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BiH State-related Issues

BiH Council of Ministers adopts initial version of the dual-citizenship agreement with FRY

At its session held on Thursday in Sarajevo, the BiH Council of Ministers accepted the first version of the BiH/FRY agreement on the dual citizenship. Svetozar Mihajlovic, the BiH Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications, told journalists following the meeting that an expert team would be appointed to start working on the issue together with colleagues from Yugoslavia. The Council asked the authorized Ministry to propose similar agreements to be reached also with certain European countries including Austria, Germany and Sweden.

BiH House of Representatives postpones discussion on the Council of Europe's post-accession document

The BiH Parliamentary House of Representatives postponed the declaration of a statement/letter, by which BiH is expected to officially accept the fulfillment of obligations which it will have after the admission into the Council of Europe. Chairman of the BiH Parliamentary House of Representatives Zeljko Mirjanic told reporters on Thursday that the session was postponed because the BiH Presidency and BiH Council of

Ministers are expected to declare themselves on the final text of the statement, which was adopted on Wednesday at the session of the Political Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe, before the BiH Parliamentary House of Representatives. "We will receive today the final version of the letter and we expected that, in accordance with the procedure, the BiH Presidency and BiH Council of Ministers declare themselves on the letter first. The declaration will be on the agenda of the regular session of the House of Representatives on November 20," Mirjanic said.

ONASA: DEBIS intends to further invest in BiH economy

Chairman of BiH Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija said on Thursday that it was agreed today in principle to create suppositions for what has been characterized as the "strategic partnership between BiH and Daimler Chrysler" in Berlin. He told reporters after the meeting with Daimler Chrysler – Debis International representatives that the German company is interested in becoming even more engaged in the development of BiH companies in the field of the electric-engineering, chemical industry and mining. Lagumdžija mentioned the Debis' interest in the further cooperation with the Coke-Chemical Combine, Elektroprivreda BiH, Soda-So, and stressed the development plans related to the Mostar's Aluminij. These issues will be more discussed at the next meetings of the German company representatives with the officials of the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Federation Prime Minister Alija Behmen, the Elektroprivreda representatives. "We expect concrete, long-term plans, jointly defined in a form of memo or a similar document to be reached in two to three months," Lagumdžija said. He added that the document itself is not as important as the relation that will be of mutual interest. "What is particularly important is that these plans are not politicized, and that we all support the

development of the factory, such as Aluminijs from Mostar," Lagumdžija said. Debis Director Volker Schmidt said his company was asked by the BiH Government to be a potential strategic partner of the country. "The German company has been present in BiH since 1996 and many things have been done here. But, those are minor things compared to what we plan to jointly do and what we have talked about. We will have important talks today and tomorrow, and judging by the preparations for the meetings, I assume the results will be positive," he said.

Federation

BiH Federation House of Representatives supports formation of a single BiH intelligence service

At its session held on Thursday in Sarajevo, the BiH Federation House of Representatives discussed and adopted the initial version of the Federation Law on the Intelligence Services but concluding that it could only be an interim solution. Oslobodjenje reports that the Deputies proposed that, as a final solution, a single intelligence service at the BiH state level is established.

Approximately 65,000 small depositors to get their money back following Petritsch's decision

According to Sarajevo dailies, the BiH Federation Banking Agency said in a press release issued on Thursday that approximately 65,000 small depositors would be in position to get back a part or the entire amount of their deposits, following High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch's decision to amend the BiH Federation Law on Banks. "In the Federation, there are six banks currently under the provisional administration, and in one of them, the Gospodarska Bank in Mostar, there are no deposits," the release read.

Oslobodjenje: The Alliance's Ministers supports a "HZ Herceg-Bosna" gathering

A few officials belonging to the Alliance for Changes, both from the state and federal level, will participate in an international seminar on the strategy for the road infrastructure development, which will take place in Neum in mid-November in the organization of the so called "Croat Community of Herceg-Bosna (HZ Herceg-Bosna)." In a front page article on the issue, the newspaper quoted BiH Federation Minister for Transport and Communications Besim Memedic as saying that all Alliance officials, including his Assistant Zaim Heco, were forbidden to take part in the seminar in the capacity of their current position in the authority. Oslobodjenje concludes that in this way Heco and other officials intending to go to Neum and attend the seminar support a gathering organized by "Herceg-Bosna."

