

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 12/9/2002

Print Media Headlines

Blic: Mico Micic – All Jahorina refugees will be taken care of; Mikerevic -Al Qaida is present in BiH; Silajdzic – Kostunica's statement is one step to declaration of war; Marsicanin -Uniting with the RS is a historical interest;

Glas Srpski: RS Army – those without diplomas shall be fired; Pensions earned in Slovenia to be paid

Nezavisne Novine: The anniversary of terrorist attacks against US marked: A tragedy that united the world; Commemoration in US Embassy in BiH: Hope in justice and tolerance is shared by all; RS Government: Investigation on export of military equipment to Iraq continued

Oslobodjenje: September 11 commemorative ceremonies; Bodies of 93 Bosniaks discovered in Sremska Mitrovica

Dnevni Avaz: US and BiH were victims of terrorism

Dnevni List: Orao denies allegations of sale of weapons

Vecernji List: Sept. 11 commemoration

Kostunica's statement and reactions

* * * FRY President **Vojislav Kostunica** said today in New York that there is no need for strong reactions to his statement about the RS *"being a part of the family which is only temporarily separated from Yugoslavia."* *"Nothing needs to be explained about our position towards the RS. My view is very well known and has not changed. It was clearly stated and later confirmed. Process of disintegration of former Yugoslavia lasted for ten years and every attempt to redraw borders or national structure of population would be an invitation to extend the Balkan tragedy. Ethnic questions and the so-called national question on the Balkans have always been interconnected, so the solution applied in one case has to be applicable to all other similar cases. In other words, if*

the base principles of the Dayton Peace Agreement were developed on the principle of multinational, multiethnic and multiconfessional community, it is impossible to accept results of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and establish a monethnic state...Some still believe that nation-states represent the only possible solution for this nationally, ethnically and religiously diverse region, and that the war must be continued until ethnic cleansing is achieved," Kostunica concluded in his speech in New York. (FENA)

The **Democratic Party of Serbia** (DSS) said today that "malicious people in Belgrade and Sarajevo want to represent the party's efforts to strengthen ties between Serbs on both sides of the Drina River, which is in accordance with the Dayton accord, as 'statements which threaten to destabilize BiH' or 'even as calls to war', which is far from being true." "We have been advocating, in an unambiguous manner, respect for the Dayton accord and UN Security Council Resolution 1244 through its work so far and through its program objectives. These documents stipulate the inviolability and unchangeable nature of borders in the Balkans, those of Yugoslavia as well as those of other states created in the process of the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia...Wars are behind us and the peace which is ahead will contribute to a further stabilization of relations in the region and of the beginning of the process of integration. It will also help decrease the importance of interstate borders, which will strengthen ties between Yugoslavia and BiH, as well as between peoples living in these states," the DSS stated. (FoNet Agency)

The chairman of the **DSS election HQ** and the DSS deputy chairman, **Dragan Marsicanin**, said on Wednesday that the statement made by the FRY President, Vojislav Kostunica, about the RS being "temporarily separated" from its mother country was not controversial. Commenting on the reactions from BiH to Kostunica's statement, Marsicanin said that "it may be controversial for them, but it cannot be controversial in Serbia as an objective, as an idea, as something worth

striving for". "Just as East Germany and West Germany were pursuing unification, that is also a long-term and historical interest of the Serb people," Marsicanin told a news conference.

According to him, *"it is a totally different matter" whether unification with the RS will ever be realized, and "it depends on the circumstances, political atmosphere and balance of forces"...* (**BHTV 1, SENSE** news agency, **FRY Nacional 3, Blic 3**)

The **SDP** on Wednesday strongly condemned Kostunica's statement. Party's Vice President **Sead Avdic** said that this statement is confirming the continuity of Belgrade's policy towards BiH, which is trying to destabilize the destroy BiH. The SDP called on the BiH delegation in the Council of Europe, if such rhetoric continues, to vote against Yugoslavia's admission to the CoE at a session later in the year. *"Kostunica should not play with the patience of our country, since such statements are not in the spirit of good-neighborly relations,"* the SDP said in a statement. (**ONASA, Oslobođenje p. 7, Dnevni Avaz p. 8**)

