thing that the High Representative reexamines his decision on the punishing of the President of one political party who for the third time won a striking victory in this party. However, political logic is not the strongest quality of Wolfgang Petritsch and no one should be surprised if this time as well he makes illogical moves. It means that he will not only persist in his removals, but that he will perhaps introduce some other forms of sanctions. In any case, new threats are already coming from the OSCE.

It is absurd that the party, and this Congress has confirmed its supremacy, that has a huge support among its people, is kept underground by the IC. According to our opinion, a common solution should be found soon. Namely, the HDZ BiH aspires to political goals regarding the constitutional and realistic position of the Croat people in BiH, which no one brings in question anymore, but cannot realize this policy. Furthermore, lately even those Croat politicians who put themselves at the disposal of the Bosniak Alliance for Changes are taking over basic political principles of the HDZ BiH.

For such a situation the IC should be blamed above all, but we could say that the HDZ BiH has not always made right moves in terms of strategy. The HDZ BiH can stop a negative political trend only by their complete involvement in the Parliament Houses in order to prevent the already prepared changes of the Constitution that would reduce the Croats to the position of a national minority.

In this work the HDZ BiH would have to have a transparent support of the international administration because a stable and democratic BiH is not possible without the equality of all its three constituent peoples. In this political moment, which is important for the whole world, a necessity of relying on the legitimate Croat representatives is evident. Insisting on removals and pushing the HDZ BiH underground presents leaving room to those who do not support a democratic BiH and European values.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Ante Jelavic after he was re-elected the President of the HDZ BiH

(Full translation provided by OHR Mostar)

The interview was conducted by Zoran Sagolj

We talked with Ante Jelavic in Mostar on Saturday afternoon,

short after he was elected the President of the HDZ BiH for the third time.

Have you expected so sweeping triumph at the Congress, especially since you were waiting to declare Your candidacy until the last moment?

During the last week I was thinking whether to run for the position of the party's President at all, because I was thinking to withdraw from politics and act as an ordinary HDZ member. However, during the last week in my communication with many people, especially my party colleagues, this decision prevailed.

If there were more candidates...

I am aware of the difficulty of the situation, as well as, of my personal position. However, at the same time I believe that I am the most responsible for the destiny of the party, and if it is the central party of the Croats in BiH, then also for their constitutional and legal position at the eve of the constitutional reform. I did not expect so big support, but I did expect a bigger number of candidates for the position of the President of the party. I would be much happier if I was defeated among a bigger number of the candidates.

Are you afraid of objections about a non-democratic atmosphere within the party exactly because of this fact that there was only one candidate running for the position of the President?

Everybody could feel whether the atmosphere was democratic or not. Short before this interview I proposed my five candidates for the position of the Vice President of the party: Mr. Luzanski, Batinic, Covic, Raguz and Tokic. However, there is certainly enough room because all delegates can candidate themselves if they collect 75 signatures.

If you had not run for the office, whom would You propose for Your successor?

Do not ask me that (laughter). I think that there are enough high-quality candidates. You have already mentioned one, Dr. Ljubic. There are at least four or five names more, Dr. Covic and a few other members from the former Presidency composition, who, certainly, could be at the head of the HDZ BiH.

Out of 547 delegates about 70 of them did not vote at all. Is there, according to your opinion, some hidden message?

I did not think about it, however, if they turned out for the elections and voted against me it is a democratic right. I do not see any message there. Am I supposed to receive all 547 of votes? Then something would be really wrong with the party.

Some people say that this Congress will finish as late as on Monday, when Petritsch comes to his office and, perhaps, concludes that your election is some challenge for him, since he had removed you from all positions before?

I cannot see why it should be so. This is nether a challenge to him, nor it should be viewed like one. The International Community is present in BiH and some sort of protectorate certainly exists, however, on the other hand there are Constitutions of the state and the Federation and all human rights and freedoms have been guaranteed to me as a citizen, and thus the rights on public and political work, a right to vote... I think that Mr. Petritsch is aware of this as well.

We shall establish partner's relations

However, this is not a crucial issue, but the one as to how we shall altogether, my party, other partners on the BiH political scene, and the International Administration, establish different relations in the coming period. It means that out of one, I would say a worn out protectorate, we transfer into a phase of partner's relations and this way we start with constitutional changes and reach one self-sustainable BiH to the satisfaction of all citizens and

peoples.

With this statement you have announced the readiness of the HDZ to return to the Parliaments. Who should make the next move and which one?

