

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 11/9/2002

Print Media Headlines

Oslobodjenje: Ashdown- Vote for Reform

Dnevni Avaz: Ashdown addresses voters and politicians

Jutarnje Novine: September 11 – the day that changed the US

Blic: The Day of champions, Ashdown – Elections for reform in BiH or failure

Glas Srpski: Tax Administration affair

FRY Nacional: Radovan Karadzic congratulated the basketball players: “You heal wounds”

Nezavisne Novine: Ashdown – Vote of future of children in BiH

Vecernji List: September 11 – Bosnia as a stronghold of Al-Qaida

Dnevni List: Infectious disease in Hercegovina-Neretva canton

High Representative's urges BiH citizens to vote

At a press conference in Sarajevo, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, called voters in BiH to turn up for the elections on October 5 and to give their vote to those politicians and parties who are prepared to implement necessary reforms. According to Ashdown, the following four-year mandate of a new government will definitely decide whether BiH would succeed in implementing reforms or fall through. *“The choice is clear and simple: either a powerful country will be set up here or BiH will stagnate and watch how its neighbors are included into Europe.”*

(front page story in **Dnevni Avaz** “We will work with elected politicians on basis of their programs”, **Oslobodjenje** “Vote for reforms”, **Jutarnje Novine** “Reform or stagnation”, **Nezavisne Novine** “Vote for future of children in BiH”, **Blic**

“Elections for reforms or failure”, **Slobodna Dalmacija** “Reform forces of Balkan darkness”, **Dnevni List p. 5** “Elections must turn the new page in BiH,” **Vecernji List p. 2** “Reforms need reformers”, 1st item in **Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna**, 2nd item in **RTRS**, 3rd item in the **Federation Radio, BiH Radio 1, BHTV 1** prime time news)

RS Affairs

In a statement for **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 3), the SDA president, **Sulejman Tihic**, said that **Law on RS Administration** drafted by the government of Mladen Ivanic contains numerous provisions which violate the vital national interests of Bosniaks. *“What Ivanic’s government is proposing as a possible organization of administration in the RS is an attempt to legally promote one entity into a classic sovereign state,”* said Tihic, referring to the RS request to keep the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and to introduce a number of other ministries and agencies which would have jurisdiction over matters generally envisaged to be state competencies. The daily notes that the OHR also seconded this view. *“The text in its entirety does not reflect the constitutional reality in BiH which represents a sovereign state in international and legal context and which is comprised of two entities. If a reader would come to this text not knowing this fact, he could be mislead into believing that the RS is a sovereign state,”* Senior Deputy High Representative **Gerhard Enver Schroembgens** wrote in a letter sent to Mladen Ivanic.

On the basis of findings of an investigation by a RS Defense Ministry commission, it has been concluded that there is no proof that the Air Force institute **Orao** delivered arms, military equipment and spare parts to Iraq, nor that it has offered services to any country under the UN embargo, says a statement issued by the **RS government** public relations bureau. *“The government has concluded that the Air Force institute Orao has had business and technical cooperation with several companies in the RS, the Federation and abroad, and that when making deals with partners it has not always observed the*

envisaged procedure for securing the approval from the RS directorate for the production and trade of weapons and military equipment. The commission will check whether some of these other companies sold military equipment made by the Air Force institute Orao.” (Dnevni Avaz p. 4, Oslobođenje p. 5, Glas Srpski p. 3, Nezavisne Novine p. 3, Dnevni List f.p., first item in BH Radio 1, BHTV 1, FTV, RTRS prime time news)

In a statement for BHTV 1 last night, the US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, said that the US Administration will ask BiH authorities to stop any further violation of UN resolutions pertaining to embargo on arms sale to Iraq. “If it turns out that the controversial sale indeed took place, we hope that further violations will be prevented and persons responsible for it adequately penalized.”

Nezavisne Novine (p. 3) reported that the US Embassy in Sarajevo sent a verbal note to the BiH Foreign Affairs Ministry, saying that “Orao” company did not only deliver military equipment and spare parts but also the technical parts. It was also said that the RS Defense Ministry controls “Orao” company and that members of the RS Army were involved in the illegal activities. “The “Orao” company has to stop with such activities immediately. Also, it has to provide BiH authorities with full access to its documentation related to all business arrangements with Iraq.” – said the note.

Glas Srpski (p.3) reports that the Vice President of the RS, Dragan Cavic, and Speaker of the RS National Assembly, Dragan Kalinic, met yesterday in the Serb Sarajevo with the PDHR, Donald Hays. The discussion focused on current political and economic issues.

