OHR BiH Media Round-up, 12/12/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV – Pogledi** (23,00 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
SFOR's action in Serici	PIC extend HR's mandate	SFOR's action in Serici	Conscription issue in RS
PIC meeting in Brussels	Arrests in Bihac	PIC extend HRs mandate	PIC meeting in Brussels
Regional Free Trade	Free trade from 2004	Drugs trafficking in Bihac	
	Future of Air Bosna		

Oslobodjenje	SFOR scared Seric's habitants; Ashdown's mandate extended; Srebrenica women sue Dutch government; Government negotiates with IMF: Not even a half of pensions till internal debt established
Dnevni Avaz	Avaz learns: Censorship intents to stop the truth: Bosniaks are oppressed in both Judiciary and Police; Paddy Ashdown's mandate extended; Eronet illegally put 100.000 cards in sale
Dnevni List	Ashdown's mandate extended until May 2005; SFOR in search for Al-Qa'ida in Zenica
Vecernji List	Terrorists threat Croat leaders, Borislav Paravac: Advocating for Republika Srpska does not damage BiH
Slobodna Dalmacija	World Bank calls off help to City of Mostar
Glas Srpske	Croatia: Books at stake

Nezavisne Novine	OIC extended mandate to HiRep: Paddy Ashdown stays in BiH until May 2005; Following adoption of the Republika Srpska Laws on Defence and Republika Srpska Army: No conscription, but training
Blic	Scandals at the Railroad Company: They are hiding data on sale of railroad cars
Ljiljan	Dnevni Avaz will not accept the introduction of censorship; Adnan Terzic: We will determine a price of license for all GSM operators
Dani	Brcko – a promised city
Slobodna Bosna	West fears of Mustafa Ceric's political ambitions

Political developments

Mandates of Ashdown and Hays extended	CRHB, BHTV 1, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz cover ‘Paddy Ashdown’s mandate extended’, pg 2 ‘Ashdown and Hays’ mandate extended for another year’, Oslobodjenje cover, pg 3 ‘Ashdown’s mandate extended’, Dnevni List front, pg 3 ‘Ashdown’s mandate extended until May 2005’, Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 2 ‘Paddy Ashdown stays in BiH until May 2005’ – The Political Directors of the Peace Implementation Council [PIC], who met in Brussels on Thursday, extended the mandate of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown to May 2005. The mandate of the Principle Deputy High Representative Donald Hays was also extended to the end of 2004. FTV – Ashdown commented in a telephone interview with FTV: ‘The International Community asked me to stay in BiH and after consulting my wife I decided to accept it, under the condition to continue with progressive policy and collaboration. I also asked US government to extend mandate for my deputy Hays and he will be around till end of next year. OHR will continue to work with local leaders.’

PIC stressed need to continue with reforms	CRHB, RTRS, FTV, Dnevni List pg 8 'Terzic: We must keep reform implementation dynamics' – Representatives of the BiH authorities, led by Chairman of the Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic, Treasury Minister Ljerka Maric, and Entity Prime Ministers Ahmet Hadzipasic and Dragan Mikerevic, attended the PIC meeting. BH representatives were also urged to complete necessary reforms, including Public Broadcasting System, until June 2004. While PIC representatives commended reforms and its initiatives on going, they also stressed that the new ones must be commenced. High Representative reported the changes referring to the 16 conditions that EC has laid down following the positive answer to the BiH Feasibility Study will be completed in the next year. PIC identified June 30 of the next year to be a deadline for all reforms, and BiH authorities we warned that it they faily to meet that deadline an opportunity to move ahead would be lost as well.
[Terzic presented plan for public administration reforms]	BHTV 1– Chair CoM Adnan Terzic presented the plan of changes in public administration and PIC set deadline June 2004 for preparation of strategy in this field. Terzic said: 'PIC believes that we can do what we are committed to, but they also insisted that we respect given deadlines.' At the second day of PIC meeting in Brussels on Thursday, BiH delegation also presented the achievements in the defence, taxation and customs, and the state information and protection agency.

