OHR BiH Media Round-up, 15/3/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
OHR on public b/casting	OHR on public b/casting	Spiric, Pamuk statements	OHR on public b/casting
SDA-HDZ negotiations	HR visits Mostar	SDA-HDZ negotiations	Spiric, Pamuk trip to US
HR visits Mostar	Terzic visits Slovenia	BH farmers protest	Return to Krnjeusa
	Authority over Mo airport	Return in Banja Luka	Regional Youth Forum

Oslobodjenje	Dokic failed to ensure unity and independence of the public broadcasting service
Dnevni Avaz	A billion euros of compensation demanded from Holland; Will appointment of Relja Kovac be withdrawn; Discussion between Dokic and OHR
Dnevni List	Colak: HDZ BiH is ready for early elections; Hadzipasic: I did everything by the law!
Vecernji List	Croatian Interpol submits composite picture of assassin; Scandal: Ashdown wanted to prevent erection of monument to Croat defenders in Mostar
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines
Glas Srpske	Following bread price increase: Price goes back; Roosters do not sing in Rooster
Nezavisne Novine	Republika Srpska Chief Auditor finally confirms: Government of Mladen Ivanic destroyed Kristal Banka; Negotiations between SDA and HDZ today

Public Broadcasting	
OHR says Minister Dokic's draft PBS legislation is unacceptable	RHB, BHTV 1, RTRS, Oslobodjenje cover splash, pgs 4&5 'Dokic failed to ensure unification and independency of public broadcaster', Dnevni Avaz cover 'Discussion between OHR and Dokic', pg 2 'Dokic did not produce adequate law on public broadcaster', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Screen with two faces', Dnevni List front, pg 2 'Adoption of Law with OHR amendments necessary', Vecernji List pg 4 'OHR accuses Dokic of obstructions', Onasa – "The draft public broadcasting legislation submitted to the Council of Ministers by Minister Branko Dokic on 10 March is unacceptable to the OHR", reads the press release issued by the Office of the High Rep. It also said that OHR has therefore informed the Board of Principals and the Steering Board Ambassadors that Dokic, as the minister responsible, has failed to draw up adequate draft legislation. OHR Spokesperson Mario Brkic explains that the draft was inadequate for three reasons: "First, his latest draft fails to put in place the framework for a genuine single public broadcasting system for BiH. Second, his latest draft fails to incorporate the key elements of the Agreement on public broadcasting signed by the three state and entity Prime Ministers on 6 November 2003. And third, his latest draft is unlikely to meet the requirements of European integration. PBS reform is one of the 16 specific priorities for action set out in the European Commission's Feasibility Study," the OHR said. The Commission have informed Dokic that means drawing up legislation that fully reflects the Prime Ministers' Agreement. On 3 March, the OHR commented on Dokic's draft legislation to help bring it into line with the Prime Ministers' Agreement. Dokic has failed to incorporate the substance of these amendments into the legislation forwarded to the CoM. The EC said they would formally assess the draft legislation against the requirements of the Feasibility Study. "However, unless the CoM adopts draft legislation that incorporates the OHR's amendments, the OHR will be forced to advise the European Commission that this legislation fails to meet even the most basic requirements of the Prime Ministers' Agreement," press statement reads, and adds: "CoM faces a clear choice. To adopt Dokic's inadequate draft and risk this country's future in Europe. Or to put the interests of the citizens first and adopt legislation that includes the OHR's amendments. Mladen Ivanic will have a decisive role to play… As leader of Dokic's party he is in a unique position to help convince Dokic to put the interests of BiH first… We have also advised the Council of Ministers that unless they adopt adequate PBS legislation in coming days, they run the risk of missing their own deadlines for implementing this requirement of the Feasibility Study." Nezavisne Novine pg 2 'Dokic's proposal unacceptable for OHR'- NN carry statement by Frane Maroevic, Spokesperson of the European Commission delegation to BiH. He stated that it is hard to expect that it would be possible to support public broadcasters in the future, without proper legal framework.

Dokic: OHR offers no proof for its claims; Ivanic: pressures lead nowhere	Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'OHR doesn't offer a single evidence for their claims' – BiH Transport and Communications Minister Branko Dokic said he found it hard to comment OHR's press release, for which he says that it doesn't offer a single proof of claims it makes. He also adds that proposed draft legislation also included some solutions not included previously, such as collection of the RTV subscription. Saying that OHR's press release came as great surprised to him, especially since he was praised recently for some solutions in the field of broadcasting. "I need nobody to assure me to work in interests of BiH, as that interests if on the first place for me," concludes Dokic. BHTV 1 – "This is best proof of structures in the country that believe that we in BiH are incapable of doing anything without their help", commented Dokic. RTRS – Dokic denies that draft Law did not include all the necessary amendments. "Key matters from the Agreement between CoM Chairman and two entities' Prime Ministers have been incorporated into the Law; of course that refers to those that were possible to include… Secondly, the conditions outlined in the 16 preconditions laid down in the Feasibility Study were completely respected and, most importantly, the Law contains the Council of Europe's standards regarding the Broadcasting sector," said Dokic. SRNA, TV BN – "The only matter from that agreement that has not been included in the law is the executive board of the [Public Broadcasting] system, which would mean existence of the system as a legal entity, and that is contradictory to the basic principle of the institutional independence and editorial autonomy of public broadcasting services ," said Branko Dokic in the statement for BN TV. "This is really reaches epidemic scale of issuing announcements. Warnings, pressures, demands… I think it leads nowhere", estimated BiH Foreign Affairs Minister Mladen Ivanic.