Refugee Return

FTV reported that no new rallies have been organized by Bosniak returnees in Kozarac and Prijedor, but all international organizations and entity and state institutions

have been asked to help stop activities in the Prijedor and Kozarac police HQ which – according to returnees – have been carrying out arrests and imputing blame to persons who only witnessed violent incidents two nights ago when a police officer was wounded.

Hundreds of returnees have signed a petition addressed to the **High Representative** demanding that a *“halt be put to the terror campaign waged by the local police”* and that perpetrators be punished. The **RS Ministry of Interior** has denied reports about the arrests and terror campaign against the returnees. MUP spokesman Zoran Glusac said that there have been problems and protests, but all current police activities were aimed at catching the perpetrators and the person who tried to kill the police officer.

Six citizens [also public figures – actors, columnists] living across the Federation, Emir Hadzihafizbegovic, Zoran Cerkez, Ilija Kulenovic, Aleksandar Seksan, Fatmir Alispahic and Izan Mustafic, sent an open letter to the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, in which they strongly condemn the nationalist violence in towns across the RS following the victory of the Yugoslav basketball team at the World Championship. The undersigned citizens also asked Ashdown to initiate the abolishment of the RS, *“the darkest fascism in the heart of Europe.”* (**Dnevni Avaz** p. 11, **Oslobodjenje** p. 7)

Dnevni List (front and page 2) reports that the OHR, UNHCR, OSCE, CRPC and UNMIBH released yesterday the Property Legislation Statistics for the month of July of this year. According to the report, the overall implementation rate of property laws in BiH has reached 57%. Also in July, the RS reached the 50% benchmark; which means that in most municipalities half or more than half of all claims have been solved. The organizations remind that there are still municipalities that need to implement the property related laws more strictly and with accelerated rate.

The BiH Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, **Azra Hadziahmetovic**, and the Minister of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, **Rini Suwandi**, signed a trade treaty between BiH and Indonesia in Sarajevo today. The treaty was signed during a visit by an Indonesian delegation to BiH led by President **Megawati Soekarnoputri**. This is the first bilateral agreement in the sphere of economic cooperation, and the main objective is to regulate and intensify trade and other economic relations between BiH and the Republic of Indonesia in line with the principles of the WTO. *"I am hopeful that through the direct establishment of economic and trade relations we shall have that type of communication directly with Indonesia, which will make Indonesian products cheaper on our market. I would particularly wish to emphasize the opening of the Indonesian market to BiH producers. There is particular interest in investment and cooperation in the sphere of the steel industry, rubber industry and civil engineering products,"* Hadziahmetovic told the press.

Earlier in the day, members of the **BiH Presidency** also had talks with a state delegation of the Republic of Indonesia led by President Megawati Soekarnoputri and discussed ways of improving economic cooperation. (**Dnevni Avaz** p. 2, **Federation Radio, BH Radio 1, BHTV 1**)

Reactions to Kostunica's statement

The **Embassy of Bosnia and Hercegovina** in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has officially asked the office of Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica to confirm whether the Yugoslav president told Blic newspaper that the RS was only temporarily separated from Serbia and that it still belonged to it, the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced. (FENA)

Haris Silajdzic, Party for BiH's candidate for member of the BiH Presidency, sent on Tuesday an open letter to the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, and ambassadors of **PIC** member-countries, urging them to organize another session of the Council and discuss ways of penalizing Yugoslavia and its officials because of frequent statements similar to that of Kostunica, who said that the RS has always been and will remain a part of Yugoslavia. Such a statement by the Yugoslav

president, Silajdzic believes, confirms that the current authorities in Belgrade have not given up their territorial claims against BiH. *"This is continuation of Milosevic's policy which led to war in former Yugoslavia. It is precisely because it was keen to implement such a policy that Serbia carried out aggression against BiH. Therefore Kostunica's statement represents a threat of fresh aggression, because Serbia's territorial claims against BiH cannot be realized in any other way. This is a step away from a declaration of war,"* Silajdzic says. (**Dnevni Avaz** f.p. FENA)

At a press conference held yesterday in Sarajevo, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, said that every official who questions the integrity of any country is endangering his own reputation and the reputation of his country. *"I have seen the statement made by the President Kostunica. It is possible that it was a slip or that he has been misquoted, as it is completely different from his official position reiterated during his latest meetings with the members of the BiH Presidency...Any politician, regardless of his position, who questions in his statements the integrity of any Balkan state is not only endangering his own, but also the reputation of the country he represents and its ambition to get closer to Europe."* (**Dnevni Avaz** p. 2)