Slobodna Dalmacija: There is no doubt: Small depositors have been damaged

Written by Miroslav Landeka; (Partial translation provided by OHR Mostar)

(...) Transactions worth about 2 million Marks were made to the benefit of relatives and friends of the Bank's employees, and this way the amount planned for the payment of small depositors was reduced. On the grounds of this information it can be concluded that Hercegovacka Bank served private interests of a few power-wielders and the names that have been mentioned most frequently, are the names of persons from the so-called Generals' lobby whose members are: Ante Jelavic, Ljubo Cesic Rojs, Ivan Medic, Miroslav Rupcic and Ivica Karlovic, the former Head of Hercegovacka Bank.

However, the evening after the press conference in Mostar (which was held on Wednesday) Johan Verheyden, the Spokesperson of the Hercegovacka Bank Provisional Administration, stated

that the fact that these names were mentioned in the documents, which they found in the bank, does not mean that these persons were directly involved in the Hercegovacka Bank embezzlements and that, at this moment, everything is up to BiH judicial bodies that the Provisional Administration cooperates with. (...)

In fact, there are only a few shareholders of the Bank who did take a loan.

Apart from Antonio Trade the loans were granted to Neretva Promet and Gratex. Alpina Commerce, AG Kamen, Betacom, Comex Stojic, Eurobemm, Herc MB, Maki Medjugorje, Lijanovici and Union Foods are on the list of the companies that were granted with the loans and are also shareholders of the Bank.

Among a few shareholders that did not take loans, are the Franciscan Province Mostar and companies: Graming, Jumbo, Lon Commerce, Mepas, Primus AD Mostar and others. HPT Mostar, which is not a Hercegovacka Bank shareholder, was granted with 5 loans amounting to 6.5 million Marks. (...)

However, in spite of everything there is still an unresolved dilemma. Time will show whether Hercegovacka Bank was a self-service for chosen elite and their friends or, as its 'protectors' like to say, the most successful Croat bank in BiH that Petritsch destroyed.

As the time and investigation advance it seems that arguments are on the side of the first theory.

The article also carries the High Representative's statement on Hercegovacka Bank given to Slobodna Bosna and the statement of Ante Ljubic, the owner of Antonio Trade, covered by Vecernji List yesterday (see the Cropress Summary of yesterday).

Vecernji List: Hercegovacka Banka Provisional Administration made multi-million transactions

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

Participants of the 2 million-KM-worth vicious circle, namely Elektroprivreda – Hercegovina Osiguranje – Hercegovacka Banka – Antonio Trade, have denied any illegality (of their transactions) claiming that it is yet another piece of evidence for a law suit before an impartial court abroad, reads Vecernji List (...). The paper also carries that the HB staff cannot go public with any statements on the work of the Provisional Administration adding that they believe that the bank will be liquidated and sold to foreign partners. Vecernji List quotes a senior official of the bank on the allegations that the HB employees withdrew 2.5 million KM after the accounts were blocked: "It was practically impossible to do it after April 6, because only the Provisional Administration was able to do it. I was informed by the Central Bank of BiH that one week after the raid in the bank, the bank's accounts were de-blocked for 15 minutes during which multi-million transactions were made. You figure out yourself who is the culprit there". The same source claims that the loan to Antonio Trade was legal and that the Provisional Administration has not discovered anything in the past seven months to justify the raid. This senior official says that the latest amendment to the Law on Banks which allows payments to depositors up to 5000 KM in banks where provisional administrations have been introduced is an attempt to lessen the people's rage similar to that after the two raids, which will occur once the liquidation and sale of the Bank is announced. He added that the payments will crush the bank. The same banking expert who wanted to stay anonymous says that Hercegovacka Banka will never function properly because that would mean that Wolfgang Petritsch was at fault for the robbery of the century. He is of the opinion that the bank's reserves are insufficient to overcome the shock that would

occur after the de-blocking of the bank's account. The Elektroprivreda is surprised that they are mentioned in the negative context. Vecernji List checked the mentioned advanced payments and ascertained that it was a case of normal payment for insurance and not some dodgy transactions. The Elektroprivreda of Herzeg-Bosnia even showed the VL's journalist the records of leveling of mutual assets and liabilities that the Elektroprivreda representatives signed with the Provisional Administration. The document shows that Hercegovacka Banka owed Elektroprivreda of Herzeg-Bosnia 3.02 million KMs on the day of the raid and blockade, April 6, which affects the Elektroprivreda's business, reads Vecernji List.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Milenko Brkic, leader of Croat National Community (HNZ), called for gathering all Croat parties in Croat Democratic Block!

