

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

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)
BiH HoR adopts next year's budget	Budget expenses – 325 million-KM on foreign debt	Up to 1 million people might lose BiH citizenship
Strike of education workers in HNK	Presidency in NY, HR in Moscow	Arizona on agenda of Croatian Congress Board
Tomac claims media misquoted him	Import by export in BiH – 26% only	Redemption of apartments with certificates
		BiH budget adopted

Oslobodjenje	Haris Silajdzic does not want to be BiH PM; MoI – old passport valid until January 31; High penalties for negligence; Road taxes increasing prices?
Dnevni Avaz	Silajdzic does not want in the government, waiting for SDA's reply; UN will help reforms; Jonjic accuses HDZ and Hadzovic; Bedrija Hamzic gave birth to triplets
Dnevni List	Due to slow constituting of new authority, BiH citizens with dual citizenship might be deprived of BiH citizenship – Ashdown will proclaim changes of Law on Citizenship
Vecernji List	Scandal in the Federation Government – ministers are illegal employees

Slobodna Dalmacija	Who owes what: OHR demands from politicians to give up profitable jobs or their positions: Minister of Trade has shops, Minister of Social Welfare pharmacies, and Deputy Minister of Defense flower shops
Glas Srpski	Sufferings of convict Milomir Tepes continue – new prison, same old pain; Drvar- wild boar kills a hunter
Nezavisne Novine	BiH House of Representatives passes BiH budget – PDP and SDS support financing of BiH law-suit against FRY; Banja Luka District Court – judges are freezing, most trials postponed
Blic	A man kidnapped a policeman's wife and then committed a suicide in a forest; Orao is awaiting a permission to export to 'Rolls-Royce'; Ranka Misic: The budget rebalance was not fair; Dodik: A new affair in the customs looms

Political parties/new government	
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<p>Silajdzic won't be BiH PM</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 8, Oslobođenje pg. 1 and 6 – Sahbaz Džihanović stated yesterday after a SBiH Presidency session that 'due to personal reasons and after analysing the overall political situation, SBiH Presidency supported Silajdzic's decision not to be SBiH's candidate for the CoM Chair'. As for the talks with the SDA, Džihanović stated that they were sticking to their original offer to the SDA. According to the offer, SBiH wants to split Bosniaks seats in the future government with the SDA. According to Oslobođenje, SBiH Presidency members had different opinions on whether to co-operate with the SDA. Apparently, Beriz Belkic and Spomenka Micic were against the idea. They insisted on co-operating with moderate parties, and suggested that at entity and state level SBiH was in charge of the opposition. Avaz reported that Safet Halilovic, SBiH President and Adnan Terzic, SDA Vice-President 'met for a coffee yesterday and talked about possibilities of bringing closer positions of the two parties. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 15 by <u>Blanka Magas</u> – according to the current distribution of forces at the BiH political scene, SBiH will not participate in the executive authority at both the Federation and state level. "After two-months long negotiations, during which the SBiH leadership was arrogantly demanding two thirds of Ministerial positions, their unrealistic demands resulted in the situation that along with SDP this party will be the biggest opposition to the authority. The national parties will form authority at the state and entity levels with the support of smaller parties," reads the article. Namely, the ruling parties are willing to give smaller parties high-ranked positions at the Federation authority, such as the position of the President and Vice President of the BiH Federation as well as the managerial posts in some public companies and steering boards.</p> <p>Avaz pg. 8 'Mikerevic is Ivanic's extended arm' – according to daily's sources, it is becoming more evident that Mikerevic will distribute eight ministerial posts for Serbs between the PDP and SDS. Those better-informed claim that the combination will be more satisfactory for both parties rather than an option of the PDP getting five and the SDS three ministerial seats. There have also been rumours about names of future ministers. Simeun Vilendecic has been mentioned as the possible candidate for the Finance Minister (currently working in the same post), and Sinisa Djordjevic, Ivanic's Hague Advisor, as the new MoI head. There have been warnings from the opposition that Mikerevic is Ivanic's 'extended arm' and shall carry out whatever Ivanic wants.</p> <p>Oslobođenje pg. 6 'Dodik for the premature parliamentary elections'. Glas Srpski pg. 2 'SNSD wants early elections' – SNSD President, Milorad Dodik, stated on Tuesday that his party will advocate for the holding of premature parliamentary elections at the next local elections because the current coalition in the RS government was deadly for the RS. "It is not SNSD's goal, as the SDS tries to present it, the ruining of the RS Parliament, but the RS Assembly Chair Dragan Kalinic," said Dodik. According to Dodik, his party holds information about a new customs affair related to the import of shoes at the price of 0,95 KM. As for the state VAT, the SNSD supports the VAT in BiH, but requests a mechanism that would ensure that VAT incomes remain the entity incomes. The Head of the SNSD caucus, Krstan Simic, said that the aim of SNSD's activities in the Parliament would be to expose a political philosophy, which had deceived the people in the RS for ten years. (Reported in Blic on pg. 2 'Srpska's Parliament in crisis').</p> <p>Blic pg. 2 'SDA conditions support to RS PM', Nacional pg. 11 – the SDA Presidency member, Adil Osmanovic, confirmed that the SDA was ready to support the nomination of the RS PM, Dragan Mikerevic, under condition that the SDA proposed the Vice-Premier and three ministers. He further confirmed that during the meeting with the SDA President, Sulejman Tihic, he was informed that the SDA would demand to assume one of the key ministerial positions, most probably the ministerial positions of finance, defence or internal affairs.</p>
<p>Opposition vs. Mikerevic</p>	
<p>SNSD on new RS government</p>	
<p>SDA on supporting RS PM</p>	