We shall make the first move. We shall certainly appear on the benches of the Houses of Representatives of both, the Federation and State Parliament, completely ready especially with regard to this issue on constitutional changes the same moment when proposals of the Amendments get in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament and there is enough open space regarding our return to the House of Peoples, especially if a good will for its reconstruction on the line of the solution from a newly adopted Election Law exists on the other side.

Now it is crucial for us as to how to stop an unfavorable course of the constitutional reform, that is, the unfavorable contents of the proposals of the Amendments on the Constitution of the Federation and the RS.

Is this return definite or there is some 'if'?

This return to representatives' benches does not have any 'if'. It is definite and we shall show up. The issue regarding the Houses of Peoples is also disputable. It is a very difficult issue because this whole political-institutional crisis broke out first of all because of those strange Election Rules and Regulations, especially regarding the election of the representatives in the House of Peoples. In any case, we could do without it.

Could we say now that the HDZ is making a step back, withdraws from its attitudes, which were proclaimed earlier regarding the self-rule and similar things?

No, we have not withdrawn at all. In any case we are using all forms of a political struggle. I think that at this moment our

showing up in the representatives' benches is the most useful in order to try to make some result and reach favorable solutions for the Croats when we are talking about the proposals of the Amendments for the Entities' Constitutions. In that context, it is not our step back of any kind.

Losers have come to power

Another thing is that in the decisions of the Croat National Assembly from Mostar we have clearly stated that we cannot accept such Authority, established by disputable Election Rules and by the promotion of the principles of the civic majority. It is illegal and illegitimate for the Croats in BiH, because, practically, the election losers have come to power. And we shall stand by this attitude, however, on the other side we have to do something regarding the constitutional-legal position of the Croat people, and in that context view our return to the representatives' benches.

Is the statement given during the Congress by Sefkija Cehic, from the SDA, who stated that he is pleasantly surprised by the HDZ Declaration, an announcement of a sort of closer cooperation between these two parties?

I am not thinking about it. We shall be looking for the partners all over BiH political scene, and among the Croat and Bosniak political parties, and we are even ready to have talks with the SDP. The Alliance concept of power, the dissolution of a three-national model of the state in the direction of the division of BiH in two parts, in the entity with the Serb and Bosniak majority, and turning of the Croats into a national minority is not acceptable. In any case we are ready to cooperate with all those with whom we could stop this process.

Dr. Bozo Ljubic was announced as Your counter-candidate. He, as he said, gave up by his own will but also due to some demands to do it. How would You comment on this?

Dr. Ljubic and I were talking during the last months, and on

Friday evening we had the Presidency session, at which he clearly stated his reasons. His reasons are primarily related to the fact that he has too many obligations with regard to his profession, he is a professor at the Mostar Faculty of Medicine, and probably he will go abroad for a further study. Perhaps there are some other reasons, however in all my combinations he was one of the Vice Presidents. I am sorry, we shall have to organize our cadre and I believe that we shall come up with the high-quality solutions.

Slobodna Dalmacija: SDA says SDP wants to take over control of media

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The SDA accused the SDP that it tries to take over control of media according to the checked Communist model in order to preserve power and cover up its own incapability to solve the issues of a life importance for BiH and its citizens. It is certain that the other members of the Alliance for Changes will also be deprived of a possibility to make public appearances. This party has celled on the OHR and OSCE, which admitted that the SDP, their 'pre-election front runner and the present partner' exerts pressure and endangers the freedom of media, to take appropriate measures in order to 'cut down non-democratic intentions of the SDP'.

Dnevni List: Director of AID, Kemo Ademovic, should go to The Hague as witness or even as indictee!

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Although it was prepared under greatest secrecy, the operation of sending the AID director Kemo Ademovic to The Hague to be a Bosniak liaison officer, who would replace Amir Ahmic at the post, has been revealed. The scandalous attempt to organise a

