OHR BiH Media Round-up, 13/4/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
Floods in BiH	Floods in RS	Floods in Zenica Canton	Floods in Banja Luka
Floods in RS	Floods in BiH	Floods in Una Sana Canton	Floods in RS region
Syndicate vs FBiH Govt	Syndicate vs FBiH Govt	Sjekirica not in Spain	SFOR probes Pale action
Srebrenica Commission	FBiH Parliament budget	Syndicate vs FBiH Govt	

Oslobodjenje	Prosecutors starts with investigation into embezzlement of money for refugees; Veterans Law: Shehids, mujaheedins questionable, revision for partisans too; Vuksic case: Prosecution announced appeal to Supreme Court; Houses, roads and land flooded in entire BiH
Dnevni Avaz	Floods threat with disaster; Haris Silajdzic: Our ideas everybody supports today
Dnevni List	Mostar to be cultural capitol of BiH in next 79 days; Edhem Biber: Behaviour of Federation Government is impermissible
Vecernji List	Floods in BiH; Sarajevo under pressure: Freedom wanted for Algiers group
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines
Glas Srpske	After torrential rain that lasts for days – Up to floods; State of Emergency; Tuzla – No changes

Nezavisne Novine	Sava, Bosna, Vrbas, Sana, Una has flooded – State of emergency in more than few municipalities; How are political parties in BiH financed – Law costs millions; Nemanja Vasic, RS Roads Director – The beginning of highway construction doubtful; Srpsko Sarajevo – Arrested suspect of murders near Trnovo
Blic	Priest Starovlah regained consciousness, fight for his son’s life continues; Water destroys houses and arable land; Cedo Volas: The Law on Salaries might jeopardize social peace in RS

Floods

Update to floods in BiH	RHB, BHTV 1, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz cover splash, pgs 8,9&25 ‘Floods threat with disaster’, Oslobodjenje cover, pgs 4&5 ‘Houses, roads and land flooded in entire BiH’, Dnevni List front and page 12 ‘Floods caused by human factor’, Slobodna Dalmacija last page ‘People living next to the river in fear, Civil Protection on flood alert’, Vecernji List front page ‘Floods in BiH’ and pages 2 and 3 ‘Rivers flooded BiH’, Nezavisne novine cover, pgs 2&3, Blic front, pg 13 ‘Fear greater than water’, Vecernje Novosti front, pg 21 ‘Water takes and people are helpless’ – All media report that the rain falling during the last 3 days has caused floods all over BiH. Rivers of Neretva, Sana, Una, Vrbas, Bosna, Lasva and many other smaller rivers have broken their banks and hundreds families have been evacuated from their homes all over the country. Situation is very difficult in Donji Vakuf region, Jajce municipality, Bugojno and Gornji Vakuf. The level of Sava in the Posavina Canton is also on the rise. In Una Sana Canton 250 square meters and nine housing structures have been flooded in the centre of Buzim. Some 100 housing structures have been flooded in Sanski Most and another 30 in Kljuc. Large parts of agricultural land have been flooded in the area of Bosanska Krupa.Parts of Banjaluka, Srbac, Laktasi, Celinac, Jezero, Sipovo and Mrkonjic Grad flooded. Critical situation in parts of Prijedor. Water level of Una raising. State of natural disaster declared in Maglaj; Flood threats in Mostar; Flooded houses in Osjek, Sarajevo. Snow in Mrkonjic Grad, Sipovo and Knezevo/Skender Vakuf. <u>Note</u> that both print and electronic media broadcast/published a series of separate reports for each of the regions hit.