[Ashdown's message to BH authorities and citizens']	Paddy Ashdown also conveyed two messages for politicians and for citizens of BiH. He instructed politicians to be much quicker in carrying out reforms, and citizens to be patient before results of reforms become visible. Ashdown said: 'We need to improve efficiency of governments, work on appointment of Defence Minister and establishment of the Defence Ministry, complete reform of intelligence system and PBS… I want to let know citizens that I am aware of their frustration with lack of jobs and economic agony, but we need to be patient to give time to reforms… Mostar must have single City administration where nobody would dominate over others.' PIC countries promised to assist BiH in reforms process. Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 2 'Paddy Ashdown stays in BiH until May 2005' –Secretary-General of the Standing Committee on Military Matters Enes Becirbasic briefed the Steering Board on the BiH authorities' strategy for implementing Defence reform. Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Brussels speaks complementing of BiH' – Terzic stated for a daily: 'In Brussels, BiH is spoken about mostly in affirmative sense, and on improvements made in reforms. Members of PIC also indicated where they expected to have some problems. However, in total, the story on BiH today in Brussels cannot be even recognized in comparison to the period behind us… I believe that PIC understood the essence of our efforts and I expect that they will support our activities, we are aware that we will succeed only by recruiting everybody in BiH to implement ceratin measures and to get closer to European integrations.'

SD on PIC meeting	Slobodna Dalmacija pg 21 'Ashdown and authorities praise their own selves' by Emir Felic – SD carries that, while Paddy Ashdown and BiH officials tried to present to various international institutions the "gloomy" image of BiH reality as a reform mid-term direction that leads to self-sustainability, various categories of population protested throughout BiH which was their expression of how they see the progress. The author says that, contrary to optimistic PRs that were sent from those international meetings, businessmen in BiH are not stimulated, there is corruption, customs fees are high…'After numerous trips in Europe, the HR and BiH officials will return to BiH and see the right picture – but only if they have the courage to face it. Disappointed and deceived defenders, pensioners, farmers, teachers, returnees…. are waiting for them', the author concludes.

Update on Mostar issues	Dnevni List pg 19 ‘Referendum on organization of municipality on January 10’ by Vera Soldo – The Municipal Council of Mostar’s Municipality Southeast took a unanimous decision on amendment to the Decision on organization of referendum in the said Municipality. Namely, citizens of the Municipality Southeast will be on January 10, 2004, responding to the referendum question: ‘Are you in favour of the City municipality Mostar-Southeast maintaining the current status of a unit of local self-government, organized as a municipality?’. Vecernji List pg 2 ‘Coalition for division of Mostar’ by Zoran Kresic – The author claims it is only in Mostar that SDA and SDP are in a “tacit” coalition in order to diminish the fears of Bosniaks of the “invasion from the west” and that the SDP never asked for the same rights of the Croats in Konjic, Jablanica, Sarajevo and elsewhere. Dnevni List pg 2 ‘Konjic versus Mostar town’ by Miso Relota – Claiming that the SDA is advocating changes to the Dayton Accord only when it suits it, the author hopes that Paddy Ashdown will not give up his 8 principles so Mostar and its citizens is not a test-ground for anyone’s political mutilations.

DL on Mostar Commission	Dnevni List pg 9 ‘What’s Ashdown next step?’ by V. K. – The daily reckons that the public judged the report on achievements of the Mostar Commission as presented by its Chairman, Norbert Winterstein, as another failure, albeit when compared to the first Commission things did start moving from the dead stop. The daily goes on to say that the domestic politicians gathered in the Commission simply could not handle the issues of status and organizational set up of Mostar, whilst for the ‘foreigners’ see even the every day routine, such as freedom of movement and restoration of friendship and trust among the Mostarians, as a progress. DL also notes that although the original date for the work of the Commission has not expired yet (December 15), it is hard to expect that the Winterstein’s report to the High Representative will be different to the one he (Winterstein) presented to the journalists on Wednesday. In this context, DL carries the spokesperson of the OHR South, Avis Benes, who did not want to talk on behalf of the Mostar Commission. ‘We do not want to speculate how and if at all the High Representative would use his powers. We do not speculate about his future steps’, says Benes.