Federation Issues

The deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, **Sejfudin Tokic**, today forwarded a request to the police and prosecutor's office to verify the basis for allegations about corruption, criminal activities and international terrorism, disclosed in a report by the BiH Federation Intelligence and Security Service (FOSS). *"It is necessary to make the whole report public, considering that certain media have portrayed the FOSS in the most selective and tendentious way, and that some of the report's content are used for election purposes,"* Tokic said in a statement. Tokic condemned all persons who have equated criminal activities with the legitimate resistance in BiH during the war. (**Dnevni**

List, Dnevni Avaz, Oslobodjenje)

Federation Minister of Justice **Zvonko Mijan** said yesterday that the priorities of the ongoing judicial reform also implies the reorganization of courts and prosecutor's offices in the Federation. Mijan explained that the reorganization would lead to reduction of the network of courts in line with objective criteria, including the population size served by one court, caseload, and geographic parameters.

BiH State-level

Dnevni List (p. 5) reports that the UN Mission to BiH expressed its dissatisfaction with the delay in the implementation of Law on Agency for Information and Protection of BiH, and urged the BiH Presidency to appoint the Head of this Agency and two Deputies as soon as possible. *'The UN Mission believes that any further delay is unacceptable,'* said UN spokesman Alun Roberts.

Boris Kujundzic, BiH Presidency's press secretary stressed that *"Neither the BiH Presidency nor UN Mission is obstructing the process of the appointment."* *"The BiH Presidency was one of those that initiated passing of the Law on Agency for Information and Protection, it supported its adoption in the BiH Parliament and appointment of the Head of the Agency."* According to Kujundzic, *'the BiH Presidency was expecting to get an agreed proposal from the BiH Council of Ministers, however, the BiH Presidency only received from them a list of 15 persons and some of these persons did not even meet basic prerequisites to perform the duty of the Head of the Agency.'*

In a statement for **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 3), the Federation Minister for Veteran Issues, **Suada Hadzovic**, said that veterans associations from the Federation, RS and the Brcko District have formed a joint **Bureau for Veteran Protection**. This Bureau based in Brcko has five employees from the Federation and the same number from the RS.

Pre-electoral activities

Dnevni List (page 2) reports that the **HDU Caucus** in the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament Assembly held its regular session yesterday and discussed Chapter 8, Article 8.1 of the Election Law that refers to the election of the Croat member of the BiH Presidency: *'If the person' who did not declare oneself as a Croat at the last census put forward his candidacy for a Croat member of the BiH Presidency, does that mean that it can be expected that a member of the Bosniak or Serb people can also put forward its candidacy for this position at the next elections. '*

Nacional (page 20-22) carries an interview with **Mladen Ivankovic Lijanovic**, the President of People's Party Working for Prosperity and a candidate for the position of a Croat member of the BiH Presidency. Asked about the incident when an explosive device was planted in his car, Lijanovic said that *"it has never been revealed as to who planted the explosive device under the car partly due to a wrong move by Wolfgang Petritsch, the former High Representative."* *"Petritsch said that the Sarajevo authorities will take over the investigation of this case and the Cantonal authority welcomed this decision because Police is under their competence. According to this decision, local Police did not have to carry out the investigation, unless believed it was necessary."* Lijanovic also commented on the role of Paddy Ashdown: *'The HR's role is implementation of peace, of the Dayton Peace Agreement, and International Community appointed him to this position. He has authorities stronger than the Assembly, he is untouchable and he implements the policy of the International Community, for which stability and development of this region are important. His role in BiH is preservation of stability and preventing of the return to abyss of the war.'*

Electronic Media Headlines

BHTV 1

- The RS Government stated that there are no evidences on delivery of weapon from "Orao" to Iraq.

- Indonesian President is visiting BiH
- A High Representative invited BiH citizens to choose between reforms and disaster on 5 October.
- Iraqi Vice- President invited all Arabs to attack the US forces in case of military intervention against Iraq.

FTV

- The RS Defense Ministry's Commission said "Orao" industry had not delivered weapons and military equipment to Iraq
- After incidents that happened yesterdays, returnees to Kozarac asked for the OHR and government's protection.
- Slovenian and Croatian prime ministers agreed upon temporary solution for Piran problem

RTRS

- RS Accepted the Ministry of Defense Commission's report. No evidence on Aeronautical Company Orao's supply of weapons to Iraq.
- OHR is going to withdraw its move after comprehensive investigation on Orao case, says Ashdown.
- RS Government provided guaranties for General Talić's probation release.
- The ICTY Prosecution completed first phase of the trial against Slobodan Milošević.
- US – High-level security measures upon terrorist attacks anniversary.
- Belgrade – Magnificent welcome to the basketball champions.