Economic and social issues

Syndicate signs petition for dismissal of FBiH Govt	RHB, FTV – The BiH Association of Independent Trade Unions has launched a petition, whose signing was commenced on Monday in Mostar, demanding dismissal of the Federation Government. The petition signing will last until April 29, when Syndicate announced it would hold "massive" protests taking place in Sarajevo. The Union said the initiative followed after the Government rejected to put a moratorium on the Law on changes and addenda to the Bankruptcy Law, recently adopted by the parliament, and which, as Syndicate claims, ignored Union's demands. President of the Association Edhem Biber said that this petition could be signed by workers, pensioners and young people with a goal to force the government to serve its citizens. He clams that this petition has great public support. BHTV 1 – The protests will start in Konjic on 15 April. Dnevni Avaz pg 11 'Petition signing for dismissal of FBiH Govt has started',, Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Thousands of signatures of support', pg 8 'Protests in Konjic on 15 April' Dnevni List, page 14 'We are requesting removal of FBiH Government' – reports that the Cantonal Board of BiH Association of Independent Unions in Canton 7 has started a petition aimed at removal of the FBiH Government. Vecernji List, page 4, 'Unions request removal of Federation Government' – reports about the same petition in the Tuzla Canton.

DL int with Edhem Biber	Dnevni List, front and page 7 ‘Behaviour of Federation Government is impermissible’, by Nermin Bise – Following the initiative of the BiH Association of Independent Unions to organize a petition aimed at removal of FBiH Government, DL carries an interview with the leader of the said Unions, Edhem Biber, who says that the irresponsible behaviour of the FBiH Government cannot be tolerated any more, because there are too many problems in areas of economy and social affairs. ‘There are more and more unemployed every day, life is getting tougher in BiH. Unfortunately, the authorities do not feel it, and they do not create an ambiance to stop the situation and create better living conditions. The culmination is the enactment of the changes and amendments to the Law on bankruptcy, the changes that decrease rights of workers in the bankruptcy process, and the FBiH Government did not come up with adequate measures, social package and other measures that would help the people in these hard times’, says Biber, noting that the petition started on Saturday and is going well.

Dzihanovic: Nothing will be achieved with these protests and demands to dismiss FBiH Govt	Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Dismissal of the Government would not solve the problems of workers' – FBiH Vice President Sahbaz Dzihanovic believes that nothing will be solved when it comes to BiH Association of Independent Trade Unions by calling upon dismissal of the FBIH Government and holding protests. He invites Syndicate to instead seek solutions directly with the Government. "You know, the Bankruptcy Law is nothing but a regulation of the economic situation and that has to take place in a manner that would make companies in FBiH healthier. Establishment of false image of social peace and solidarity will not bring BiH to Europe," comments Dzihanovic.

Update to FBiH Veterans Law	Dnevni Avaz pg 12 ‘Term shehid should not be used in veterans law’ – Zdravko Beslic, Western Herzegovina Cantonal Minister for Veterans’ Issues denies allegations made on Monday by FBiH Veterans Minister Ibrahim Nadarevic that the harmonization of the FBiH Veterans Law was completed. Beslic says that one of the unsolved issues is the use of term ‘shehid’, to which Croat side opposes “as it has nothing to do with defence-liberation war’’ while Bosniaks insist for the law to use this term twice. Also Beslic points to the issues regarding the revisions of the beneficiaries’ lists, media documents and issued papers. He adds that such job should be carried out by a single Croat-Bosniak Commission at FBiH level, and appointed by House of Peoples. “We are not against adoption of the Law, and than revision to follow, and have to go on for five years. [That is OK] just to have it done rightly… Nadarevic keeps insisting for revisions to be done at the level of Cantons, through military administrations, and to have a Commission at the level of Federation which would be a supervisor [of the process],” concludes Beslic. Oslobodjenje cover, pg 6 ‘Veterans Law: Shehids, mujaheedins questionable, revision for partisans too’ – also carries Beslic’s statements regarding disputable issues in the Law.

Spiric on pensions	Nezavisne novine pg 5 ‘Ivanic throws dust in the eyes of pensioners’ – Resolution that orders FBiH to obey Human Rights Chamber decision on pensions is not implemented due to agreement of BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic, and Bosniaks, said Nikola Spiric, Deputy Head of BiH House of Representatives. According HRC decision FBiH must pay pensions for 30.000 pensioners currently living in RS. At the moment FBiH pays it only for three of them. Those who were before HRC.

