

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 1/10/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Pogorelica Group released from custody

Dnevni Avaz: Alispahic and others at liberty; SBS controls entire BiH's border

Dnevni List: Federation Supreme Court – Custody to suspects in Pogorelica case suspended

Vecernji List: What does latest NDI opinion poll show – Americans forecast reprise of 2000

Glas Srpski: Bijeljina Public Security Center requests investigation into tax evasion cases; RS Supreme Auditor receives death threats; ICTY unseals indictment against Ljubomir Borovcanin

Nezavisne Novine: Ambassador Clifford Bond meets with members of the Livno Municipal Election Commission – Every attempt of election fraud will be punished; ICTY unseals indictment against Ljubomir Borovcanin; SBS controls BiH border

Blic: The Hague's indictment against Ljubomir Borovcanin; Ashdown: We do not have favourites; Ivanic: War with petroleum prices in BiH to start; Serbia in second round

Vecernje Novosti: Electoral results in Serbia: Both for Europe; Momcilo Perisic accused of spying

Nacional: New elections on 24 December

Pogorelica suspects released from custody

With the approval of the BiH Federation Prosecutor's Office, the investigative judge of the Entity's Supreme Court in charge of the **Pogorelica case** has decided to release from custody Bakir Alispahic, Irfan Ljevakovic, Enver Mujezinovic, Edhem Veladzic and Ejub Ikic, who were detained on suspicion of committing criminal acts of terrorism and espionage and of

the attempted assassination of Fikret Abdic. The acting president of the BiH Federation Supreme Court, Sadudin Kratovic, confirmed the information for Fena, adding that the decision to release them had been sent to the relevant instances. According to the decision, which comes after the expiry of the five-month legal limit on the detention of former senior police and AID (one of former Federation intelligence services) officials, there are no longer any legal foundations for keeping them in the central prison in Sarajevo. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, front page, p 3, **Dnevni List**, front and p 3, **Vecernji List**, front and p 2, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3)

OHR activities

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, has once again called on the BiH politicians and citizens to support the economic and judicial reforms from the agreement signed by the representatives of the current BiH authorities and the PIC Steering Board members more than two months ago. ON Monday, OHR for the first time published the text of the agreement, by which the BiH authorities had obliged to ensure creation of 60,000 new jobs by 2004. (Oslobodjenje, pages 4-5, Dnevni Avaz published the brochure, Nezavisne Novine, p 3)

"One should be at the same time fascinated by Ashdown's hard work and concerned by a lack of his willingness to face crucial BiH problems – the extreme nationalism and the process of return," Zija Dizdarevic wrote in an Oslobodjenje second-page editorial.

The Deputy High Representative, Graham Day, on Monday visited Bihac-based Meggle Milk Factory. (Dnevni Avaz, p 2)

The Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**, on Monday visited the Trebinje-based Tools Factory and a farm near the southern Eastern Herzegovina town. After the visit the Tool Factory, Hays stated that *'people of this country are qualified and hardworking'* and he added that *'they can succeed with the support of law, through education and open market.'* Hays also said: *'The Tool Factory desperately needs foreign investments and you do not even get a chance to get them*

because the laws and those, who tailor the laws, are not on your side.' **Milan Grubac**, the General Manager of Trebinje Tools Factory, stated that *'the RS Government has passed recently the laws that give a good signal to foreign investors'*. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 11, **Dnevni List**, p 8, **ONASA**)

This week's edition of **Reporter** carries an editorial by the High Representative for BiH, **Paddy Ashdown**, in which he said that voters had to decide which of the political parties will fulfill its promises, given that all political parties claim they want to clean up political life and open new jobs. *"Do not ask the candidates what are they going to do. Ask them how they are going to do it"*, said Ashdown. Ashdown said that the choice that BiH is facing with is very clear : reform or failure. *"Join the countries, which are on their way to Europe or stay where you are and be a poor province"*, said Ashdown.

Dnevni List: Statement of Day – Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative: *'The politics in BiH has matured and for this reason we do not have our candidates.'*

BiH-related news

The BiH **State Border Service** on Monday officially set up its last unit in Strumica near Bosansko Grahovo, whereby it has placed the entire state border under its control. Addressing a ceremony to open the border crossing between BiH and Croatia, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, said that with this act, BiH had become a sovereign state in control of its 1,500-km border. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 10, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, mentioned on the front page, **Dnevni List**, p 5, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 2)

