

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 12/11/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: New alliance takes over the power – Silajdzic to be prime minister, and Ivanic foreign minister; Customs system – Criminals more unified than customs officers (with photo of PDHR Hays)

Dnevni Avaz: Implementation of the Sarajevo deal – Fuel prices raise again; Depleted uranium threatens to Hadzici, Han-Pijesak

Dnevni List: Dangerous uranium found in suburbs of Sarajevo; Support of International Community to Customs offices

Vecernji List: NATO bombs have caused increase of cancer diseases; Today verdict in Leutar case: Indictes expect freedom

Slobodna Dalmacija: Anic: We were selling APCs that were not in working order to Israel; Scandal at session of intellectual 'Circle 99': Minister of Culture Gojer had his mobile phone ringing while he was talking about primitivism

Glas Srpski: Alarming findings of the UN experts for environment protection: too much uranium; Banja Luka: Brcko in a better position

Nezavisne Novine: "Gazexport" decided 1st December is a deadline for BiH authorities: No more Russian gas for BiH; Strong reactions over dismissals of special police members in Sarajevo – Lagumdžija: Security undermined in the entire state; Dragan Cavic, RS Vice President: The "Orao" affair is orchestrated by the officer's circles according to the JNA recipe; OHR and CAFAO representatives in BiH Federation Customs Administration: Criminals better connected than the customs officers

Blic: Extended detention to Orao's directors; Dodik: It is a lie that I negotiate with SDS on new authority

OHR/international community's activities; related commentaries

Principal Deputy High Representative **Donald Hays** and director of CAFAO (EU-sponsored Customs and Fiscal Assistance Office) **Alan Jensen** have given their full support to the Federation Customs Administration in the investigation of customs fraud. They have said that they would not tolerate political interfering in the investigation. According to official statistics, between 300m and 600m convertible marks worth of customs revenue is currently being lost due to fraud and bad management and particularly because of three customs directorates co-existing in our country. BiH simply cannot afford these losses, according to PDHR Hays. *"We must find a rational way to address the high cost and bad efficiency of the two-and-a-half customs services that we have in this country. Since, the extent of customs revenue loss would consequently have to be borne out by the taxpayer,"* he told journalists following his and Jansen's meeting with the BiH Federation Customs Administration Director **Zelimir Rebac** and his associates in Sarajevo on Monday. (**Oslobodjenje**, pages 3, 4 and 5, mentioned on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Dnevni List**, front and p 5, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3)

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Zdenko Jurilj) reads that the Federation Customs Administration is about to get a special armed unit which will help the Administration in its line of duty. The said unit will accompany the inspectors on the ground and will be entitled to seize any document and search every premise to achieve its goal. **Zelimir Rebac**, the Director of the Administration: *"They (the special unit) will have special insignia and official uniforms just like the special police. The authorities are big because they have to be like that in order to trace frauds worth millions committed by owners of some companies".*

Nezavisne Novine quotes (p 6) **SNSD Executive Board Chairman Nebojsa Radmanovic** as saying in Banja Luka that it is necessary to make entity customs administration more efficient, and that decisions on the BiH-level customs administration should not be made over night. *"Without a serious analysis, in which experts from both entities should be take part, no measures regarding the setting up a joint,*

state-level customs administration should be taken", said Radmanovic. He said that SNSD advocates efficient customs policy at the state level, which can be achieved in various ways, but definitely not with hasty introduction of the joint customs administration. "OHR and some other forces from BiH exert pressure in order to have as many institutions under state control and they justify their demands with inefficiency of current solutions", said Radmanovic.