Sarajevo Stock Exchange marks second anniversary	Dnevni Avaz pg 15 'Average daily trade reached 600.000 KM' – The Sarajevo Stock Exchange [SASE] on Monday marked its second anniversary. On the occasion, director Almir Begic, stated that with exchange exceeding 180 million KM during the last two years and the current level of daily exchange at 600.000 KM the SASE has proved to be a respectable institution contributing to the development of the market of capital and BiH. SASE Supervising Board Chair Muris Cicic said that without the support of domestic or international governments SASE has managed during the last two years to transform from a stock company into a stabile institution reaching approximately 22 million in exchange during the first quarter of this year. Attending the ceremony of the second anniversary, the Principle Deputy High Representative Donald Hays said the international community hopes to see the principles of the corporate governance applied in BiH. In this sense Hays added that there should be a high level of discipline in all public companies, especially those who were a subject to OHR audit in last years, adding that the best way for this was transparent behavior of stock companies. BiH Central Bank Governor Kemal Kozaric said that SASE is an important partner of the Central Bank in the BiH payment system and that it has promoted regional integration with other securities markets since it was established.

DL: 'BiH is slowly but surely collapsing economically'	Dnevni List, 'BiH is slowly but surely collapsing economically', by Zvonimir Jukic – argues that facts presented by the FBiH Statistics Bureau clearly show that the BiH economy is decaying. The author notes that in month of February (of 2004), the export was lesser by 2,5% when compared to month of January, and that the import in January and February of 2004 was increased by 6,5% when compared to the same period in 2003. The author also notes that the unemployment rate is still extremely high at 44,2%.
Editorial on Terzic' statement about Croatian monopoly in BiH	Vecernji List page 2 'Terzic's warning' by D. Jazvic carries an editorial regarding the statement given by Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic who announced measures that should prevent further Croatian monopoly in BiH. The author says that the BiH Council of Ministers should be smart and strong enough to regulate a status of domestic producers and make possible certification of their products. The author added: 'Only then the BiH CoM will refute arguments of those people in Croatia who see BiH as an economic colony and secure to BiH producers a chance at the market, that does not tolerate state intervention in economy that the Terzic's Government showed recently.'

War crimes

Mikerevic demands report of Srebrenica Commission by Wednesday	RHB, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 ‘Mikerevic demands report on Srebrenica by tomorrow’, Oslobodjenje pg 4 ‘Mikerevic demands report by Wednesday’, Nezavisne novine pg 4 ‘Srebrenica Commission report tomorrow’ – RS Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic has requested from members of the Srebrenica Commission to forward the report on the events in and around Srebrenica in the period between July 10 and 19 1995 by Wednesday, after which it will be decided whether to request from OHR to prolong the deadline for designing the report. This has been confirmed to FENA news agency by the spokesperson of RS Prime Minister, Goran Radivojac, on Monday. He specified that after receiving report Mikerevic will decide whether the Commission requires additional time to complete its work in order to comply with all requests from the Human Rights Chamber’s Decision. “The report will show what the Commission has done so far, what problems it was facing and what form of assistance is necessary so that it could complete its work as efficiently as possible”, said Radivojac.

SFOR investigates its operation in Pale	RTSR – SFOR spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Julian Bower has confirmed that SFOR has been conducting the internal investigation into the events surrounding their recent operation with an aim to arrest a war crime suspect in Pale on 1 April. Orthodox priest Jeremija Starovlah and his son Aleksandar were seriously injured during the operation. Julian Bower said that all indications show that their injuries were caused by explosion and that SFOR medical personal examined them and found no evidences that they were beaten.
Bond: SPC doesn't provide refuge to war crimes suspects	Blic pg 12 'Serb Orthodox Church is not protecting Radovan Karadzic' – After he has met with the Serb Orthodox Church officials, American Ambassador to BiH Clifford Bond has stated that 'the church does not provide with a refuge to war crimes suspects, concretely not to Radovan Karadzic'. 'Perhaps some individuals do so, but the Serb Orthodox Church is not doing this and it is not providing Radovan Karadzic with a refuge', Ambassador Bond has stated.