(Provided by OHR Mostar)

The leadership of the Croat National Community (HNZ), the party presided by Milenko Brkic, suggested to the political parties in BiH, especially the Croat ones, to close an agreement on association into Croat Democratic Block.

By this agreement the parties would oblige themselves to cooperate before, during and after the elections in order to systematically gather Croats and other BiH citizens of the same orientation in order to act on the preservation of constituent rights of the Croats, their sovereignty and equality.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Marko Tokic, dismissed HDZ Vice President and President of the Croat self-rule

Interview conducted by Josko Celan (Partial translation provided by OHR Mostar)

Marko Tokic: (...) The IC truly does not have a partner on the Croat side, because the ones that they have at the moment, are simply a group of people, who are not able to raise any serious issue within such Authority. The IC has brought itself into a ridiculous situation, according to which some issues should be solved with only one active political player within BiH and that is Zlatko Lagumdžija. On the other hand, he does not have possibilities to resolve the structure of the Authority that he inherited. (...) Obviously the purpose of the so-called Alliance was the centralization of the BiH Federation and its turning into a unitary civic entity. (...) The existence of the Cantons themselves is becoming unbearable. (...) It is an absurd that no one but the Helsinki Watch is interested in these issues.

At the moment, it seems that Aluminij is, at least partly, spared of the destiny of Hercegovacka Bank. However, is there a possibility that it might be destroyed soon?

If you followed the Aluminij case you could notice that not only an independent audit and the running of the company have been disputed, but its existence itself – with the threats that it will be physically destroyed. Direct terrorist threats were sent through media and no one has suffered consequences of it.

It was rather easy to recognize the inspiration for this situation, having in mind as to what is going on in the world at the moment.

Unfortunately, I have to say that the teachers behind these occurrences are the same. I pray to God that it does not happen to Aluminij or to the cross on Hum, against which petitions have been signed. We are living in an atmosphere of violence, without a possibility to defend ourselves through institutions.

What will happen with the trial to Ante Jelavic, the leader of

the Croat people in BiH, and other Croat politicians in Sarajevo? How far are the arrangers of this rigged process ready to go?

It is really about a staged political trial. They are being processed before the Court that, according to the Constitution, is not competent for this case. (...) Who are those that such a court is protecting and which constitutional position does it defend? (...) The one in which a constant change of the constitutional competence is an absolute will of one person, and we are against it. We want to secure that the constitutional organization functions in accordance with the Constitution and that we transfer all processes to competent courts. We owe it to all Croats who, due to different reasons, are being processed before the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo.

The attitude of the current Croatian Authority towards BiH Croats has been scandalous since the very beginning. Is there any sign that the situation might change with regard to this issue?

I believe that this attitude is scandalous! It is unbelievable as to what extent the Croatian Authority diverts attention from the problems of the Croats in BiH. Certainly because of the requests of those who demand it from them, but also because of the belief that by giving up on Croat problems in BiH they will build stronger positions towards the integration into European. It is a complete mistake. On the contrary, losing the constitutional-legal position of the Croat people in BiH, Croatia comes as the next problem. This issue has been openly discussed, it does not matter whether it is called the problem of the Western Balkans or the problem of the Southeast Europe. It is clear that it is about reanimation of the former Yugoslavia spirit.

Catholic prelates recently paid a visit to the US. Maybe somebody in Europe will be there to hear you out as well?

Perhaps some Christian democrats, peoples' or conservative parties. Unfortunately, Europe is dominated by social democrats and liberals. On the other hand I understand Americans who have difficulties comprehending European problems, especially when it comes to complex democracies as BiH was supposed to be. I hope that the prelates' visit will have some effect and that the word on inequality of Croats will be spread, and that we will find American partners to talk to. Otherwise there could be incurable damage not only to the Croat people but to the IC too.

Let's go back to the relation with the international "receivership". I don't use the term "international community" on purpose because it is a fictitious term. Does the pressure subside?

My term is "the international administration of BiH" – that is the most neutral term. Will anything change given the circumstances and duration? It seems that following the prelates' visit to the US that the information embargo is subsiding but not in the way we would like and deserve it. We are entering constitutional changes and we will soon get a clear situation with regards to implementation of the DPA.

How are the people going through this?

With difficulties. They sense lack of leadership, which can be ascribed to the parties within the HNS and HDZ. It is a matter of days when we will not be able to fulfill our obligations to beneficiaries at Cantonal levels which would lead to crisis. And the HDZ will be held responsible at levels where it is in power and not the Croat marionettes in Sarajevo.