High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** met on Monday in Sarajevo with BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations **Azra Hadziahmetovic** to discuss the establishment of state control over arms export, as well as the ongoing economic reforms in BiH, OHR Spokesman **Mario Brkic** told **Onasa, Fena** (**Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3, by Sead Numanovic, **Dnevni List**, p 8, **Slobodna Dalmacija**, last page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3). Hadziahmetovic informed Ashdown of the progress made so far and the activities that are to be completed by the end of the week. The BiH authorities have determined a plan of activities on the basis of which state institutions should by 15 November take over full control over the import and export of weapons and military equipment. Brkic said the High Representative requested that the "case of the Orao Aviation Bureau, which has exported military equipment to Iraq and violated the UN arms embargo lifted against this country, happens never again". It is clear, he said, that it is needed to have entity defence ministries cooperating with state institutions in order to establish an adequate arms export control system. Ashdown said better cooperation is needed between the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, which is issuing licences for import and export of weapons, and agencies that verify the legality of export.

*"The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, has removed **Munir Alibabic** from the office of FOSS Director after Alibabic had started to deeply investigate into certain dossiers. He has still not offered convincing arguments for that removal. If he*

does not offer these arguments, there will be a real room for further speculations that he had removed Alibabic under political pressures or in accordance to some sort of a deal," Mirko Sagolj wrote in the **Oslobodjenje** In Focus column.

"The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, and US Ambassador to BiH **Clifford Bond** are in disagreement over the implementation of the election results and over the policy towards the RS in reaction to the Orazo affair. Ashdown believes that it is not important who will be on power and that it is not his job to influence the process (of the election results implementation), while Bond is resolute that an alternative to the national political parties must be established," Zija Dizdarevic wrote in an **Oslobodjenje** editorial.

"The Bosnia experience offers some support for this more muscular postwar scheme. **Paddy Ashdown**, the veteran British politician and statesman who is now the high representative in Bosnia, has pointed out that the repeated elections in that country have sometimes impeded rather than advanced the progress of desperately needed economic and political reforms. Most of the important changes in the country, from guarantees for returning refugees to the purging of criminals from government, have happened on the orders of Mr. Ashdown and his predecessors. And further progress is unlikely unless Western governments tightly condition continued aid on concrete steps by the Bosnians. In short, while democracy should be a central aim of postwar nation-building, it cannot necessarily be the starting point – and even if it is, a strong outside authority is essential," said the editorial in today's **Washington Post**.

Sarajevo special policemen case

The revoking of work permits of **19 members of the Sarajevo canton police special unit** is the most direct message to criminals in Sarajevo and BiH that they should not fear the police and that the police should fear them, BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs **Zlatko Lagumdžija** told a news conference in

Sarajevo on Monday. The move has pushed the relations between BiH authorities and the international community to the most critical point in the past two years, according to Lagumdžija. *"I believe that this example is something that has completely destroyed the partnership that was painstakingly built over almost two years. I have to say that we shall all – and particularly I in the capacity of BiH minister of foreign affairs – support everybody who was in such a brutal way brought into a position in which their basic human right is violated – that they are found guilty without a trial,"* Lagumdžija emphasized. Given that the legal dispute involving these police officers is still under way, the IPTF decision violated the so-called presumption of innocence, Zlatko Lagumdžija said, despite the fact that one of the priorities of the international community in our country is to build a law-governed state. All police officers whose work permits were revoked by the IPTF have the right to file a complaint within eight days of receiving the decision. (**Oslobodjenje**, pages 4-5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 11)

War crimes

The Dutch parliament has launched a public investigation into the massacre which took place in **Srebrenica** in 1995. This investigation could make it possible for survivors to demand compensation from The Netherlands. A special parliamentary committee will be tasked with identifying the guilty party responsible for the Srebrenica tragedy. For seven years, the women belonging to the Srebrenica Association are meeting on each 11th of the month, on the day the UN protected area fell. The women also met on Monday at Pinga, in front of the local mosque in Tuzla. Since 1995 until today, their demands remain unchanged. The women demand the truth about the missing members of their families and that the guilty are punished. The women of Srebrenica felt that not enough has been done to address either of those demands. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Vjesnik**, **Jutarnji List**, **Vecernji List**)

Vecernji List (page 5) carries an interview with a former member of the BiH Presidency, **Stjepan Ključić**, in which he

talks about the missing transcripts from wartime sessions of the BiH Presidency, the transcripts that were according to VL requested by the ICTY investigators and representatives of IC in BiH. *"The BiH Presidency, unlike other institutions, had a generator during the war and all the sessions were taped. There is not a possibility that transcripts disappear. At the beginning of the Muslim-Croat conflict I was not in the Presidency but I know for sure that all the sessions were taped and that transcripts existed. It is exactly known who was in charge of that at the time and there are no reasons to hide it"*, says Kljajic.