In an editorial in **Oslobođenje**, Gojko Beric criticizes **Ashdown** for trying to find excuses for Kostunica's controversial statement by speculating that this could have been a slip or a misquote. *"This is just like having a thief with a history who breaks into a store immediately after he gets out of prison and we say 'he must have slipped.' Vojislav Kostunica has been and still is a great sympathizer of the Greater Serbia movement"*

9/11 Commemoration Ceremonies/Terrorism

A commemoration ceremony on the occasion of September 11th was held at the US embassy in Sarajevo. *"Many nations and many families have lived in the shadow of terrorism during years of mindless and merciless killing. The September 11 was not the beginning of global terrorism, but it was the beginning of the world's concerted response to it,"* the US Ambassador to BiH,

Clifford Bond, who together with senior domestic and international officials attended the commemoration ceremony. *"Our condolences for the victims, all victims in the world, victims of terrorism and genocide, are not enough. We must fight harder for every man and we are all responsible for justice in the world,"* **Beriz Belkic**, the chairman of the BiH Presidency, said in his address. (first item in **BHTV 1, FTV, RTRS, Federation Radio, BiH Radio 1**, front page in **Oslobodjenje, Dnevni Avaz, Jutarnje Novine, Nezavisne Novine, Vecernji List**)

[Reporter] Chairman Belkic said that the entire world has the right to fight terrorism, but the principles of democracy must not be brought into question.

Also in Sarajevo, associations of Srebrenica women together with Women in Black from Belgrade organized a homage to all victims the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington as well as all those killed in the Srebrenica massacre. (reported prominently in all Sarajevo media)

* * * SFOR confirmed that is forces arrested and later released **Dzevad Aletic**, a Bosnian student of Islamic Theology at the University in Cairo, who was spending his summer holidays with his family in Dobrinja neighborhood in Sarajevo. According to **Dnevni Avaz** (p.11), Aletic was arrested by some 20 armed members of SFOR wearing masques who stormed into his apartment in the middle of the night and seized all his personal belongings. In a statement for the daily, SFOR spokesman Yves Vannier (sp!) said that this action was in line with SFOR mandate. Aletic was released early Thursday due to lack of evidence. *"We arrested him during the night of Tuesday/Wednesday 10 and 11 September in his father's apartment. We interrogated him for 20 hours. He was very coopertative and was later released"*, Vanier said.

War Crimes

Federation Commission for Missing Persons will on Monday (September 16) overlook the exhumation of remains of some 93

Bosniaks, which were found in Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia and which are believed to be killed during the Serb army attacks on Srebrenica, Zepa and Bijeljina. *"Corpses were probably thrown in the Drina river, where they were floating up until mouth of the Sava river and got trapped somewhere alongside Sremska Mitrovica, where they were found by Yugoslav authorities,"* the chairman of the Commission, **Amor Masovic**, told **Oslobodjenje** (front page).

RS Issues

Bijeljina based "**Orao**" Company denied all allegations related to its export of weapons to Iraq and announced pressing charges against all those who were giving statements related to the issue as well as against the media which publicized such information without previous verification (**Glas Srpski**, p.3). The release issued by the company and signed by the Director, **Milan Prica**, says that "Orao" Company, in its long tradition, never produced weapons and noted *that "turbo engines are not weapons."*

Glas Srpski (p.3) also reports that the RS President, **Mirko Sarovic**, and RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, will be invited to attend the session of the BiH Presidency on Saturday, September 14, which will discuss the report of the RS Government Commission related to the allegations against "Orao" Company. **Nezavisne Novine** (p.7) carries the statement of the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, who said that the investigation of the RS Defense Ministry Commission is not completed yet. Ivanic emphasized that the Commission only publicized its findings gathered in contacts with "Orao" Company. (**Vecernji List** p. 2, **Dnevni List** f.p.)

