

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 15/10/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: RS hardliners do not want BiH Court to be placed in Sarajevo Ramiz Salcin (former Viktor Bubanj) Military Barracks, claiming – For us, the place is a holocaust museum!; Ashdown: The time of national favorites has passed

Dnevni Avaz: Halilovic (following Tihic's initiative for coalition) – SDA's offer has been made premature; Ashdown to party leaders – Citizens need and efficient and not an administration suitable in political/partisan terms; Milorad Dodik – We do not want coalition with SDS

Dnevni List: The High Representative is inviting leaders of strongest parties at meeting: On public functions most competent, not party suitable

Vecernji List: Mess with compensation mandates: Who will rule in BiH?; Attack on Croatian language

Slobodna Dalmacija: BiH is preparing for reforms of tax system: Because of PDV, prices go higher 20 %

Glas Srpski: Rebalance of RS budget for this year – Pensions to be distributed from budgetary surplus; Banja Luka – Rain ruins crops; ICTY reduces number of charges against Karadzic

Nezavisne Novine: Protest at Banja Luka University – Students want lower tuition fees; Head of OSCE Mission to BiH, entity education ministers discuss education reform

Blic: SFOR sizes computers and diskettes from "Orao"; BiH citizens soon without visas to EU countries; The Tribunal changes indictment against Radovan Karadzic

Vecernje Novosti: Elections on 1st December?

FRY Nacional: DOS prepares a plan for solving the crisis: The Assembly elects a president

Dispute over Court of BiH residence; other BiH-related news

At its session scheduled for Tuesday in Sarajevo, the BiH Council of Ministers will allegedly, at the request of the Chairman Dragan Mikerevic and BiH Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic, reconsider its decision on the location of the Court of BiH residence. According to an *Oslobodjenje* (front page, p 6) source, "the Ramiz Salcin (former Viktor Bubanj) Military Barracks, where the Court should be placed according to the Council of Ministers' decision, for Serbs may be according to relevant opinions in the RS only a holocaust museum with the pieces of evidence proving the alleged torturing of the Sarajevo Serbs during the war." The source claims that Mikerevic and Mihajlovic were therefore exposed to fierce criticism in "their entity" (because they did not oppose the decision) and even declared traitors of the Serb people. (*Dnevni Avaz*, p 9, also reports on the issue)

"Proposal of the BiH Court residence was OHR's, and the European Commission is financier. In the material delivered to the Council of Ministers it is said that the residence of the Court will be in military barracks "Ramiz Salcin". Only few could guess that behind that name is former JNA military barracks "Viktor Bubanj", " **Svetozar Mihajlovic**, Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications in CoM, explained the dispute arisen after the CoM's decision about the BiH Court residence. "It has been agreed that the Council of Ministers will have a session in regard to that and I believe we will annul the decision that the BiH Court has its residence there," Mihajlovic said. (**Vecernje Novosti** p 4)

The Task Force comprising the representatives of the Entities' Education Ministries and the international community agreed and harmonized in Banja Luka on Monday a document on the **strategic goals of the education reform in BiH**. The document will be presented to the Peace Implementation Council at a session scheduled for November 21 in Brussels. The essence of the future reformed education system in the country will be its harmonization with the standards in the European Union, which will ensure that the diplomas being obtained by the students in BiH are recognized abroad. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 3)

Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 15, by Zlatko Tulic) carries story about introduction of PDV (i.e. **VAT**) in BiH. The author says that according to information from OHR, BiH is loosing about 500 million-KM on annual basis because of the current tax system. The author says that BiH, with Serbia and Montenegro, is among few states that did not install PDV, but since that is one of the conditions for European integration, BiH started to work on it. Current sales tax is a revenue on entity level, and the High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** requested instalment of PDV on state level. The article says that this will mean end to over 20,000 phantom companies in BiH, but also that prices of most of the goods will go higher approximately 20 %.