The RS Government's bureau for relations with the Hague tribunal forwarded on Monday criminal files on **Alija Ibric** nicknamed Kurta and **Fahrudin Sasanovic** nicknamed Beli, who are suspected of committing war crimes against civilians in the municipality of Bratunac, to the Banja Luka office of the Hague tribunal. A statement issued by the bureau says that, as members of the 213th infantry brigade of the BiH Army, Ibric and Sasanovic are suspected of being in charge of and taking part in the attack on the Serb village of Loznica in Bratunac, and of killing and wounding villagers and setting their homes ablaze on 28 June 1992. (**Blic** p 7)

Weapons sale affairs

"The criminal panel of Bijeljina's court of first instance on Monday rejected as unfounded an appeal by the defence team of the accused managers of the Orao aviation institute, Milan Prica, Teodosije Kecman and Gordan Santrac", court president **Dragomir Zivanovic** has told SRNA. The defence team of Orao's replaced director, **Milan Prica**, his deputy **Teodosije Kecman** and the head of the marketing sector, **Gordan Santrac**, appealed against the decision of the court of first instance on grounds that the detention and pre-investigation proceedings against the managers were illegal. Lawyer **Milos Peric**, the defence lawyer of the accused Orao managers, confirmed to journalists that the criminal council had rejected as unfounded the appeal by the defence team of the accused Prica, Kecman and Santrac.

(**Vecernje Novosti** p 5, **Blic** p 7, **Nacional** p 7)

Several hundred **workers of the Bijeljina-based Oraq** Aviation Institute rallied in the institute on Monday to protest against the arrest of Oraq managers. *"The livelihood of over 500 workers depends on this firm and we will not allow Oraq to collapse,"* head of Oraq's laboratory sector **Milan Buha** told the rally. Buha went on to say that *"Oraq workers are indignant at the current situation, because they are creators, not destroyers as someone would like to portray"*. The Oraq workers earlier in the day issued a statement saying that

"the detention of the director, his deputy and the head of marketing thwarts the functioning of the institute." (Articles on Oraq affair: **Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Blic** p 7)

The **RS Treasury** has no records that the Oraq conducted payments to certain company or the entity budget through the single account of the Treasury – **Nada Trninic**, the official for implementation of budget in the RS Treasury, confirmed. She said that Oraq was presented in the system of public treasury as a supplier of the RS Defence Ministry, and on this basis 432.655 KM were paid to Oraq by the Ministry as of January 1 this year to date. *"The RS Defence Ministry has not yet paid in 193.000 KM to "Oraq" as the supplier, which it owes on this basis"*, said Trninic. (**Blic** p 7)

Commenting on the "Oraq" affair, RS President **Dragan Cavic** in his today's interview to Nezavisne Novine stated that the ongoing investigation is being carried out thoroughly: *"From what we have learnt so far, I got an impression that everything was done in officers' circles, as it seems to me that there is a JNA organisation that never stopped existing. When we finalise the investigation, we will send the report to the BiH Presidency so it can brief the UN."* (**Vecernje Novosti** p 5)

"I am not familiar with any trip of Oraq's officials to Iraq",

General **Manojlo Milovanovic**, who was RS Minister of Defence during Dodik's government, said, commenting the accusations of Dragan Cavic, the RS President, who said that Milovanovic "blessed" the trip. (**Vecernje Novosti** p 5)

Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 15, by Zlatko Tulic) carries article in which Federation Minister of Defence **Mijo Anic** says that he is embittered on accusations coming from officials of Financial Police. Although he is still not officially informed about charges that are brought against him, Anic stated that the whole story has sauced him huge political damage, and therefore, he will file charges against Director of Financial Police, **Zufer Dervisevic**. "It was Dervisevic's interest to discredit me", Anic stated. Anic stated that all the military vehicles that were sold were not in working order.