The **SDA** president and a member in the RS Constitutional Commission, **Sulejman Tihic**, initiated on Wednesday a veto on the proposed Law on RS Administration, arguing that its provisions will ensure further domination of Serbs in institutions of authority in this entity. **Oslobodjenje** (p. 2) reports that Tihic will ask for the abolishment of the RS Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations, as this *"portfolio is under jurisdiction of the state."*

Refugee Return/Reconstruction

Representatives of the entity governments, Council of Ministers and the Islamic Republic of Iran signed yesterday in Sarajevo a Protocol on the implementation of project of return to **Srebrenica** and the Agreement on joint financing. The project envisages the construction of homes for 130 Bosniak and Serb returnees to Srebrenica, Bratunac, Sarajevo and Tuzla cantons. (**Oslobodjenje** p. 3, one of the first items in the **Federation Radio, FTV, RTRS** prime time news)

"We will no longer wait for the International Community to build the Memorial Center in Potocari. We will bury our dead on our own. This is the last time that we are asking the OHR and other international institutions and organizations to stop obstructing the construction...", warned associations of Srebrenica survivors during yesterday's protest in Tuzla. (**Oslobodjenje** p. 5, **Dnevni Avaz** p. 2)

Dnevni Avaz p.11 and **FTV Pogledi** carried the OHR press release (Foundation Srebrenica –Potocari expressing its gratitude to the government of the US and Netherlands)

In a short interview with **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 5), SDHR **Gerhard Enver Schroembgens** said that he is not very satisfied with the rate of refugee return and the low rate of implementation of property laws. *"Over 100,000 family are still waiting for their property to be returned."*

Vecernji List (page 3, by Zdenko Jurilj) reports that out of 40 million Euro that the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development** (EBRD) allocated to the BiH authorities for the reconstruction of roads and construction of new ones, the areas in which Croats live have not received any. The daily notes that Croat representatives in the state and entity bodies and Croat institutions are partly responsible for this situation because they did not support construction of concrete programs and studies for the construction of road network from Herzegovina to the parts of Bosnia.

Fena reports that a group of Bosniaks last night prevented

Chairman of the Council of Minister **Dragan Mikerevic** from visiting Ustikolina near Foca/Srbinje. Mikerevic wanted to visit Ustikolina to talk to a group of Serb returnees about the problems they have been encountering.

As reported by RS media, Mikerevic said that he had gone to Ustikolina with a group of Serbs who expressed a desire to return to their homes there. *"We were confronted by a group of Bosniaks shouting 'Allah Akhbar' and hurling abusive words at us in order to intimidate and prevent Serb refugees from returning,"* Mikerevic said. He said that he would *"discuss the incident with representatives of the international community to draw their attention to the intolerant behaviour of the Bosniaks in Ustikolina"*.

"For all these incidents we blame the Bosniak authorities in Sarajevo who continue to deceive the world about what they are really about while at the same time resorting to various ploys to obstruct the Serbs from returning to the Federation, and shoot poisonous arrows any time there is a pronouncement from Belgrade," Mikerevic said.

Federation Issues

Federation Minister of Urban Planning and Environment, **Ramiz Mehmedagic**, said yesterday that the Federation government is considering the possibility of annulling all contracts on purchase of military apartments concluded between 1991 and 1992. *"Such contracts were concluded between the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) and its military personnel only in BiH,"* said Mehmedagic, adding that this was a preplanned activity of the JNA which was preparing for aggression against BiH. He suggested that one of the possible solutions for this problem is to treat all such apartments as a joint property of the SFRJ, which could be distributed as a part of the succession agreement. According to Mehmedagic, the Federation government and the OHR are close to reaching an agreement on changing the Article 3a (article pertaining to privatization and return of military apartments) of the Law on Housing.

In a statement for **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 3), the representative of **Vakuf Administration** in Sarajevo, **Esad Hrvacic**, said that he is shocked with the statement of an SDP representative who announced that this party will propose a new draft of the Restitution Law to the Federation Parliament. *"This proposed law, which stipulate the sale of vakuf property will bring an end to the institution of vakuf which has existed for hundreds of years in BiH."*

Dnevni List (front and page 3), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 15) and **Vecernji List** (front and page 6) report that the Prime Minister of Herceg-Bosna Canton (Canton 10) **Ante Omazic**, Cantonal Minister of Finances **Jakov Ursa** and Minister of Education, Culture and Sports **Stipo Barac** resigned. They said they will never accept the appointment of **Rafael Pivic** on the position of Cantonal Police Commissioner. Earlier, at the session of the Cantonal Government on August 30, Pivic was rejected and **Andjelko Grgic** was appointed the Police Commissioner. UN Mission in BiH annulled this decision.