Judiciary and legal affairs

Prosecutor to appeal against Vuksic's release	FTV, BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje pg 5 'Prosecution announced appeal to FBiH Supreme Court', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Prosecution will appeal against Vuksic's release' – Sarajevo Cantonal Prosecution on Monday received a verdict in the case against Ivan Vuksic [former Deputy Director of FOSS], who was recently found not guilty by Sarajevo Cantonal Court on the charges for taking hostages in Hercegovacka Bank take over in Mostar. Prosecutor's Office announced it will appeal against the decision to the FBiH Supreme Court.

State Prosecutor orders probe in FBIH Refugees Ministry embezzlements	Oslobodjenje cover splash, pg 7 ‘Prosecutor Mihajlovic commences with investigation into embezzlement of money for refugees’ by Azhar Kalamujic – State Prosecutor Bozo Mihajlovic on Monday announced to Oslobodjenje that in next 15 days he will instruct the beginig of the investigation of the work of FBiH Ministry for Refugees, DPs and Social Issues, for the period June 2001 – end of 2002. Mihajlovic also disclosed that the BiH prosecution obtained plenty of documents on the work of the Ministry and its relations with the companies providing with the construction material and other humanitarian goods. Prosecutor rejected to announce against whom charges would be issued. Oslobodjenje reminds that March last years OHR Special Auditor Dale Ellen Ralph published report which read that this Ministry overstepped budget for 14,3 million KM, which was headed by Deputy Minister Mijat Tuka, The audit report also blamed Ministry’s Secretary Fehima Bekan, Advisor Salko Beba. Following the report, HR Paddy Ashdown dismissed these officials. Daily also brings that FBiH Financial Police checked offices of 15 private companies working with FBIH Refugees Ministry, and forwarded findings to BiH Prosecutor.

Raguz, Sadovic on HJPC announced openings in judiciary	Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'As if the vacancy announcement for Chair has been published by mistake, as I don't intend to quit' – DA carries that the High Prosecutorial and Judicial Council published internal vacancy announcements for different positions in BiH Court, including the position of the Court's Chairman. This position has been already occupied by Martin Raguz as of 2002: "I have an impression that this vacancy has been published 'by mistake'… The competition for opening has probably been announced as someone has been aware of the fact that I am turning 70 soon, and the Law [on BiH HJPCs], judicial position can be performed by that age limit. However, the same law says that the same age limit is not valid for the Court's chairman." Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'New vacancy announcements by HJPC will enable complete ethnic balance in judiciary' – Tarik Sadovic, Chief of SDA club in the RS National Assembly expressed his satisfaction with the vacancies published by HJPC for the positions within BiH Court, BiH Prosecutor, FBiH Prosecution, prosecutors and judges in a number of cities in both entities and one vacant position for the Supreme Court judge. Sadovic comments this will enable complete ethnic balance in judiciary.

Defence and security issues

Sjekirica update	FTV – According to Court's source, the Spanish police arrested during the weekend three Moroccans suspected to have participated in the terrorist attack in Madrid. According to his mother, Sanel Sjekirica – a BiH citizen suspected of also being involved in carrying out Madrid terrorist attack – is not currently in Spain, said she refuses to give his position. According to her, Sanel will return to Madrid on Friday and will attend informative interrogation with the Spanish police. Sejda Sjekirica refused any involvement of her son in the terrorist attacks. Vecernji List, page 11 'Sjekirica contacted Spanish Police', Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Sanel Sjekirica promised he would turn to police by Friday?', Nezavisne novine page 6 'Sena Sjekirica: My son Sanel reported himself to Police' – Dailies carry that Sjekirica's mother claimed her son already contacted police. DA claims that despite his mothers statements that Sjekirica was just a friend of one of suspects, it learned that he would be interrogated as a suspect.