bar exam for Ademovic, without presence of the public, has been successful in the sense that the media informed the public with a few-days delay. The information was published by "Hrvatska rijec" two weeks ago and the following week "Slobodna Bosna" came into possession of details on how the operation was organised. Ademovic passed the bar exam before selected members of the Exams Committee on the second floor of the Sarajevo's Palace of Justice. The committee was led by Sahbaz Dzhihanovic, the current Deputy Justice Minister and former consul general of BiH in Munich. He is also responsible for granting of numerous BiH citizenship to Arabs under yet-to-be-revealed circumstances (...) Other members of the committee were Sadudin Kratovic, the acting President of the Supreme Court, Hajrudin Hajdarevic, a Supreme Court judge (participation of members of the most senior judicial body is scandalous for itself), Dzemailudin Mutapcic, Assistant to the Federation Justice Minister, Enver Zecevic, an attorney and one Ranko Nikolic. Ademovic graduated from the Law School in the similar fashion as he passed the bar. At least, that's what the Sarajevo sources say. (...) What's the reason behind sending Kemo Ademovic as a liaison officer to The Hague? Especially now when the Alliance is in charge of the selection, the same Alliance that Ademovic tried to prevent from taking the power by revealing records from communist times trying to compromise the SDP. Moreover, selecting Ademovic would represent a definite evidence that the Liaison Office is linked to the Bosniak secret service. It is not a secret that Ademovic has been feeding the Party for BiH, apart from the SDA, with the AID gathered information. Maybe that is why the ICTY will process the crimes committed in the under-siege Sarajevo. Killings of Serbs, POWs and other unsolved cases are without a doubt linked to the then military, police and political pinnacle in the Capital, quite possibly to Alija and Bakir Izetbegovic. But if he were to become a Liaison Officer of the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency to the ICTY, Ademovic could easily face the man he tried to murder: Nedžad Herenda. Herenda, let us remind you, was abducted by

the AID agent. They tried to murder him but having miraculously survived Herenda will be a key prosecution witness regarding the crimes that were committed in Sarajevo. The Hague investigators have been dealing with the crimes committed in the capital between 1992 and 1995 that was under the BiH Army control. Murders of JNA soldiers in the Sarajevo's "Veliki park", private prisons, murders in medical facilities and politically motivated murders are being mentioned. Why is Herenda such an important witness? Because he has details on the work of the "Seve" secret group that is linked to aforementioned crimes and terrorist actions in Sarajevo. Ademovic's agents tried to extract these information from Herenda before they tried to kill him. But after the "cease-fire", arranged by Kemo Ademovic and Bakir Alispahic, the issue was kept under wraps. But nowadays, when Sefer Halilovic will certainly talk about sensitive issues, Ademovic's presence in The Netherlands could be of crucial importance for some powerful people, reads Dnevni List.

Three foreign citizens handed over to the Egyptian authorities

The Federation Interior Ministry deported on Saturday to Egypt three Egyptians arrested in BiH, the two of whom had the BiH citizenship. According to ONASA, the deported were Al Hussein Arman Ahmed, Al Sherif Hassan Mahmoud Saad, who had both BiH and Egyptian citizenship, and Abd Al-Halim Hassanyn Khafagy. The Ministry said that Al Hussein Arman Ahmed lived in BiH under false name Eslam Durmo, while Al Sherif Hassan Mahmoud Saad under false name Abdulah

Ensidar. Both were arrested on July 19 in Zenica on the basis of an international warrant issued by Croatia. Abd Al-Halim Hassanyn Khafagy, born in Egypt in 1932, was deported because he lived in BiH illegally.

Republika Srpska

RS Defense Minister says formation of a joint BiH Army not possible

The Republika Srpska Defense Minister, Slobodan Bilic, rejected on Friday in Banja Luka a possibility of formation of a joint army in BiH saying that there were no constitutional, legal and real conditions for such a move. According to a press release of the RS Defense Ministry carried by Saturday's Oslobodjenje, Bilic presented this position during his meeting with the representative of the European Union Monitoring Mission, Helmut Huter. The two officials exchanged their views concerning the future of the armies in BiH, cooperation with The Hague Tribunal, establishment of the democratic control over the armed forces in RS and transparency in the defense sector.

RS Prosecution Office to complete indictment against Izetbegovic in two weeks

Saturday's Oslobodjenje reported that the Republika Srpska Prosecution Office would complete indictment against the SDA President and the Bosniak wartime leader, Alija Izetbegovic, and send it to The Hague Tribunal. The indictment, which should be forwarded to the Tribunal at the beginning of this month, is currently being amended with new evidences including those related to the participation of mujahedeens in the BiH's war.

Forensic experts unearth more than 500 bodies of Bosniak war victims in BiH

The bodies of more than 500 victims of Bosnia's 1992-5 war have been unearthed at two mass grave sites in the east and

northwest of the country's entity of Republika Srpska, Bosniak forensic experts said on Saturday. Jasmin Odobasic, an official from the BiH Federation Commission for Missing Persons, said 301 bodies had been exhumed so far from a former iron mine near the northwestern town of Ljubija. Another 224 bodies were exhumed at the Cancari grave in eastern Bosnia where work was now finished, experts said.