BiH State level developments

Dnevni List (page 5) reports that the Council of Ministers of BiH will not discuss the Draft Law on Citizenship at its upcoming session, although this was anticipated. According to media reports, OHR suggested that before the draft law goes into parliamentary procedure some regulations should be harmonised with the European standards, as some of them are contrary to the European Convention on Citizenship. **Dnevni List** and the **FTV** noted that the High Representative was particularly concerned with the Article 1, which pertains to regulative agencies for annulment of the citizenship.

Dnevni List (page 2) carries an editorial by its Editor-in-Chief Valentina Rupcic on the reform of the BiH judiciary and in that perspective a decision of the Independent Judiciary Commission (IJC) on merging of courts in BiH. Rupcic criticizes the criteria that IJC applies in the process (cites the example of merging of Siroki Brijeg court to Ljubuski

court, IJC said that Ljubuski has more attorneys' offices), criticizes the fact that the merging will result in higher expenses for common people if they need to go to court, says that nobody needs any merging when the judiciary is already in a state of chaos. *"We can change the courts, merge them, the attitude will not change. People need to be worked on, because the key problem is in us, not in the institutions with century long tradition"*, says Rupcic and adds that the time will tell whether the IJC's decision, which causes revolt by municipal authorities all over BiH and that could even cause social unrest, was a good one.

Editorial on Ashdown

Slobodna Dalmacija (p.15, with title "Lord rules in a lordly manner") carries an editorial by Dino Mikulandra who writes about first 100 days of Paddy Ashdown. *"British lord in hundred days became an almost adopted BiH citizen. He didn't disappoint anyone, he didn't irritate anyone either, but honestly, he didn't fill anybody with enthusiasm either. (...) And it started really – cool! After the terribly proud Austrian who devoted his mandate to personal crusade against nationalists of all colors (and most of all: Croats), ex British commando decided to take different tactic of conquering "*, the author writes. The editorial says that Ashdown was so thrilled with the trilateral meeting of presidents from Croatia, FRY and BiH that he announced it as a historic one, but everything that was "historic" was statement of FRY President **Vojislav Kostunica** who refused to apologize for atrocities that Serbs have done in war. The author says that after that gathering first Ashdown's move was the hammer hit on heads of Croats, i.e. removal of Nikola Grabovac, ex Federation Minister of Finances. *"British commando has shown a very developed feeling for liberal demagogy. Very calmly he goes in Siroki Brijeg and 'sells thick London fog' to Croats. He states that the best entrepreneurs are in Herzegovina. They are so good that he could not explain when investigation on 'Hercegovacka bank' would be finished and their accounts de-blocked. (...) Rating? The voice of common sense says – hardly two (on scale to five). And if you fully believe to OHR, then*

notice what Ashdown's deputy Donald Hays stated. He said that 'in the past 100 days the High Representative has kept promises that he gave to citizens of BiH. Hmmm, already?!', finishes the author.

Electronic Media Headlines

BHTV1

- Memorials in the USA and whole world a year from the terrorists' attacks on New York and Washington
- Two American bases in Afghanistan attacked a couple of hours before the homage ceremony.
- Women of Srebrenica and other women organizations organize an action for peace as homage ceremony to the 11 September events.
- Belgrade confirms that statement that RS is just temporarily separated from Srbija is indisputable

FTV

- Memorials took place all over the world a year from terrorists' attack on the USA.
- A Committee for Foreign Affairs with the European Parliament discussed the exemption of US citizens from jurisdiction of the ICC.
- The BiH Council of ministers will not discuss the amendments to the Law on citizenship on its session taking place on Thursday.

RTRS

- America and the world marked the anniversary of terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.
- The protocol on return into Srebrenica has been signed.
- The 57th United Nations General Assembly opened by the acceptance of Switzerland