As of Monday, **Nijaz Spahic** will perform the duty of the BiH Border Service (SBS) Director for the next eight months, while **Slavisa Vukovic and Tomislav Mihalj** will be deputy directors. As it was announced by the BiH SBS, rotation at the top of SBS was conducted in line with the Law on State Border Service and with the Decision of the BiH Presidency on compliance with rotation of the SBS directors. In a statement to Srna, Vukovic said that very soon the BiH citizens would be able to travel to the EU countries without visas, which would be a gift from the EU. (**Blic**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, **Oslobodjenje** also report on the issue)

The Serb member of the BiH Presidency, **Zivko Radisic**, whose mandate for this post expires soon, has said that he had only signed three documents during his four year mandate – the Defence Policy of BiH, a joint statement on rapprochement with European processes and statement on relations with Yugoslavia and Croatia. *"I signed the Defence Policy without any fear that there will be a single army, a single ministry and a single General Staff, which my opponents abused for their daily political goal, while spreading fear and hatred among the people,"* Radisic said. He particularly singled out the importance of the statement which the Presidency signed with

the presidents of Yugoslavia and Croatia on the strengthening of bilateral relations during the tripartite mini summit in Sarajevo, as well as the importance of the statement on European integration. *"I responsibly claim that besides these three documents I have not signed anything else and neither have the other two members of the Presidency,"* Radisic said. (Blic p 3)

The **United National Environment Protection Programme (UNEP)** started in BiH the realisation of its "Post-war examination of status of life environment in BiH in connected with the depleted uranium", was stated at press conference on Monday, which was organised by the Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications and UNEP representatives. (Blic p 6, Oslobodjenje, p 9)

Post-election research/statements/commentaries

After counting of the majority of ballots received by mail, Oslobodjenje (pages 4-5, mentioned on the front page) researched how the future parliaments will be constituted. According to the research and currently known election results, the SDA will have 9 seats out of a total of 28 mandates belonging to the BiH Federation in the BiH House of Representatives. Other parties will get the mandates as follows: SDP-5, Party for BiH – 5, HDZ-HD Coalition – 4, DNZ – 1, and Party of Pensioners, NHI, BOSS, Economic Block HDZ for Prosperity – one compensatory mandate respectively. Out of 14 RS mandates in the House, SDS will get 5, SNSD – 3, PDP – 2, and SDA, Serb Radical Party, SPRS and DNS one seat each. According to the Oslobodjenje research, 18 parties will have seat in the BiH Federation Parliament, as 14 political parties will be represented in the RS national Assembly. (Dnevni Avaz, p 2, carries the latest preliminary results of counting of the ballots received by mail essentially not making any significant change in the general share of power)

The Party for BiH President, Safet Halilovic, assessed an open offer made by SDA leader Sulejman Tihic in terms of his party's readiness to cooperate with the Party for BiH as something that was still under question and prematurely launched. *"I believe it is premature at the moment to speak about dominant positions in the future authorities since we are to face a very difficult implementation of the election results, which will require a lot of well-intentioned*

political will by all," Halilovic told Dnevni Avaz (front page, p 4).

"We decided long time ago not to join any coalition with SDS. The offers in this sense coming from then represent their despair because it seems they cannot establish the authorities in other way," SNSD leader Milorad Dodik said in an interview with Dnevni Avaz (p 5, mentioned on the front page). He added that if PDP leader Mladen Ivanic decides not to make coalition with the SNSD, the SNSD would remain a part of opposition.

Vecernji List (front and page 14, by Dejan Jazvic) carries that a vague wording of the Election Law with regard to distribution of compensatory mandates has complicated the post-election situation in BiH. The article says that due to this situation, minor parties, that are mainly satellites of SDP, might get one or two posts in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament, and thus bring in question a victory of SDA and HDZ. VL says that the Election Commission is trying to persuade the public that by this distribution of the compensatory mandates they want to respect the will of people, who gave their votes to small parties, while HDZ and SDA accuse the Election Commission of the post-election engineering and they have a support of BOSS.