VL interview with Paravac	Vecernji List front, pg 5 ‘My effort to keep RS is not to detriment of BiH’ by Jozo Pavkovic – Speaking of the BiH Presidency work in his interview, Borislav Paravac, Serb member of the Presidency, says that, contrary to the public impression, there is consensus on essential issues in this body. Asked to what limit RS authorities will allow dismantling of that entity, Paravac says: “I think we have done with the RS “dismantling” with the changes to the Constitution pertaining to the constituency of peoples and Annex 7 implementation. One should know that, when the RS came into DPA, it had all characteristics of a state. Now conditions for entering the EU have been set before BiH and this has its price, we all must sacrifice something for that”. As for Vlasic meeting, Paravac says it will be Ivanic, Cavic and Kalinic who will attend and it is expected that a message of mutual tolerance and going for positive processes instead of political skirmishes will be sent. Paravac adds the High Representative should stay in BiH until the country becomes self-sustainable.

Slobodna Bosna: Reis Ceric's political ambitions	Slobodna Bosna pgs. 22-25 'If he does not get another term in office of the head of BiH Islamic Community Mustafa Ceric will surely activate politically within SDA' By Asim Metiljevic – "Immediately after death of Alija Izetbegovic, the Head of the BiH Islamic Community, Mustafa Ceric, was being mentioned as one of the most serious candidates to become future leader of Bosniaks," wrote Metiljevic. He concludes that Ceric has serious political ambitions in the future. The magazine interviewed some of the prominent Bosniak intellectuals asking them what do they think about possible Ceric's political engagement. Marko Orsolic, the director of the international multi-religious center 'Religious heads do not separate religion from the politics', said such Ceric's move would produce no negative consequences since he should have to resign the religious post first. Sacir Filandra, the president of the Bosniak Preporod cultural-educational society, expressed hope that, as a wise man, Mustafa Ceric was realizing such the move would be disastrous both for him and the Bosniaks. Academic Muhamed Filipovic claims that Bosniaks do not need the leader at all but that they need a functional, democratic state. Srdjan Dizdarevic, the president of the BiH Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, said Ceric's possible more transparent political activation would mean nothing since he had anyway acted politically so far.

Security issues

SFOR searches for terrorist suspects near Zenica	CRHB, BHTV 1, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'US troops looked for material in connection to Al-Qa'idah in Serici settlement', Dnevni List front, pg 3 'SFOR in search for Al-Qa'ida in Zenica', Slobodna Dalmacija back pg 'SFOR looking for foreign nationals?'– On Thursday evening, SFOR members blockaded the village of Serici, situated about 30 km away from Zenica, for about four hours. According to the first reports from eyewitnesses and local community members, the village has been under siege, with a few SFOR helicopters taking part in the operation and civilians being prohibited from entering the area. Sixty SFOR troops of the US contingent searched buildings for armaments and other materials that could be linked to the terrorist network Al-Qa'idah. The houses in question are owned by persons who had or have connections with the mojahedin SFOR Eagle base has notified the public that this operation was an 'unannounced Harvest' to prevent the transit of illegal armaments, carried out in cooperation with the local authorities within the general framework of the peace agreement. FTV – Troops confiscated two computers, and asked local people to recognize Arabs on the pictures. However, it was reported that villagers could not identify anybody. SFOR Multi-North Division press release reads: 'Serici settlement was chosen for this unannounced, targeted, Harvest operation due to positive cooperation with SFOR to date… Since the beginning of the December, the brigade has implemented 'doors-to-doors' campaign in order to encourage the citizens to get rid of unwanted arms and explosive devices.' Oslobodjenje cover splash, 4&5 'SFOR scared Seric's locals' – Daily was present at the scene, and talked to several citizens of the settlement asking them about the action carried out by SFOR. All interviewed confirmed that the population was upset with the search.