At the last session in its mandate in Sarajevo on Monday, the **BiH House of Peoples** adopted several draft laws, including the amendments to the Law on Civil Aviation. The House also discussed some other issues such as the expropriation of land at the Arizona market in Brcko District. According to **Ilija Simic**, the deputy Chairman of the House, the Brcko District

cannot be a special case in this country. *“Brcko District is part of the constitutional set-up of BiH and nothing can happen there that is completely separate from the general interest of the state,”* he emphasized. The delegates tasked the Council of Ministers with establishing an inter-ministerial team to investigate whether there have been violations of human rights in this case. In the course of the session, the House made a decision that from now on the printing deals of the state interest, such as printing of election ballots and IDs, can be reached only with the companies registered in BiH. (**Federation Radio, Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Glas Srpski**, p 3)

At a session in Sarajevo on Monday, the **BiH Council of Ministers** decided to propose candidates for the post of head and deputy heads of the State Information and Protection Agency (**SIPA**) from its initial list. It will forward its proposals to the state Presidency, which might discuss the issue at its session on Friday. The proposed candidates include: Emir Bjedic, Fehim Durakovic, Sredoje Novic, Zlatko Miletic, Dragan Lukac and Dragan Vikic. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Glas Srpski**, p 3)

Pre-election poll/statements/commentaries

Vecernji List (front and page 3) carries results of the latest **NDI** opinion poll conducted on 1600 interviewees in both BiH entities between September 20 and 27. The results published yesterday forecast similar amount of success for the Alliance for changes in the Federation of BiH when compared to 2000 results. NDI report notes that there has been “migrations” among the voters who support the Alliance, namely SDP’s support has decreased by 5 and Party for BiH’s support has increased by 5% when compared to 2000. In the same context, HDZ apparently enjoys the same level of support whilst SDA has lost 9 points. When it comes to the RS, NDI’s poll forecast a decrease in popularity of SDS (35%) although the party should remain strongest in the RS Parliament. SDS is followed by SNSD

(23%) and PDP (13%). Finally, when it comes to the BiH Presidency, the poll says that it is certain that **Dragan Covic, Mirko Sarovic and Haris Silajdzic** will enter the office. **Slobodna Dalmacija** (front and page 17) carries a similar report.

Vecernji List (page 8, by Eldina Medunjanin) carries a commentary on the aforementioned opinion poll. The article says that it will be hard for so-called moderate parties to collect necessary 51% of votes at the elections for the state Parliament. The article goes on to say that *'international officials, who openly support the parties belonging to the Alliance for Changes, are also aware of it and they warn citizens that the way towards general reforms and membership in European Associations might be prevented by a possible victory of national parties. However, international diplomats also admit that it will be hard to gather the Alliance again, after the elections.'*

The US Secretary of State **Colin Powell** has sent a message to the BiH citizens ahead of the forthcoming general elections in our country, which will be held on 5 October. *"You will not decide only about people and parties which will lead you, you will decide also about where they will lead you. A vote for reforms will help BiH to embark faster and further on its road to democracy, free market and integration into Europe. Or you can choose to again slip down the dark and dangerous road to ethnic divisions, economic stagnation and international isolation,"* Powel emphasized. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 2, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Dnevni List**, p 4)

Vecernji List (page 4) carries a brief article on visit of Catholic Bishop from Mostar **Ratko Peric** to Jablanica, where he stated: *"If you expect me to say something about the elections, I think that you should vote"*.

Vecernji List (page 2 by Marko Knezovic) carries a highly critical editorial about the forthcoming elections. The author is very irritated with the whole election campaign i.e. the

messages, rallies, posters, TV and radio programs etc. *“Like a circus, they tour our villages and towns, hold fiery speeches, speeches one could hardly listen to if it were not for the accompanying signers of patriotic songs, entertainers, actors, beauties and whole entourage. They will create so many jobs that we will have to import labour, they will make more schools than mothers will be able to fill in with kids. And all of them will be straight A students (...) All we have to do is turn out and vote for them”*, says Knezovic.

Dnevni List (page 4, by Slavo Kukic) carries a critical editorial on **Dragan Covic**, an HDZ-HD-HNZ candidate for the Croat member of the BiH Presidency, stating numerous illegal activities in which Covic was allegedly involved (Soko company, Eronet etc.) as well as various political parties whose member Covic was. Kukic says: *‘The only thing sacred for Covic is as to how to survive in a stencil of the political influence and authority and nothing else.’* Kukic goes on to say that *‘Covic managed to avoid instituting of criminal proceedings against him thanks to ‘Mafia’ solutions on immunity, however, the High Representative persisted on the solution by which a politician cannot use immunity to protect oneself from instituting of criminal proceedings against him for the crimes that the politician committed in the area of economy.’*

Vecernji List: Balkans conference to be held n London on 24 November

Vecernji List (front and page 8, by Dejan Jazvic) reads that a conference on regional co-operation of countries in Southeast Europe will be held on 24 November in London. The daily says that leaders of the countries and representatives of international community will meet on the initiative of British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** and the High Representative in BiH **Paddy Ashdown**. Ashdown confirmed that at the conference topics for discussion will be economic and legal co-operation, but that there will be no talks about borders. However, during his

recent visit to Sarajevo, Commissioner for Foreign and Security Policy of European Union, **Javier Solana**, announced that at such conference issues to discuss might be majority of the questions that are burdens in relations between the countries. The article says that the original idea for such conference came from Russian President **Vladimir Putin**, who sent draft *Agreement on measures for strengthening sovereignty, territorial integrity and good neighbourly relations* in June 2001 to all countries in the region, but without proper answer. The author says that BiH authorities have received this initiative with reserves, and that it could be acceptable to them only if they receive guarantees that the goal of the conference is truly confirmation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in the region.