New resignations in the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska

Both Glas Srpski and Nezavisne Novine report on the latest resignations of members of the Republika Srpska Socialist Party (SPRS) from the position of party Vice-presidents. Miroslav Mikes (President of the RS Constitutional Commission) and Sasa Cudic (assistant to the RS Minister of Sport) resigned at the session of SPRS's Main Board. "Our resignations are matter of a principle. We are still members of the SPRS and we shall continue to be members of the party's Main Board", stated Miroslav Mikes. According to a source from the party, Glas Srpski learns, Mikes and Cudic were neglected by the President of the Party, Zivko Radisic, as his advisors and their proposals for modernization of the party were not taken into account so that they do not want to take the responsibility for things they were not involved in.

RS President Mirko Sarovic says RS possesses evidence about certain individuals involved in the international terrorism

Glas Srpski and Nezavisne Novine carry a statement of the Republika Srpska President Mirko Sarovic, from his interview with the SRNA news agency, in which he said that "they have many evidence and even names of those staying in the BiH's territory who were or are involved in the international terrorism." Sarovic added that all these evidences would be forwarded to the relevant bodies. "RS will improve and

strengthen its institutions in order to have better contribution to global fight against terrorism. RS will also provide necessary support to the Federation BiH," said Sarovic.

RS Premier Mladen Ivanic to face new crisis of his Government

Nezavisne Novine writes that another two ministers from the RS Government would leave their posts, mentioning Minister of Traffic and Communications Branko Dokic and Minister of Local Administration Petar Kunic, as suggested by Drago Kalabic member of Main Board of Democratic Peoples Alliance (DNS). Kalabic thinks that ruling coalition SDS-PDP is breaking apart. He said that the work of the RS Government was brought into question by these developments.

Bosko Gvozden, Aid to the RS Minister of Defense, says the RS Army does not provide security to Karadzic and Mladic

Nezavisne Novine carries a short interview with the Aid to the Republika Srpska Defense Minister, Bosko Gvozden, who claims that the RS Army has no knowledge about the most wanted war crime suspects Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic's whereabouts and that they were not under protection of the RS Army.

International Community

U.S. launches military strikes in Afghanistan

BiH electronic and print media report that the United States on Sunday launched military strikes in Afghanistan, since its Taliban's regime had failed to hand over the most wanted world terrorist Osama bin Laden. US President George Bush confirmed

the start of the operation saying that the strikes were directed at carefully selected targets in order to destroy the Taliban's military power.

FRY and RS establish Council and Permanent Committee for Cooperation

According to Saturday's *Oslobodjenje*, the leaderships of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Republika Srpska headed by the Presidents, Vojislav Kostunica and Mirko Sarovic, established the Council for Cooperation on Thursday in Belgrade. The Council comprising Kostunica, Sarovic and RS Vice-president Dragan Cavic that formed a six-member Permanent Board. At the first joint session of the Council and the Board, the members discussed further implementation of the FRY/RS Special and Parallel Relations Agreement particularly in the areas of defense, health care, trade, refugees, transportation, communications and legal assistance.

OSCE and OHR concerned over frequent political pressures-related complaints of journalist

According to Saturday's *Dnevni Avaz*, the Office of the High Representative and the OSCE Mission to BiH are concerned over more and more frequent complaints lodged by BiH journalist in regard of political pressures on them by certain parties including the SDP. OSCE Spokesperson Urdur Gunarsdotir said that it was about various forms of pressures but that the most frequent ones were related to insisting for publishing or non-publishing of certain information.

SDP considers unfounded OHR and OSCE allegations that media are under its pressure

The Presidency of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) BiH assessed as unfounded the statements by spokespersons for the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and OSCE regarding

pressure of members of this party on media. After a session of the body held on Friday, the SDP said in a press release that claims about alleged

pressure of members of this party directed toward journalists presented an attack on the party and its progressive policy toward the media and freedom of their activities.

OHR says privatization of apartments for cash would discriminate returnees

Head of the OHR Press Office Alexandra Stiglmeier told Saturday's Dnevni Avaz the OHR was against the proposal that the rest of approximately 82,000 still not privatized apartments in the BiH Federation were to be sold for cash. According to Stiglmeier, such a measure would discriminate the returnees to the entity and families living in the nationalized apartments.

[Economic Task Force discusses urgent reforms in the RS](#)

The Economic Task Force, chaired by Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays and comprising senior representatives of international financial institutions and major donors in BiH including Bruno de Schaetzen, the Resident Representative International Monetary Fund, Joseph K. Ingram Country Director of World Bank and others, on Friday met with Republika Srpska Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and members of his cabinet, ONASA reported.