Defence issue	
Update on Defence Law in RS	RTRS, SRNA, Blic pg 13 'Serving of military service abolished' – RS Defence Minister Milovan Stankovic confirmed that the military service in RS has practically been abolished following the adoption of the RS Army and Defence Law. Stankovic clarified that the laws stipulate that after a transitional period of 12 months, military service in the RS will be abolished and an obligatory four months training would be introduced. The four months training will be the forerunner for filling the Serb Republic Army reserve corps. The training will be an obligation for all men from nineteen to twenty-seven years, and it can last shorter depending on the training plans. Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 4 'No conscription, but training' – Regarding conscription in RS, the ruling parties stress that the new Law on changes and addenda to the Laws on RS Army and Defence have actually marked abolishment of conscription, the opposition is of the view that only the term used for this has changed. Milorad Dodik, President of SNSD, announced that SNSD Caucus at RS National Assembly would initiate the proceedings as to whether decisions passed by Assembly regarding defence and army were in line with the entity's Constitution or not. Dusan Stojicic, SDS Spokesperson, reacted by saying that Constitution of RS was not violated with the adoption of these laws. He noted that the Laws clearly define professional and reserve formation of army, while anything else is a related to different interpretations. Igor Radojicic SNSD Secretary General, said that: 'Instead of being sent to serve military service, the recruits will be sent to go through training with same officers and under same regulations, because the provisions of the Law remained the same.' Nevenka Trifkovic, Head of PDP Caucus to RSNA, denied claims that term training replaced the term military service. The OHR Spokesperson, Vedran Persic, passed on positive assessment by OGR upon adoption of the Laws on Defence and Army at RSNA. he said that: 'OHR will not judge constitutionality of passed decisions – this issue should be addressed to Courts.'

Becirbasic: No PfP for BiH without arrest of Karadzic	Oslobodjenje pg 7 'With Karadzic at large, there is no Partnership for Peace' by Antonio Prlenda – In an interview to Oslobodjenje, the Secretary-General of the Standing Committee on Military Matters Enes Becirbasic stressed that admission to Partnership fro Peace is not possible without apprehension of Radovan Karadzic, as some PfP member states would certainly not agree with inviting BiH to do so at the Istanbul summit in June 2004. One it comes to next steps in the defence reform, Becirbasic says that he agreed with Paddy Ashdown to start from easier things, as such appointment of Defence Minister and two Deputies. Becirbasic also expressed his disagreement with the proposal from RS on abolishment of the conscription.
DL: PIC on Intelligence Reforms	Dnevni list pg 3 'BiH needs modern security service due to global terrorism' – At its session, the PIC noted somewhat slower approach of the BiH Council of Ministers to the law on Intelligence-Security Agency which is a matter of particular concern. "Modern and professional intelligence services is needed in BiH bearing in mind global threat of terrorism and BiH aspirations to join NATO and the EU", it was stated. PIC also supported HR's announcement of deadlines related to Intelligence-Security Service, as well as idea to form an ad hoc working group to assist Kalman Kocsis in reform of intelligence.
On discharges from FBiH Army	Dnevni List front, pg 10 'There is no plan for taking care of discharged soldiers', Dnevni Avaz pg 9 'Defence Ministry and Government deal with the issue of taking care of soldiers', Oslobodjenje pg 6 'Building modern military' – The Commander of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Army, General Atif Dudakovic, confirms the FBiH Army does not have the plan how to take care of discharged troops once the new BiH Law on Defence has been implemented. In that context, Gen. Dudakovic says there is a plan what the taking care should look like noting that the ultimate decision rests with the politicians. Moreover, Gen. Dudakovic notes if the future structure of the FBiH Army were to have 8.000 members, there would be a surplus of 4.932 persons.