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, has sent a message to the people of the Balkans that the doors of Europe will not stay forever wide-open as they are now and advises them not to stand "too long in front of them as beggars begging to enter." *"When we see how big is the price of the upcoming expansion, this opening might become narrower,"* Ashdown said. He said that entrance ticket of the Balkans' countries into Europe might be their binding into a powerful economic space. Ashdown announced that the Balkans conference would be held on 24 November in London, which would discuss the bringing of order and law at the borders, and it would not be a new Dayton. The High Representative said the IC did not have favourites at the forthcoming elections. (**Blic** p 2, **Nacional** p 10)

BiH Federation affairs

The Federation Prime Minister **Alija Behmen** on Monday visited Mostar, where he held talks with the management of Croat Post and Telecommunications Mostar (**HPT**). The talks mostly concerned Eronet and the struggle of the Steering Board and management to get mobile telephony back into HPT. Behmen said following the meeting that the Federation Government was fully supporting the HPTR management in this matter *"because the consequences of a different solution would, above all, place in unequal business conditions this segment of the Mostar HPT, which would objectively halt the development and call into*

question the livelihoods of 2,000 people working in the Post and in fixed telephony.” When it comes to the request of the government of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and trade unions for the Federation government to provide them with 8.4million KM to readjust the budget, Alija Behmen said that the Cantonal Government should resign over its failure to adequately tackle the issue in spite of a fact the revenues in the first eight months of this year were 17 per cent larger than in the previous year. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 10)

Vecernji List (page 2, by Zoran Kresic) reads that last week it was announced that writers and publishers in Federation BiH will be supported with 1,5 million KM. However, the Foundation for promotion of Bosnian culture through support of creative writers and their potentials, led by writer **Ivan Lovrenovic**, and Federation Minister without portfolio, **Gavrilo Grahovac**, who removed Croat NGOs (Matica Hrvatska, Association of Croat Writers of Herceg-Bosna ...) from list of budget beneficiaries. The author says that out of 103 authors, publishers or magazines that have received financial support there is no single one that is connected with area of Herzegovina, nor Croats and their cultural heritage or history. In the same time, large amounts of money were paid for translations from Arabic and Turkish. Out of 83 authors on the list of budget beneficiaries there are only 8 Croats from BiH, and among 15 publishers there are only two Croat, one from Siroki Brijeg and one from Citluk. The author concludes that there are no Croats on Lovrenovic's list, except those from so called "Bosnian circle".

Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 14, by Tomislav Zoric) carries an article criticizing the BiH judiciary in general, with a special emphasis on the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office in Mostar. The article says that with regard to the crimes committed in the period from 1994 to 1998, **Mirsad Resulovic**, the Prosecutor of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, filed criminal charges against unidentified perpetrators for homicide. The article says that Resulovic concludes in advance that the perpetrators of these crimes are not known, however,

according to Resulovic, they are Croats. Zoric states example of homicide of **Husein Djelilovic**, who died after he was shot during the celebration of the Croatian national team at the World Cup. According to Zoric, since Resulovic could not reveal as to who shot Djelilovic, he proposed filing of criminal charges against the Police Commander or some other responsible person because they did not take preventive measures, which would prevent shooting during the football match.

Vecernji List (page 6) carries that Independent Judicial Commission responded to the letter of **Josip Peric**, the President of the Tomislavgrad Municipal Council, who demanded reconsidering of the IJC proposal to abolish the Tomislavgrad Municipal Court, within the reform of the BiH judiciary. The IJC said in its letter that it would re-examine all arguments that the Municipal authorities handed over to IJC and review whether it is justified to abolish the Tomislavgrad Municipal Court.