Dnevni List (page 5) carries continuation (NB: see yesterday's Cropres) of the interview with Nihad Spahalic, General Manager of "Intrade" company, that has sold 50,000 guns to one American company this summer. *"For three months of investigation inspectors haven't found anything. Now the Financial police came and they also saw that everything is clean. But when they send their reports to their bosses than they send other inspectors and that is how it lasts for three months. (...) It is all about some political score settling and we are the collateral damage. Why exactly 'Intrade' company? Because the job was very good, and little children know that ministers Anic and Buljubasic are at odds, they are trying to stage each other all the time. (...) You know about Anic's job of export of weapons to Israel, what is classic example of malversation, and inspectors don't want to know that, but I know!"*, Spahalic said.

Contamination with depleted uranium

United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**) experts have found traces of **depleted uranium** on three locations in BiH whose

radiation and toxicity may pose a threat to people's health. The traces have been found in the Sarajevo suburb of Hadzici and a RS Army barracks in Han Pijesak on the Romanija mountain, Finland's **Pekka Haavisto**, who headed the UNEP team, told reporters in Sarajevo on Monday. All the locations inspected by the UN team were Bosnian Serb targets in NATO air strikes in 1995. Following NATO's strikes on Yugoslav targets in 1999, Bosnian Serb authorities accused NATO of having used ammunition with depleted uranium and causing lasting damage to the environment and an increase in cancer among the local population. Although depleted uranium dust has been found on only three Bosnian locations, UNEP experts have taken some 200 samples of soil, water and air from all over Bosnia which will be analysed in Great Britain and Italy in the coming months. A final report on the danger to the environment will be published in March 2003. UNEP has called on local authorities to decontaminate the facilities in Hadzici and Han Pijesak. Bosnia's deputy minister of civil issues and communications, **Milan Lovric**, has announced the measures will be taken at once. He has also stated that the situation is not particularly dramatic. The issue of depleted uranium in Bosnia is much smaller than in Kosovo or Serbia, where more than 100 locations were hit with ammunition containing the substance during NATO's air raids in 1999. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 8, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, mentioned on the front page, **Glas Srpski**, front page, **Nezavisne Novine**, front and page 3)

Vecernji List (front and page 15, by Eldina Medunjanin, title "NATO bombs have caused increase of cancer diseases"), **Dnevni List** (front and page 9, title "Dangerous uranium found in suburbs of Sarajevo"), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (back page, title "Traces of depleted uranium found in three locations in BiH"), **Jutarnji List** (page 6) and **Vjesnik** (page 2) also carry reports on depleted uranium contamination in BiH.

Dragan Cavic: I'll be the President of all RS citizens

In an extensive interview to **Nezavisne Novine** (pages 4,5), the future RS President, **Dragan Cavic**, stated that he will act as the president of all RS citizens and that he expects the new

RS Vice Presidents to work in the same manner, as all three of them [President and two Vice Presidents] were elected to these posts as representatives of constituent peoples. Cavic also stated that he will tranquilize political conflicts in entities, through dialogue. He will not hesitate to use his constitutional authority for the benefit of all RS citizens. Cavic wants a Government that will be supported by parties from the RS, and from the BiH Federation as well. Commenting on the "Orao" affair, Cavic stated that the ongoing investigation is being carried out thoroughly: *"From what we have learnt so far, I got an impression that everything was done in officer's circles, as it seems to me that there is a JNA organization that never stopped existing. When we finalize the investigation, we will send the report to the BiH Presidency so it can brief the UN. I hope that BiH and RS will not suffer consequences because of this affair, due to the fact that we have undertaken all measures to stop these activities. We have invited SFOR and OSCE to take part in the investigation. So, when we summarize everything, I hope that we will avoid sanctions."* Speaking about future RS Government, Cavic stated that for the next few years, we will need a combination of politics and expertise. He could not answer whom he will trust with the mandate to create new RS Government.