Is the key to all this the UN's (obvious mistake by the interviewer) "surrealistic" plunder of the Hercegovacka Bank?

It was a blow against the whole people (...) It was a clear signal how far the violence against any attempts of political disagreements could go.

It is an incredible precedent. Did it ever happen that the UN or NATO rob a private bank?

That was the first time (...) But the Munro's memo showed us that the old tactic of insinuations will be used and that they will be on a lookout for political culprits (...)

Of course, the "designers" will not suffer consequences.

Unfortunately. (...)

What's the demographic situation of the Croats like nowadays?

It is stabilizing. We are talking about some 560,000 Croats. They still count on BiH as their homeland. Unfortunately there are double standards even there. Whilst the return of Serbs and Muslims to Croat majority areas is politically and financially supported there is not a similar practice when it comes to the return of the Croats (...)

Considering all this, could one say that there is a conspiracy against BiH Croats?

It is hard to say that there is a conspiracy, but when you hear me out, one could get a similar impression.

What's the motive behind it?

In my view, a restoration of some form of Yugoslavia or something similar. Croats in BiH are its biggest opponents.

We have witnessed expelling of the Croats from Drvar and neighboring Municipalities. It seems as if the IC is implementing a sort of ethnic cleansing of the Croats...

It is actually about a high pressure exerted against the people, who have already been punished. (...) These are the Croats, who have already been expelled for two or three times from some areas. (...) They are looking for new ways to expel them. The IC is the organizer of it, and returnees, whose

right to return nobody disputes, implement it. (...) In Brcko, for instance, it is not being done this way. (...)

They only insist on their leaving. It is absolutely unjust.

And finally, what are You, as an appointed official and the party planning to do in the coming period?

Perhaps, the most important thing is to settle things among ourselves, that is, we shall organize elections within the party. I believe that we shall achieve a complete consolidation of the party. We shall have to join this parliament competition for the constitutional changes. Still, I strongly believe that this Authority cannot function in a satisfactory manner. (...) It is falling apart...(...) We have predicted it and not only because the legitimate will of the Croat people was excluded contrary to the will of the Croat people, but also because the possibility to elect the cadre has been limited. Nothing will be achieved until Croats become equal with the other two peoples.

Republika Srpska

RS accuses Izetbegovic of killing civilians and establishing concentration camps

According to Oslobodjenje, Republika Srpska Justice Ministre Biljana Maric told a press conference in Banja Luka on Thursday that the RS would send to The Hague Tribunal an amended indictment against the Bosniak wartime leader Alija Izetbegovic. The RS accuses Izetbegovic of being responsible for killing of civilians, establishment of the concentration camps and a systematic intimidation and shelling of civilians during the war in BiH. Commenting on the move, UN Spokesman Stepho Lehman told the newspaper that the UN Mission to BiH believed pressing war-crime charges against Izetbegovic by the RS was a strange move since the RS was the only structure not

cooperating with The Hague Tribunal. High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch said in his statement with Oslobođenje that he “would like to strongly discourage the RS authorities because they took one-sided approach, and to warn them to be very cautious.” Izetbegovic himself said that the BiH and Sarajevo citizens, as well as The Hague Tribunal should assess how realistic these accusations were.

AFP: Bosnian Serbs seek compensation for rebuilt homes

Bosnian Serbs on Thursday demanded compensation for rebuilding houses destroyed during the 1992-95 war that Serb refugees have now been ordered to leave, the SRNA news agency reported. During the war, Bosnian Serbs expelled the Bosniak and Croat population from Brcko in the northeast of Bosnia and occupied property that the authorities now have to return to their lawful owners. Republika Srpska Minister for Refugees Mico Micic said he was seeking from the Brcko district authorities financial compensation for some 670 houses. In the aftermath of the war the Republika Srpska (RS) invested some 5.2 million German marks (2.4 million dollars, 2.6 million euros) rebuilding those houses, Micic said. According to the Dayton peace agreement that ended Bosnia's war, Brcko was put under international administration because the parties failed to agree on its status. Both Bosnia's post-war entities – the Republika Srpska and the BiH Federation – claimed to have the right to control the town and in March 1999 the international arbitration commission decided to make it a neutral district. According to the 1991 census, Bosniaks were the majority in the Brcko municipality with more than 38,000 inhabitants, followed by some 22,000 Croats and 18,000 Serbs.

RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic supports reconstruction of Bijeljina mosques

Republika Srpska National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic sent a document to Bijeljina Mayor Dragomir Ljubojevic, giving him

strict instructions on issuing of permits for reconstruction of devastated mosques in Bijeljina, Nezavisne Novine learns from sources close to the Bijeljina SDS branch. According to the same source, the Head of the Urban Planning Department in Bijeljina, although he is a more moderate SDS member, has been smoothly avoiding to sign any kind of permits for reconstruction of the mosques.

International Community

FRY parliamentary delegation visits BiH

A Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) parliamentary delegation officially visiting BiH met on Thursday in Sarajevo with the BiH Presidency members, top BiH parliamentarians, BiH Council of Ministers leaders and with the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch. According to Oslobodjenje, Petritsch said following the meeting that this visit was a very important step forward leading towards the full normalization of relations between the FRY and BiH. "I particularly emphasized an importance of mutual relations between the two states, as well as a constructive role being played by FRY as a state-signatory in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement," Petritsch said. Dragoljub Micunovic, the Speaker of the FRY parliament, said that the goals of the FRY and BiH were the same, and they were directed towards the European integration.

Petritsch requests RS leadership to fulfill its obligations related to the apprehension of war crime suspects

According to Dnevni Avaz, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, has strongly urged the Republika Srpska leadership to live up to their obligations with regard to arresting war criminals and going after those people that have been indicted by The Hague tribunal. "With regard to their own activities I would say that the prime concern of the International

Community here is certainly the people who are on the list of The Hague tribunal. We will continue to strongly urge and look after that the Republika Srpska authorities live up to their obligations," OHR Spokesman Patrik Volf told journalists on Thursday in Sarajevo.

Petritsch develops strategy for 'Rules of the Road' Court proceedings

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, on Thursday issued a Decision mandating Judges in BiH to exercise judicial discretion when deciding on the detention of individuals charged with serious offences, during criminal proceedings, so bringing the Federation of BiH (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS) Criminal Procedure Codes into line with European human rights conventions. (FTV, FENA, ONASA, Jutarnje Novine and Dnevni Avaz carried the [Press Release](#))

AFP: Two Bosnian Serb war crimes suspects arrested: report

Two Bosnian Serb brothers indicted by the UN tribunal for war crimes committed at an internment camp in Bosnia were arrested early Thursday in Serbia, the state news agency Tanjug reported. Predrag and Nenad Banovic, indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for crimes committed during the 1992-95 Bosnian war, were arrested at a market in Obrenovac, 30 kilometers (18 miles) southwest of Belgrade, it said, quoting "unofficial sources." The men, who had been selling vegetables at the market, "were arrested by five armed civilians," Tanjug said, adding that the whereabouts of the pair were currently unknown. The police were unavailable for comment and no official statement has yet been issued about their arrest. The two brothers were reported missing by their mother, while the family has yet to be officially informed, Tanjug said. Last year, NATO peacekeepers in Bosnia arrested two men, mistaking them for the Banovic brothers, but later released them. In the

Republika Srpska capital of Banja Luka, their father Sretko Banovic said he had heard of the "arrest from media" and had not been officially informed. Sinisa Djordjevic, advisor to RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic, told local television that the authorities of the Republika Srpska had not been officially informed of any arrest. The Banovic brothers were indicted, along with 11 other men, of holding more than 3,000 Bosniaks and Croats "in inhumane conditions, under armed guard," in the Keraterm camp, a former ceramics factory and storage area complex near Prijedor in the summer of 1992. The two were guards in the camp and took part in beatings and torture of detainees, the prosecutors said. During the Bosnian war, Prijedor was scene of some of the worst atrocities against the Bosniak population, housing some of the most notorious detention camps. Television images of emaciated detainees staring out from behind barbed wire fences at the Keraterm, Omarska and Tropolje camps shocked the world when they were broadcast in 1992. The main accused in the Keraterm case, three internment camp commanders, pleaded guilty to crimes against humanity in September. The prosecution alleges that the three oversaw a regime in the Keraterm camp in 1992 in which hundreds of non-Serb prisoners were tortured, sexually assaulted or killed.