RS-related news

Glas Srpski quotes (p 3) the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, as saying at a news conference in Banja Luka that the RS budget for this year will be executed by the end of October and that the income surplus will be used for strengthening of the RS Pension and Invalid Insurance Fund and the RS Health Insurance Fund. Ivanic also said that an average August salary in the RS amounts to 348 KM and is by 11,5 % higher in comparison to the average July salary. The RS Tax Administration Chief, Milica Bisic, said that in the first 9 months of this year the collected budgetary income are by 17% higher than planned. Commenting on the dispute over the introduction of taxes on trade of oil products in the Brcko District, Ivanic said that the dispute has to be resolved by the Brcko District Supervisor, Henry Clarke. *"It does not make any sense that prices of oil products are not harmonized in BiH, i.e., that the District has lower prices. The only solution to this problem is that the District harmonizes taxes*

with the entities. If that does not happen, we will have a price war, which is not good for BiH. That is why I think that it is up to the OHR to do what they talked about so much, that is, about the single BiH market”, said Ivanic. (Blic, p 7)

Glas Srpski reports(p 3) that a judge with the Banja Luka District Court, Rajko Dakic, issued an order requesting an investigation into the case of two Bosniaks, Nedžad Besic and Emir Beslagic, from **Kozarac**, charged with attempted murder of a police officer, Predrag Malinovic. The order states that there is a reasonable doubt that on the night between September 8th and 9th, Besic sneaked to the police vehicle in which two police officers were sitting and fired shots at the police officers. Malinovic was seriously wounded, while the other police officer, Branislav Jeftic, was not injured. Beslagic is suspected of giving an automatic rifle to Besic.

Glas Srpski quotes on its **front page** unofficial sources close to the RS Interior Ministry as saying that the **RS Supreme Auditor, Bosko Ceko**, receives death threats. The paper reports that, during the last week, Ceko received several anonymous telephone calls in which he was threatened with murder. “The annual audit report will bring your life at stake”, was one of the messages that Ceko received. According to the paper, the Police have already launched an investigation into this case. Glas Srpski learns off the record that anonymous persons used public telephone booths when they called Ceko.

Glas Srpski reports on its **front page** that the Bijeljina Public Security Center requested the Bijeljina Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office to launch an investigation into several tax evasion cases involving Halil Cato and Slavko Jelacic. According to the paper, these two persons tried to avoid paying taxes through a Brcko-based “Agrarija Company” and a Bijeljina-based “International Company”.

War crimes

Glas Srpski reports (front page, p 3) that the ICTY unsealed

the indictment against the **war-time RS Special Police Units Commander, Ljubomir Borovcanin**, for complicity in genocide and war crimes committed against Bosniak population in Srebrenica in July 1995. The indictment states that Borovcanin was present in the area of Bratunac, Potocari, Sandic, Kravice, Srebrenica and Zvornik from July 11th until July 18th 1995. Borovcanin is charged with individual and command responsibility. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 12, **Blic**, p 17, **Vecernje Novosti**, p 14)

Nezavisne Novine quotes (front page, p 3) the **ICTY Spokeswoman, Florence Hartman**, as saying that the ICTY and RS authorities agreed on extradition of Borovcanin, which did not happen. Hartman said that the ICTY Prosecutor's Office will request that the RS authorities explain why Borovcanin has not been extradited in the end. ICTY confirmed that the indictment against Borovcanin was issued on September 6th this year. **Nezavisne Novine** quotes (front page, p 3) the **RS Deputy Justice Minister, Mladjen Mandic**, denying that the RS Government negotiated the extradition of Borovcanin with the ICTY. According to him, the RS Government still has not received the indictment against Borovcanin.

Jutarnji List (page 5), **Vjesnik** (page 5), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 2) and **Vecernji List** (page 13) carry analyses about Bobetko case, and all of them say that Croatian Government might address indictment against Bobetko to the Constitutional Court for reviewing. Although majority of analysts say that opinion of Constitutional Court is not binding Croatia to co-operate or not with ICTY, they all agree that it would be good to have opinion of the Court. **Jutarnji List** says that ministers of European Union sent a strong warning to Croatia that non co-operation with the Tribunal in The Hague might endanger Croatia's path of European integration. Spokesperson of The Hague Tribunal **Jim Landale** confirmed that ICTY is reviewing the appeal that Croatian Government sent.

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Indictment against Ljubomir Borovcanin for genocide is opened
- State Border Service obtained control over entire BiH border line
- Five persons, who were suspected for terrorism and espionage in Pogorelica case, were released from custody
- A total price of new driving license and traffic license is 60 KM

FTV 1 (1930)

- Custody to five suspects in Pogorelica case was suspended
- Another Hague indictment was released, this time for Ljubomir Borovcanin
- BiH gets first kilometers of the highway
- State Border Service controls entire BiH borderline as of today

RTRS (1930)

- ICTY unsealed indictment against Ljubomir Borovcanin for crimes in Srebrenica
- Kostunica and Labus in the second round of presidential elections
- Candidates for director and deputies of BiH Information and Protection Agency
- SBS took over control of entire BiH border
- EU opposes attack on Iraq without the UN support