Economic and social issues	
Doko: Regional agreements on free trade will not be abolished	FTV, CRHB, Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Without a fear of price increase', Vecernji List front, pg 2 'Free trade – export tripled', Dnevni List pg 5 'It is not free trade agreements that damage domestic production, it is non-competitiveness', Jutarnji List pg 2 'Tax free import to BiH as January 1' – The BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Dragan Doko, stated that the unilateral breaking or changing of the signed agreements on free trade with Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro would be inappropriate and unfounded. Addressing reporters at a news conference in Sarajevo on Thursday, he said that a solution to the problem did not lie in the breaking of the agreement but in the increase of subsidies, which fell within the province of entity agriculture ministries. Djoko pointed out that the establishment of a single free-trade market was an already agreed-upon regional policy of countries of South-East Europe and an important requirement for European integration and membership in the EU. Criticism of these free trade agreements is that it would destroy the local production, as it would secure low-priced products imported from neighbouring countries. CRHB – Representatives of chambers of commerce from BiH, Serbia-Montenegro, and Croatia met in Mostar on Thursday to discuss Free Trade Agreements that comes into effect on 1 January 2004. Participants called on governments and parliaments of the three countries to pass coordinated laws that would guarantee the import and export of high-quality food with the goal of preventing possible infection and contagion. Furthermore, they stressed the need for the establishment of special border crossings for the transport of goods or products of animal origin, food, oil and medicines. Dnevni Avaz pg 12 'BiH will not annul the contracts' – Minister Doko also announced that, if other two sides agree, trade exchange with Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro will maintain 40% of customs taxes from BiH side. In accordance with the Free Trade Agreement, as of 1 January 2004 non-customs regime is to be established with these two countries.

[Farmers will block 2 border crossings on Saturday]	Dnevni Avaz pg 12 'Tomorrow, blockade of border crossings in Kamensko and Bosanska Gradiska' – President of the Farmers Association in BiH Ranko Bakic said they demand postponement of the agreements for six months, and introduction of the ban of importing food and agriculture products that are also produced in BiH. He also announced that on Saturday at 10am border crossings in Bosanska Gradiska and Kamensko will be blocked, warning that his association can recruit 200.000 people and block all traffic roads and border crossings in BiH.
OHR: Law on ITA must be harmonized	Dnevni Avaz pg 8 '15 million Euros of EU assistance depends on Law adoption', Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'Harmonisation of Law on Taxation leads to EURO 15 million assistance' – OHR welcomed adoption of the Law on Indirect Taxation in the BiH House of Peoples and expects the Law to be harmonised in the relevant form. 'If BiH wishes to pass this important test from the Feasibility Study, the Law must be harmonised in a form acceptable for the European Commission. The process of harmonisation should be finalised during next week so that the Law could be adopted by the end of the year', said the OHR spokesperson, Vedran Persic. He stressed that receiving of 15 million Euros of EU support depends on adoption of the Law in a form that is in line with European standards. The Law on Indirect Taxation was adopted in both Houses of BiH Parliament, but in different texts. Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'SNSD supports that District is centre for indirect taxation' – Nikola Spiric, senior official of SNSD and Chairperson of the BiH House of Representatives, last night stated that SNSD has not given up on its request that the seat of Regional Indirect Taxation Administration is in Brcko.

Hays on Restitution Law	Vecernji List pg 3 ‘Return of nationalized property is not obligation’, Dnevni list pg 10 ‘Claims for nationalized property to be resolved by Law’, Oslobodjenje pg 4 ‘Undeniable right to buy out apartment’, FENA – Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays wrote a letter to the Association of the Citizens for the Protection of Nationalized Property ‘Dom’, and stressed that BH authorities have obliged themselves to adopt the Restitution Law which would solve the issue of claims for nationalized property. However, he stressed that the Council of Europe belief is that neither BiH nor its entities have a legal obligation to return property nationalized before November 1995. Hays also outlined that the possibility for having an option to buy out the apartments was the basic right guaranteed for with Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement.
OHR supports FBiH Law on Abandoned Apartments	Dnevni list pg 7 ‘OHR supported Government’s proposal on abandoned apartments’, Oslobodjenje pg 4 ‘Draft Law established’, Dnevni Avaz pg 10 ‘OHR support the Government’s proposal’ – FBiH Government prepared the text of the Law on Cessation of Application of Law on Abandoned Apartments and it more or less got the OHR’s support. “As the same text is to be prepared in the RS, there will be a meeting next week with the competent RS officials and the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and DPs”, FBiH Minister of Physical Planning and Environment, Ramiz Mehmedagic, is quoted as saying.