HR Ashdown in Moscow	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'Significant help of Russia for BiH reforms', Avaz pg. 3 'Russian help of vital importance', Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Ashdown in Moscow', Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 'Ashdown: Russia plays important role in the process of reforms in BiH' – HR Paddy Ashdown met yesterday in Moscow with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Igor Ivanov. Ashdown stated that the IC was united concerning the common program, which is the establishment of the rule of law. Minister Ivanov emphasised the importance of the economic reform, especially when it comes to the issues of state customs and VAT. Dnevni List carries a representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Alexander Jakovenko, as saying that 'the Dayton Agreement represents the basis of the peace process and securing of balance of interest in BiH'. "The failure to respect the agreement could undermine the foundations of the yet fragile stability and relations between two entities and three peoples that live in BiH. All more important decisions on political-economic system should be taken on basis of freely expressed consensus of all sides".</p>
Round table on customs reform	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'BiH is the only state in Europe that does not have single customs', Glas Srpski pg. 3 – Renzo Davidi, the Chief of Working Group for Reform of BiH Customs, stated that introduction of the joint BiH administration would be the only way to increase the efficiency in collecting customs. Davidi said that the existing customs system in BiH is expensive and inefficient and does not ensure the application of customs legislation at the BiH level. According to him, the main problem is the existence of three different customs administration, which are not capable of fighting the customs fraud, smuggling and crime in an efficient way. CAFAD Chief, Alan Jensen, spoke on the necessity of introducing the state VAT. The statements were made during a round table discussion entitled 'Reform of the customs system in BiH' held yesterday in Banja Luka. Nezavisne Novine reported on the same issue</p>
OHR campaign in RS	<p>pg. 2 'VAT will not endanger entities' – Davidi's statement that 'the fiscal sovereignty of entities will not be endangered with introduction of a joint customs and tax administrations.' "This is because the revenues, which will be collected on one account, will be further distributed to entities," said Davidi. Please note that the ATV reported last night in its prime time news at 19:00 that there was some misunderstanding regarding a meeting that PDHR Donald Hays had with representatives of the RS parties the day before yesterday. ATV reported that Hays said that all the RS parties agreed on the introduction of VAT and that the SDS and RS Prime Minister denied that.</p>
Platform for united Mostar	<p>Avaz pg. 10 'Experts will present advantages of VAT to businessmen', Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'OHR continues its campaign' – OHR Spokeswoman in Banja Luka, Sonja Pastuovic, confirmed yesterday that representatives from the OHR Economic department continued their campaign of presenting advantages of introducing the state VAT. The discussion on the topic will take place on December 16 this year at the Banja Luka University for Economics.</p>
PDHR Hays on VAT	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Equal and democratic community' – head of OHR in Mostar, Jean Pierre Bercot, received the Platform for Action that outlines the construction of Mostar as a multiethnic, equal and democratic community. Eighteen Mostar city councillors from the Coalition for united and democratic BiH (includes members from the SDA, SBiH, SDP and independent councillors) adopted the Platform on December 3. The news was announced during a press conference in Mostar yesterday. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 15 by <u>Marijan Sivic</u> – an editorial regarding the unification of Mostar. It says that the administrative and political unification of Mostar will not go smoothly even after the constitutional changes have taken place. This is because Bosniaks, who loudly advocated for unified city, now claim that Mostar and Bosniaks are now threatened with 'Croatization' requesting the status quo. The author also suggests that Mostar should become one constituency in order to avoid the situation that the strongest party in the elections, which has always been the HDZ, does not have most number of councilors in the City Council. Dnevni List pg. 7 by <u>Darko Jukic</u> – carries a similar editorial to the one featured in Slobodna Dalmacija. The author, however, notes that the SDP and SDA are in coalition only in Mostar, which, according to Jukic, speaks for itself. The author also says that OHR and other representatives of the IC should come up with stances regarding the future organization of Mostar as one normal city. "Than, some things would be clearer, from what the establishment of Mostar's going to be like to who is going to implement it", says Jukic.</p> <p>Nacional pg. 11 'VAT comes into force in 2004' – reports that preparations for introducing VAT in BiH do not go as planned. PDHR Donald Hays recently told representatives of political parties that participate in the work of the RS Parliament that VAT should replace current sales tax by 2004. According to his, that would increase the budget revenues. "VAT is much better solution than sales tax," Hays said. However, not everyone shares his opinion. President of the RS Government, Miladin Ivanic, thinks that collection of taxes and customs duties on BiH level would be an additional problem in relations between the entities. "The problem would be reallocation of collected revenues among entities," Ivanic said. On the other side, OHR thinks that the VAT system of collecting should be single one, and that revenues should be reallocated to the entities on equal parts. "I will not say that everyone agrees on the issue, but they support the introduction of VAT with single tax rate, single tax policy and administration," Hays said. He warned that those opposing VAT want in fact to evade tax paying.</p>