Glas Srpski quotes (p 4) the SDS Chairman, **Dragan Kalinic**, as saying that the SDS should have its representative in the Council of Ministers and that the SDS's support in the parliament will depend on this fact. *"It will be very difficult to explain to both domestic and international public that some "national" parties are allowed to be in the Council of Ministers, while some others are not"*, said Kalinic. He said that those who count on SDS's support at the state level, has to see that party in the CoM.

Glas Srpski quotes (p 4) the SDS Executive Board member, **Cvijetin Nikic**, as saying yesterday that the future RS Prime Minister designate will be a SDS member. Nikic also said that

the SDS has already provided the support of the parliamentary majority, but did not specify to which parties he is referring. (**Blic** p 8, **Nacional** p 11)

*"We are partially satisfied with the election results, because of law turnout. However, we are satisfied that the SNS has kept the status of a parliamentary party, " **Jezdimir Spasojevic**, a member of the SNS Main Board, said. "Our stand is that the SDS should not participated in the executive authority, because it has a bad relation with the IC. It is our wish that **Milorad Dodik** becomes the Prime Minister," Spasojevic said. (**Blic** p 8, **Nacional** p 11)*

In an interview with **Nezavisne Novine** (p 4), SDP BiH top official **Sejfudin Tokic** said that the SDP BiH wants to form an alliance at the state level, which will again exclude nationalistic parties (SDA, SDS and HDZ). Tokic said it is realistic to expect the setting up of reformists' alliance at the state level or the Partnership for Reforms as Milorad Dodik calls it. According to Tokic, this alliance would be made up of SNSD, SDP BiH, SBiH, PDP and NHI.

In a lengthy article in **Ljiljan** (also front page), Mustafa Borovic argues that **SDP** leadership and some parts of the International Community are preparing a post election fraud. According to Borovic, SDP and foreign officials will try once again to create an Alliance of sorts and that key factor of success will again be Silajdzic's Party for BiH. *"He has been forgiven the first time, but if he decides to enter into a coalition with SDP this time around, he will forever be labeled as a traitor of his own people,"* noted the weekly.

In an interview with **Ljiljan**, **Hasan Muratovic**, the head of the SDA election HQ, said that the SDA will favor the creation of a strong parliamentary majority. *"One of the problems was the fact that the present authorities did not have a parliamentary majority and could not pass laws. In order to ensure continuation of operations in the state, the High*

Representative assumed the role of legislative authority. That is not good. That is why we will insist on the creation of a strong majority in the Parliament and will consider any attempts to recreate new Alliance as a malicious act,” said Muratovic.

Ashdown: Citizens need efficient and not politically suitable administration; other HR-related news/statements

The directors of the public enterprises, officers in the armies, police and civil services cannot be appointed in accordance to their ethnic-political suitability but only in accordance to their professional capabilities, says a message delivered to the new BiH authorities by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown. On Monday, Ashdown invited the leaders of the political parties that would form new BiH government for talks on the appointments of the heads of public institutions. The meeting on the issue is scheduled for October 22. *“If the political parties do not ensure that there will be no favoring at the employment of the civil servants, that will be done by the High Representative,”* OHR Spokesman Patrik Volf said. (Oslobodjenje, p 7, mentioned on the front page: “The time has passed of national favorites,” Dnevni Avaz, p 3, mentioned on the front page: “Citizens need efficient and not politically suitable administration”, Dnevni List, front and page 5, Nezavisne Novine, p 5)

Oslobodjenje (p 7) carries statements by the BiH Presidency Chairman Beriz Belkic and the BiH Council of Ministers Chairman, Dragan Mikerevic, who both welcomed Ashdown’s initiative.

Nezavisne Novine (p 5) reports that all the relevant RS parties commended this High Representative’s proposal (SDS, SNSD, PDP, DNS and SPRS).