Post-election deals

In a front-page article, **Oslobodjenje** speculates that **Haris Silajdzic** might be appointed the new BiH prime Minister, as **Mladen Ivanic** could be the state Foreign Minister and **Milorad Dodik** RS Prime Minister if the leaders of PDP and SNSD decide to establish a coalition thereby pushing the SDS into the opposition. This would, according to the newspaper, mean the acceptance of a recommendation made by US Ambassador Clifford Bond at a recent meeting of moderate political parties in **Banja Luka**.

The PDP President, **Mladen Ivanic**, stated after the session of the party Main Board that it is too early to talk about coalitions (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 6)

The President of the RS Socialist Party, **Petar Djokic**, stated that his party does not want to participate in division of

power together with national parties – SDA, HDZ and SDS. According to Djokic, his party advocates an agreement with moderate political parties (**Glas Srpski**, p 2, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 6).

RS Democratic Party already supported document called Partnership for Changes, offered by SNSD, but it will also support SDS-PDP coalition, if they establish new authorities. The President of the Party, **Dusko Vukotic**, expressed hope that SNSD and PDP leaders, **Mladen Ivanic** and **Milorad Dodik** will reach an agreement (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 6).

Vecernje Novosti (p 13) reports that the formation of parliamentary majority is going on slower then it was expected. The dispute is between the SDS and SNSD that even before the elections stated they “do not want to be a part of the same wheel”. Both parties count on forming the parliamentary majority with the PDP that has won 9 seats. Dodik on Friday said that he expected the PDP would reply to the SNSD offer, adding that he had achieved an agreement with some parties from the RS and “negotiations with the SDP and Party for BiH are underway”. Three days ago the SDS Main Board held a session in Banja Luka at which it was concluded that *“the main aim of gathering of so-called moderate parties is to tighten the noose around the RS and push it in embrace of a centralise BiH”*. The SDS would like to form the parliamentary majority on the basis of thus-far relations with the PDP and the SPRS. But such a combination is missing several delegates’ seats. According to president of the Socialist, Petar Djokic, there are two blocks in the RS and neither of them has formed the parliamentary majority.

“Oil war” in sight again

Harmonization of petroleum prices in the entities, which should have been done by November 15th, has been brought in question because a longer deadline for harmonization of the prices has been set for the Brcko District. The Association of

Petroleum Distributors from the RS and the Federation of BiH have asked for an urgent meeting with the representatives of OHR in order to clarify why is it that the Brcko District should harmonize the prices only by December 31st. The representative of the RS Association of Petroleum Distributors, Vukasin Vojnovic, pointed out yesterday that the problem was not the harmonization of regulations between the entities "but in the Brcko District, which is creating a chaos". *"We do not understand why the Brcko District as well could not harmonize the regulations at the same time with the entities. It took them a year and a half and now they want another two months!"*, Vojnovic stated and pointed out that this position has been harmonized with the petroleum distributors from the Federation of BiH. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 11, **Glas Srpski**, p 1)

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Survivors and families of Srebrenica victims could request compensation from the Dutch Government
- Establishment of state control over weapons exports to take place by November 15
- Uranium traces have been found at three locations in BiH

FTV 1 (1930)

- Presence of uranium traces has been proved at three locations in BiH
- Cantonal and state officials support members of the Sarajevo Cantonal Support Unit
- Investigation on Srebrenica massacre has been opened in Dutch Parliament
- Special session of the Iraqi Parliament

RTRS (1930)

- Workers of the Orao Factory stopped production as a sign of protest
- 231 million KM have been paid so far for salaries of the budget beneficiaries
- Dutch Parliament conducts an official investigation on Srebrenica