SRS President on Sjekirica case	Dnevni List page 3 'Terrorist groups exist in FBiH' – The President of the Serb Radical Party Milanko Mihajlica warned at the press conference held in Banja Luka on Monday that Islamic, radical, religious-fanatic and terrorist groups exist in the Federation of BiH and numerous information of the Spanish authorities about involvement of some citizens from the FBiH in the terrorist action in Madrid prove it. Mihajlica demanded from the BiH Security Ministry and FBiH Ministry of Interior to offer all necessary information and cooperate with the Spanish authorities in order to reveal the truth with regard to possible participation of Sanel Sjekirica in the terrorist action.

DA int with RS Defence Minister	Dnevni Avaz pg 5 'I don't think I will be the last entity's Defence Ministry' by E. Sarac – RS Defence Minister Milovan Stankovic states for DA that he doesn't accept the possibility of being the last entity's defence minister, adding he was "bit angry" at his "FBiH colleague [Miroslav] Nikolic who talks like that". "I really minded… Nikolic's statement… I don't think that the reforms go into that direction. The last year we work on defence reform and the report by the Commission reads that, if it implements everything, BiH can be a credible candidate for accession to [NATO's programme] Partnership for Peace. Now we are in stage of implementing that plan. Stankovic also confirmed that his Ministry forwarded the names of candidates for generals positions in BiH army to BiH Defence Minister Nikola Radovanovic. Commenting the decision of BiH Presidency to appoint only new generals, Stankovic says that such decision was more political, with an aim to avoid the situation alike with the appointment with BiH Defence Minister. "When there should be a decision between joint army and demilitarisation, I would always choose the latter. Joint army is one of the conditions for NATO membership, but my attitude is that we do not need to make another JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] as history learned us that is not possible," says Stankovic.

Bond on possible BiH, Croatia and SCG accession to NATO	Dnevni List page 9 'General Gotovina main obstacle that Croatia joins NATO' by De. L – US Ambassador to BiH Clifford Bond stated that current criteria for joining NATO will not be changed because of Croatia, BiH or Serbia and Montenegro and, among other things, they imply full cooperation with the ICTY. Bond added that the failure of Croatia to extradite General Anto Gotovina to the ICTY now emerges as an obstacle on the way that Croatia joins NATO. He concluded that in case that BiH does not get an invitation to join NATO at a Summit in Istanbul, it will be necessary to raise a discussion on in the internal reorganization of BiH in order to establish an efficient state that will be able to respond to the demands for the arrest of war criminals.
Roundtable on defence and security in Sarajevo	Oslobodjenje pg 3 'BiH Security – BiH in NATO membership' – The BiH Alliance for Security, together with the BiH Defence Ministry, representatives of NATO and international organizations, holds a roundtable titled "BiH Security – BiH in NATO Membership" in Sarajevo today. The objective of the roundtable is to promote fundamental values of Euro-Atlantic structures, especially in the context of BiH efforts to join the Partnership for Peace and NATO. Participants discuss a number of issues concerning ways to implement reforms faster and meet conditions for BiH accession to Euro-Atlantic structures, as well as strengthen security and stability in general.