Update on Vc corridor	Oslobodjenje pg 6 'Croatian office is acceptable for BiH', Onasa, HINA – Croatian ministers of public works and reconstruction Radimir Cacic stated that the BiH Council of Ministers, according to the official announcements, could accept Croatian letter of the intention to participate in building Vc corridor. 'Croatian offer is appropriate, acceptable and useful for all in BiH' – stated Cacic adding that BH representatives expressed their interests to sign some contractual obligations already next week. Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'Croatia did not submit the offer for building Vc corridor' – Commenting Cacic's statement, Deputy BiH Transport and Communications Minister Haris Basic explains that BiH Council of Ministers already sent an answer to Croatia government in regard to their intention letter: 'There is no offer in the letter of intention for building Vc corridor, but it simply contains offer for financing project documentation in value of 7 to 9 million US dollars.' Basic stressed that CoM made it clear to Croatian government that it was ready to continue with negotiations.
Terzic on GSM license, Indirect Taxation Administration headquarters	Ljiljan pgs. 18-22 'We will determine a price of license for all GSM operators' – An interview with Adnan Terzic, the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers. 'We currently have two valid and one GSM operator with a provisional license. And we should have three licenses, the three GSM operators. The (one) valid license (for all operators) foresees their operations in the entire BiH territory, which means that that each operator is allowed to place its base station and offer its services in every part of the country. Then we will determine the price and divide the amount in three parts and each operator will have to pay for one third of the license. Depending on the privatization (share of the private capital in the company), each operator will be paying certain amount of funds to the state on a special account,' said Terzic. Asked how the issue of location of the Indirect Taxation Administration's headquarters would be resolved, Terzic said that until the RS Government provides adequate building, the Administration seat would be in Sarajevo.

Oslobodjenje: FBiH incomes increased	Oslobodjenje pgs 4&5 'Public revenues in Federation higher than last year' – All public revenues in FBIH in the first 10 months of this year have increased in a total comparing to the same period in last year. This has been concluded at the meeting between the Finance Ministry Dragan Vrankic and Heads of FBIH Taxation and Customs Administrations, Midhat Arifovic and Zelimir Rebac respectively, who analysed the information on the income in entities and canton. 'Minister Vrankic, tax and customs officials, therefore, can relax. The information from the central FBiH account, which indicate the decrease of the income coming from taxes on high-tariff goods… were not as dramatic as Oslobodjenje announced' – said Vrankic's Advisor Hajrudin Hadzimesanovic.
DA: Eronet sells mobile cards without CRA's permission	Dnevni Avaz cover, pg 8 'Eronet without permission placed 100.000 mobile cards in sale' – DA claims that Eronet has started selling about 100.000 new mobile cards starting with a number '8', without previously seeking permission from the Communications Regulatory Agency [CRA]. For that reason, Director of CRA Kemal Huseinovic instructed BH Telecom and Telekom Srpske to block roaming services with the Eronet users' numbers starting with eight. Spokeswoman for CRA Amela Odobasic explains that Eronet did apply for usage of 100.000 number starting with 8, however the Agency answered that only licenced mobile operators could be awarded with the block numbers, while Eronet still operates without a licence.
EBRD urges investments into Balkans	Glas Srpske pg 2 'Rapidly to the Balkans' – At the international investment summit for Balkans in Brussels, Jean Lui Sichs, Director of EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) has called on investors to immediately start investing in the Balkans state. He said that investors should not wait, because economic development of the region of Balkans would lead to political stability in the region.

Slobodna Bosna on economic reforms in BiH	Slobodna Bosna pgs. 16-17 'According to the international community's projections BiH should have become self-sustainable state until 2003' By Asim Metiljevic – "The main projection of the international community, which is that BiH has developed a self-sustained economy by 2003, has not been realized and already on the basis of this general thesis one can conclude that the post-war economic reforms in BiH were with a few exceptions failed and often wrong. The large portion of guiltiness bears also the administration of the international community in BiH, which was often essentially influencing the creation of the reforms but the burden of failures was regularly put on the back of the local government," Metiljevic wrote.