AFP: US welcomes arrest of Bosnian Serb brothers on war crimes charges

The United States on Friday welcomed the arrest of two Bosnian Serb brothers indicted by a UN tribunal for war crimes committed at an internment camp in Bosnia during the 1992-95 Bosnian war. "These two individuals are charged with crimes against humanity, violations of the laws and customs of war and grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. "The United States commends the authorities in Belgrade for taking into custody Nenad and Predrag Banovic ... and for immediately transferring them to The Hague," he said, referring to the International

Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). "This is another indication of Belgrade's commitment to cooperate with the UN war crimes tribunal," he said. "The apprehension and transfer of all indictees remains a principal US policy objective in the region." The brothers, indicted by the ICTY for crimes committed during the Bosnian war, were arrested on Thursday southwest of Belgrade, the state news agency Tanjug said.

Editorials:

Oslobodjenje and Dnevni Avaz

In the Oslobodjenje second-page editorial, Hamza Baksic wrote about the processes of globalization, European integration and different views concerning the future of the world in light of the situation created following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. In the Avaz Commentary of the Day, Fadil Mandal wrote about the recently started political and media campaign against Alija Izetbegovic, which ended with the Thursday announcement of Republika Srpska authorities on pressing amended war-crime charges against the Bosniak wartime leader. Mandal concluded that the problem was those (RS officials) who did not have any right to give lectures to anyone were manipulating with Izetbegovic's name.

Dnevni List: Darkness of Federation Television

Written by Dr. Bozo Goluza (Provided by OHR Mostar)

HRT program has been a thorn in the side of the international community for a long time, reads Dnevni List commentary.

Goluza says Croats in BiH were told that they would not be left in media darkness because their window to the world would be so called Federation Television. The article reads that the current scenario and program of the FTV is manipulating and

indoctrinating.

“Some individuals and ‘clans’ among Croats, who took care of their personal interests more than they did of the welfare of the people, are also to blame because they failed to create a Croat television in BiH. However, the question is how this television would have ended up. Perhaps it would have experienced the destiny of the Erotel?! Whatever does not suit a powerful international organization or individual, disappears overnight. Judging from their actions, the internationals have imposed on themselves the task of balancing the peoples in this region so much as to make them lose all of their characteristics and their identity, so that they can start working on building a ‘civic’ BiH,” reads Dnevni List.

The author mentions what he calls a similar attempt by Benjamin Kallay, who wanted to create a Bosnian nation, which resulted in the First World War bloodshed.

Goluza says the lightness with which Croat and Croatian politicians have taken “this dictate of the international community,” is alarming.

At length, the author concludes that Croats in BiH are entitled to have their own television and media because even national minorities are entitled to it in democratic states.

Dnevni List: Unbearable lightness of broadcasting

Written by Ivica Simunovic (Provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List says when Croats decide not to watch the channel one of the FTV, they switch to the second channel and “see the same Federation characters,” so they spend most of their free time switching channels desperately, hoping that the HTV will re-appear after all.

The author poses the question as to why Croats in BiH do not

have their own channel, and goes on to say:

“Is the ‘guiltiest of the guilty,’ the High Representative, the only one to blame for this, or are there responsible persons in the lines of Croats, as well?

As a reminder, the paper next carries that when the Croat and Bosniak representatives in the Federation Government started negotiations on the future TV, Bosniaks came up with an extremely unitary and unethical proposal of its structuring, to which Croats reacted by announcing their own proposal, which, unfortunately, has not come to light to date.

Then the High Representative used his powers and imposed the law, which, as usual, was a compromise between the Bosniak proposal and the Croat proposal that never appeared. The result of his first decision was two channels of Federation TV, one mainly in the Croatian language and the other mainly in Bosniak. This ‘mainly,’ was, in fact, an overture to two complementary, i.e. ‘mixed’ channels, which is what we have today.

Let us go back to the never produced Croat proposal of Federation Television. How could it have been produced when the negotiations, on the Croat part, were led by engineers, financial and other experts, whereas journalists, many of them with years of service in media outlets, were completely left on the margins,” says Dnevni List.

The author says there are two encouraging things about this situation, the first is that not even Bosniaks are happy about the FTV because they lost the Bosniak TV they had in the BHT, and the second is that such an expensive toy as the FTV is, cannot survive under the circumstances of being accepted by no one.

“Croats are not paying the subscription fee at all, and most of the Bosniaks do not pay it, either, and not even the High Representative can do anything about it,” comments the daily.

At length, the article says sooner or later, the position supported in all international declarations of human rights will have to prevail, and this means that Bosniaks and Croats respectively are entitled to have a channel in their own language.

“As for the Croat ‘pundits’ who made us and others happy with the FTV as it is, we suggest a disciplinary measure of being forced to watch this television alone for the next five years,” concludes the article.