Political issues

FBiH HoR today discusses the Law on direction election of heads of municipalities	RHB, Vecernji List, page 4 'Today about direct election of mayors', – FBiH House of Representatives today will discuss the draft FBiH Law on direct election of municipal heads, as initiated by Ismet Briga, the chair of SBiH club. Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'HDZ demands adoption of 6 amendments' – The chair of HDZ club before FBiH HoR, Ivan Madunic, his party has some objections to the Law: "We have sixc amendments and 15 questions [on the Law]. If they adopt our amendments a dn we are satisfied with the answer, then they will have our support. We certainly reject amendment that refers to the transferring the competencies of local authorities to FBiH level. That is against Dayton peace agreement and we believe that the High Representative Paddy Ashdown should react." SDA Club also participated drafting process of the law, confirms the club chair Semsudin Mehmedovic, and adds that SDA will support the law. Dnevni List, page 5 'Violation of European charter on local self-government' – Deputy Speaker in the FBiH House of Representatives, Josip Merdzo [HDZ], says that the position of the HDZ-CCD-HNZ Caucus is to support the direct election of mayors/heads of municipalities. However, Merdzo notes that the Constitutional-legal commission of the FBiH HoR decided to, parallel to amendments on direct election of mayors, offer another amendment which speaks about transfer of competence related to regulating the issue of local self-government on the FBiH exclusively. In that context, Merdzo claims such centralization is contrary to the European charter on local self-government, which clearly says that such issues should be regulated at the state level.

Hays on direct election of mayors/heads of municipalities	Dnevni List, page 13 'Giving opportunity of direct election to citizens', by Donald Hays – In a piece on direct election of mayors/heads of municipalities signed by the Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, he notes that the municipalities, albeit the lowest level of authority, are the ones that affect the lives of citizens the most, since they deal with garbage disposal, kindergartens, public lighting etc, which means that the opportunity that citizens elect their mayor/head of municipality directly is a great step forward in democratic process of BiH. PDHR Hays stresses that several public opinions showed that the citizenry are well in favour of direct elections (Centre of Civil Initiatives' poll shows 82%, Dnevni Avaz 72%, Dnevni List 76%), noting: 'Citizens clearly stated their opinion – it is down on Parliament to act resolutely and in timely fashion'.
Kunic on new party	Nezavisne novine pg 4 'Kunic establishes new party' – Petar Kunic, Representative in BiH House of Representatives announced that establishing of Party of democratic development (PDR) is in process. Political profile of the party will be similar to PDP. Kunic didn't want to name names of other members. He said that it would be persons with unblemished past.

SDA proposes a joint election list for Srebrenica	Dnevni Avaz pg 12 ‘Malkic waits for responds from parties’ – SDA municipal organization has proposed the establishment of a single, joint list for Srebrenica for the upcoming municipal elections. President of SDA Srebrenica Abdurahman Malkic told Fena news agency on Monday that this proposal was offered to the Party for BiH, SDP, SNSD, PDP, and DNS. He announced that SDA would organize talks with the mentioned parties to discuss the proposal during the week. SDA Srebrenica has registered nine candidates for the position of municipal official and 50 candidates for municipal councilors, who will undergo the election procedure within the party.

Oslobodjenje op-ed on role of religious communities in BiH political life	Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Self-proclaimed on behalf of people' op-ed by Zija Dizdarevic – In light of injuries of the priest Starovlah Jeremija and his son sustained in SFOR's action in Pale, author re-examines the role of religious communities in BiH political life. Stating that Serb Orthodox Church [SPC] was one of the pillars of the politics that 'lead to genocide and aggression', author notes that while injuring a priest and his son was unjustifiable, SPC uses the incident to send political "signal… distancing itself from BiH and those leading peace process." Author is further critical of Catholic Church, who "often takes over HDZ's role", and states that the Church stood behind HDZ even in projects such as establishment of the Croat self-rule. As for the Islamic community, author says it maintains its impact by insisting on a thesis of "special Bosniaks' status of majority people, [who suffered] genocide, and who is threatened even today." Claiming that its leader mufti Mustafa Ceric has an ambition to take over leadership place of late Alija Izetbegovic, author says Ceric is lately a manager of SDA politics. "BiH religious communities in BiH equalised nation and faith, religion and ideology, and based on that established their own positions as para-political organizations, self-proclaimed on behalf of people. Parties that three clerics stand behind are under constitutional and legal threat, and political and media monitoring, while cleric elite is almost untouchable," concludes the editorial.