Vecernji List (page 2, by Zoran Jurcevic) carries an editorial saying that *‘the decision of **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, by which he will freeze the appointment of new officials in public services, public companies etc. was expected, however, it is also questionable.’*

Vecernji List (page 2, by G.K.) carries article which says that future member of BiH Presidency **Sulejman Tihic** stated

that **Paddy Ashdown** violated authorities of the High Representative, by appointing three leaders of the State Information and Protection Agency. According to the daily, Tihic said that it was for the first time that the High Representative appointed certain officials, what is within competencies of legislative and executive authorities. Future Serb member of BiH Presidency **Mirko Sarovic** finds the appointment of officials in transitional period unusual. All three future members of Presidency BiH consider that after constituency, the highest state institution should reconsider appointments of leaders of newly formed state intelligence service, reads the daily.

Dnevni List (pages 4 and 10) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (last page) carry report from session of the Presidency of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (**HDZ BiH**), which analyzed the election results of the Coalition **HDZ-Christian Democrats-HNZ**, and, within this context, the possible post-election co-operation. As an HDZ statement has it, the Presidency of this party calls upon all future power holders to discharge responsibly and consequently the duties entrusted to them. *"Welcoming the efforts of the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, to finally start quality changes in this country, the HDZ Presidency calls upon all election winners to start, without election engineering, urgent constitution of all government bodies so that BiH, as a modern, law-governed and safe country might become desirable for all its citizens and peoples"* – the HDZ statement concludes.

Dnevni List (page 4, by Slavo Kukic) carries an editorial saying that HDZ and SDA say that they would like to see BiH as a state without entities, while politicians from the RS unconditionally defend the existence of the RS. Kukic says that these national parties, that came in power after the last elections, are talking about co-existence, Europe, mutual respect etc., however, Kukic also says that they were telling

the same things at the beginning of nineties, when they came in power for the first time, and then BiH was faced with the war. The editorial says that in spite of all this, the situation is different now, since the International Community controls the situation in this country. According to Kukic, **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, uses every opportunity to express his loyalty to the Dayton Constitution, and this means the entities' organization of BiH. Kukic also says that the HR also uses every opportunity to stress a necessity of building of a functional, that is, a normal state. The editorial says that the HR launched many integration processes such as the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council, State Border Service, Agency for Protection of Information etc. The editorial says that the HR did not stop on this but he wants to go on and the author refers to 6 tasks that the HR gave to a new authority. Kukic describes the HR as a person, who lives according to European standards, referring to the HR stand that the persons who are capable and not politically suitable should be public officials. Kukic concludes the editorial by saying: *"The European standards can only help us now. For this reason I wish luck to the HR. Perhaps his recipe of integration succeeds."*

In an interview with **BBC**, High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** said that regardless of the character of new authorities, reforms in BiH could not be postponed. *"Time is not on our side,"* Ashdown said. *"This requires the new government to work, and work quickly. We have to increase the pace of reform in BiH if we're to catch up and if we are not to fall."* However, if BiH authorities fail to act in a timely manner, BBC notes, Ashdown will have no option but to impose the reforms by decree. *"That would once again expose one of the fundamental paradoxes of Dayton: the absolute power of the IC to pimples democracy, good governance and the rule of law,"* concludes BBC.

ICTY unseals new/changed indictment against Karadzic

The ICTY on Monday unsealed a new unified and consolidated indictment against the most wanted war crime suspect Radovan Karadzic, which now contains 11 instead of 36 counts from the previous two indictments. In case of Ratko Mladic, there are still two indictments with 36 counts, since The Hague Tribunal Prosecution Office has not requested the unification of the indictments in his case. A reason why ICTZ Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte has requested permit to change the indictment against Karadzic is to ensure faster beginning of his trial and the unification of his case with cases of other Bosnian Serbs war time leaders such as Momcilo Krajisnik. (Oslobodjenje, p 3, Dnevni Avaz, p 8, Glas Srpski, front page, FRY Nacional, p 7)

