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MOSTAR, July 11 (Habena) – Suspended Mostar Hercegovacka Banka employees on Wednesday sent on several addresses an open letter in which they denied claims published in the Slobodna Bosna weekly that the computer data had been erased on the Bankąs operations in the past 15 months.

According to the letter, the truth is that "Marina Blagojevic, former Head of an Hercegovacka Banka branch office and current close associate to the Bankąs Provisional Administrator, was requesting the Bankąs employees to destroy the central computer disc in between the first and the second inspection. The employees categorically refused to do that because they had nothing to hide, since the Hercegovacka Banka was operating in compliance with the valid laws and regulations."

"A respectable auditing house, Deloitte & Touche, was conducting audit of all the Hercegovacka Banka operations ever since its establishment. In the February 2001, the house completed the audit for the 2000 operations, which makes the allegation on the allegedly erased data more absurd.

We therefore reject all the insinuations on 54 millions KM, which had allegedly disappeared from the Herceovacka Banka. We also rehad allegedly disappeared from the Herceovacka Banka. We also reject (deny) claims on the existence of secret HVO sub-accounts. We call on Provisional Administrator Toby Robinson to finally publicly announce where are the alleged 54 million KM now and where are the secret sub-accounts. Three

months have already passed since the imposition of the provisional administration and the time has come for the public to learn the truth on the Hercegovacka Banka operations. Media are even trying to put on our back the international assistance of five billion US dollars sent to BiH in the early 90s. The Hercegovacka Banka started its operations at the beginning of 1998, and the international financial assistance has never been sent to these areas through the Bank. Moreover, the financial assistance provided by the Croatian Government through the Hercegovacka Banka since its establishment was significantly lesser than the one provided during the war years through the other banks and the Payment Operations Bureau.

An independent commission has controlled all the flows of the money provided by the Croatian Government through the Hercegovacka Banka. The Independent Commission was made of the members representing both the Croatian Government and the BiH Federation Ministry of Defense. The Commission made a report clearly showing that there were no any irregularities concerning the Hercegovacka Bankaąs involvement in these transactitions.

Certain domestic media published the articles entitled such as: “The Great Robbery of the Century,” referring to an alleged illegal bringing the foreign currencies out of the Hercegovacka Banka. Such the allegations were based on the documents on the money transports allegedly provided by the customs services.

However, the Federation Financial Police, from April 2-5, 2001, audited transfers of the foreign currencies from the Hercegovacka Banka across the BiH state border. The Federation Financial Police made a conclusion showing that there were no irregularities during the transfers and that they were carried out in compliance with the BiH Federation Law on Operations with the Foreign Currencies,” the letter read.

“Since the very beginning, we have been victims of fabrications not having anything common with a common sense, so that we will not be surprised if the aforementioned 54 millions and secret sub-accounts are suddenly left aside, while some other things are publicly announced by the provisional administration that will than be described by media as a great crime,” the letter read.

The suspended employees emphasized that, in regard of the Hercegovacka Banka operations, the international community has been deliberately informed in a false way (probably by someone or certain circles). They requested the institutions on which adh addresses the letter had been sent to protect them from their further unfounded labeling as criminals.

The letter was sent to: all Embassies and Consulates in BiH, BiH Presidency, BiH Council of Ministers, BiH Federation Government, BiH Federation Ministry of Finance, BiH Federation Ministry of Energy, Mining and Industry, BiH Federation Ministry of Justice, BiH Federation Banking Agency, BiH central bank, BiH federation Chamber of Commerce, Home for Human Rights and Refugees, Agency for the Promotion of Foreign Investments, Office of the Ombudspersons, OSCE Regional Office in Mostar, OHR, Croatian Government, associate banks and media.

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