War crimes	
Blaskic's appeal process	RTRS, CRHB, Dnevni Avaz pg 10 'Witnesses' testimonies finished' – Defence lawyers for the former HVO general Tihomir Blaskic, sentenced to 45 years of prison for war crimes committed against Bosniaks, asked for new trial before the ICTY Court's Council. Appeal process in the case is close to end. He was convicted for the war crimes during the war in BiH. The procedure will continue next week, when the defence and prosecution will give closing arguments and than Blaskic himself will appeal to the five-member Court Council.

Lawsuit against Holland soon	Oslobodjenje cover, pg 7 ‘Srebrenica women sue Dutch government’ – The international team of lawyers is prepared to file a lawsuit against Holland, in order to establish the responsibility for events that took place in Srebrenica in 1995. A team member, lawyer from Mostar Samir Guzina confirmed that the lawsuit will be before the Dutch courts in 2004: ‘We planned to travel to Holland at the beginning of February to start with the process. However, due to complexity of the case, the date has not been set as yet.’ Guzina also explained that about a year ago the process has been started against the United Nations as well, who declared Srebrenica safe heaven during the war in BiH. ‘Due to closeness of the case, we don’t know much about it. The process is lead inside the UN and nobody informs us what it’s happening. Srebrenica women asked for compensation from UN, and we’ll see whether they will get it.’ – confirmed Guzina.

Oslobodjenje feature on verdicts delivered by ICTY	Oslobodjenje pg 5 'Judges without criteria' – Referring to verdicts delivered lately in the trials before ICTY, Oslobodjenje quotes Tribunal's representative in BiH, Refik Hodzic as saying: 'No verdict by the Hague Tribunal can be compared to another, as judges bring their decisions based on the evidences.' Estimating that the public was not satisfied with the verdict [especially in the cases of Momir Nikolic, imprisoned for 27 years for Srebrenica crimes; Stanislav Galic who received 20 years for Sarajevo siege; and Dragan Obrenovic, sentenced to 17 years for crimes in Srebrenica] and added that it looks like all those mentioned will soon be released taking into the account they already spent in ICTY detention centre [which counts in the duration of the sentence]. Oslobodjenje concludes: 'The reason for such short verdicts is also in the fact that the Tribunal must respect the Laws in effect in BiH. According to them, a person accused of genocide cannot be imprisoned for more than 15 years, while in cases where verdict could be death penalty it has to be transformed into 20 years of prison. It is clear that pleading guilty and expressing regret… will become really profitable act for those who committed war crimes.'

Legal issues

Avaz: HJPC discriminating Bosniaks	Dnevni Avaz cover splash, pg 4 'Bosniaks are oppressed in both police and judiciary' – In a cover page story, DA writes that the Council of Bosniak Intellectuals Congress will hold a session on 16 December in order to discuss 'discrimination towards Bosniak present in judiciary. Daily adds that the decisions made High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council head by Jan Erik Oja are not being checked, nor the information, based on which they appointed/removed the judge, can be viewed. Avaz further writes that out of 17 members of HPJC, only 5 are Bosniaks, while in RS there is no a single Bosniak member. 'There, Bosniaks are ethnically cleansed up in a worse manner than chetniks succeeded biologically with pre-war population in RS.' Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'The most numerous population not present in the Management Board of BiH Police', pg 4 'Extraordinary session of Council of Bosniak Intellectuals Congress on inequality in police and judiciary', pg 4 'Forum of BiH Parliamentarians: Judge Milosavljevic recommended to consider filing resignation', pg 4 'The Association of FBiH Veterans: Focic: We demand from OHR to get included', pg 5 'Judiciary is only part of Serb-Croat lobby for pursuing Bosniaks' by Fatmir Alispahic – Avaz published a series of articles attacking and stressing the negative position of Bosniaks in judiciary, but also senior management of BH police forces.