The language issue

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Robert Bubalo) carries story about recent statements of two professors of Bosnian language from Sarajevo, **Dzevad Jahic** and **Munib Maglajlic**, who stated that "*Croatian language has been systematically imposed to Bosniaks, especially through **Fena** news agency and **Federation Television***", what they saw as "*different form of continuation of aggression*". However, as the author of the text finds out from editors of Fena, the agency that was created in fusion of Sarajevo-based **BH Press** and Mostar-based **Habena**, there is no intervention in languages, Bosniak journalists and editors are emitting their news in their language, as well as Croat employees in their language. As for the FTV, the author says that the accusation is even weirder because all written materials, like Teletext or sub-titles of foreign programs, are written in Bosnian language, and lectors are exclusively Bosniaks. The author says that the situation is opposite to the one that the two professors tried to present, i.e. Croatian language is disappearing, not only from media, but also from social life in BiH in general.

Dnevni List (page 4) carries protest of Croat People's Union (**HNZ**) against attack on Croatian language by "certain individuals", rejects all accusations that Croatian language was used as an instrument of aggression, and says that Croatian language must be fully equal with other two official languages in BiH, for it is constitutional category. The party says that the fact that seats of federation media, namely Fena and FTV, are in Sarajevo does not mean that they are created only for Sarajevo, where majority are Bosniaks, but for all the Federation.

Glas Srpski reports on its **front page** that due to the increase of domestic income, which amounts to 180 million KM, the RS Government proposed the rebalance of RS budget for this year, which basically means that the overall budgetary expenditures will be more than 1 billion KM or 18% more than planned. This means that the RS Health Insurance Fund will get 9,5 million KM instead of 3 million KM as it was planned; the RS Pension Fund will get 88,7 million KM instead of 17 million KM as it was planned in the first place.

*"The Speaker of RS National Assembly, **Dragan Kalinic**, held talks with the OSCE head in BiH, **Robert Beecroft**, about the political situation in BiH following the elections,"* a statement issued by Kalinic's office reads. The statement says that they expressed hope that all the parties which were part of the government in the RS and BiH would respond positively to the reform programme recently outlined by High Representative Paddy Ashdown. *"They also discussed the performance of the Electoral Commission and the latest disagreements regarding the allocation of the compensatory mandates,"* the statement says, adding that the latter part of the meeting was devoted to discussions on the forthcoming reforms within primary, secondary and higher education, which were coordinated by the OSCE mission. (**Blic** p 3, **Nacional** p 11, Sarajevo dailies also report on the meeting)

Following a three-day inspection carried by SFOR, on Monday morning employees of the **Orao** aviation institute in Bijeljina resumed their work. *"We are analysing the information gathered during the inspection, which will take some time, and after that we will discuss the results with the state authorities,"* SFOR spokesman Major **Yves Vanier** said.

RS Ministry of Defence confirmed on Monday that SFOR had seized two laptops and several diskettes and diaries from the premises of "Orao". The Ministry said that SFOR announced the inspection of the premises of the aviation institute and the warehouse only 15 minutes before it was launched. *"Members of SFOR announced that they would carry out an inspection at around 15:00 on 11 October and they launched the inspection at 15:15 without the presence of workers and management,"* the

statement of the Ministry of Defence said.

Following an allegation that "Orao" had violated the UN embargo on export of equipment to Iraq, on 6 September Defence Minister **Slobodan Bilic** reached a decision to form a commission tasked with the investigation of all facts and was asked to submit a report to the relevant authorities by the end of the month. (**Blic** p 7, **Vecernje Novosti** p 5, **Nacional** p 11, Sarajevo dailies also report on the end of SFOR operation)

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Entities ' Ministers of Education accepted joint strategy of education reform in BiH
- USA not obliged to act at any possible BiH request related to Algerian Group
- Changed indictment against Radovan Karadzic opened

FTV 1 (1930)

- Opened changed indictment against Radovan Karadzic
- Around 2000 workers of Polihem entered factory compound
- Serbia without president after second round of elections

RTRS (1930)

- Changed indictment against Radovan Karadzic unsealed
- Draft document on education reform has been agreed
- Computers, discs and diaries have been taken out of Orao
- Special session of the RS National Assembly to take place on Thursday