Political and economic issues

Update to HDZ/SDA rift	RHB, FTV – HDZ Spokesperson, Pero Pavlovic, said that HDZ was open to all sorts of negotiations and added that the party will continue talks with SDA that would result with an agreement signed by both HDZ and SDA leaders. He underlined that HDZ expects SDA to agree on measures to prevent outvoting and that all decisions of FBiH Government made in the absence of HDZ Ministers would be returned to voting procedure. Pero Pavlovic said that they expect SDA will accept these demands, and would implement them in both FBiH Government and other all other levels of authorities. Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Pavlovic: We expect an agreement preventing outvoting' – DA inset also brings statement by the SDA Secretary General, Sefik Dzaferovic, that the party was ready to negotiate with HDZ. Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 2 'Negotiations between SDA and HDZ today' – Leaders of HDZ and SDA, Barisa Colak and Sulejman Tihic respectively, are today continuing talks about possible continuation of cooperation between the two parties, Vecernji List pg 2 'Colak and Tihic go into negotiations' by Zoran Kresic – VL says that if negotiations fail, than the current crisis could end in a total collapse of authority if both sides, the SDA in particular, do not show more appreciation. VL learns from the HDZ that the HDZ will not accept any agreement without a signed document that would establish a possible national veto in the FBiH Government. VL reckons the first test is scheduled for next week, when the FBiH Parliament's House of Representatives will discuss the budget. In that context, VL says the SDA and SBIH cannot secure the necessary majority, which could lead to the budget not getting adopted by end March, which could trigger new, early elections. VL concludes the article by saying that the IC has shown that its patience is running out, noting: "The High Representative sent a clear message – either reform or resignations". Dnevni List front pg splash, pg 3 'Colak: HDZ BiH is ready for early elections' – resident of HDZ BiH, Barisa Colak, who hopes the two parties will reach a compromise, in other words continue cooperation and intensify communication. Colak says: "Because of the previous behavior of the SDA, there simply has to be an agreement that will have to bind us all. One cannot talk about partnership relations if we are going to outvote each other about important issues, which has been the practice so far. I think the SDA President if of the same opinion. That position must be signed, so the ones who implement it must be obliged to implement it fully (…) The alternative is to reshuffle the majority in the parliament or early elections. We are not afraid of elections, be it tomorrow or in one year time". Dnevni List front, pg 7 'Hadzipasic: I did everything by the law!' by Miso Relota – DL carries the FBiH Prime Minister, Ahmet Hadzipasic, as commenting on the initiative of the FBiH President, Niko Lozancic, to remove him from the office. "My removal is not going to happen! I received letter from Lozancic in which he demands that I submit an irrevocable resignation, which is unacceptable since he has no arguments for that. If I sinned against the law or interests of any people in FBiH, for sure the two Vice President would agree with him and sign my removal," said Prime Minister, Ahmet Hadzipasic.

Terzic visits Slovenia	BHTV 1, RHB, Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Discussions on old deposits', Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Terzic will meet with Drnovsek and Rop' – On Monday Delegation lead by the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic started with two-day official visit to Slovenia, at the invitation by the Prime Minister Anton Rop. Terzic will also meet with President Janez Drnovsek. They will discuss economic and other aspects of the relations between two states, but will also focus at the Slovenian assistance for BiH on its way towards NATO and EU. When it comes to current affairs, Terzic will raise the issue of equalising trade balance as well as the issue of Ljubljanska Bank foreign currency depositors. The Council of Europe Human Rights Board will hold a meeting on Monday in Paris to discuss the report created by Erik Jurgens on the issue old foreign currency depositors of Ljubljanska bank from BiH, Croatia, and Macedonia.
Ashdown in Mostar today	RHB, BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Creation of 'normal' city', Vecernji List pg 3 'Ashdown in Mostar today', Nezavisne Novine pg 5 'Mostar officially re-united as of today' – The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, visits Mostar today, on the first day of the city reunification, to "mark the successful conclusion of an important phase in implementation of his Decision on restructuring of Mostar, specifically the dismantling of the city municipalities and transfer of their competencies to the City Administration of the City of Mostar." Ashdown will meet Mayor Hamdija Jahic and Deputy Mayor Ljubo Beslic, and will reviewprogress made thus far in implementation.
VL says HR Ashdown wanted to stop erection of monument in Mostar	Vecernji List front pg splash 'Scandal: Ashdown wanted to prevent erection of monument to Croat defenders in Mostar', pg 3 'Bosniaks saved monument to Croat defenders' by Zoran Kresic – VL claims that the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, phoned the Croat member of BiH Presidency, Dragan Covic, several times last Thursday, requesting him to stop the erection of the monument to the Croat defenders in Mostar, because the Bosniak side could take it as a provocation. According to VL, the monument was saved owing it to the Bosniak officials. "We were explained that Mister Ashdown has a prepared decision on removal of the monument on his desk", says an anonymous Croat official, who explains that Ashdown's special coordinator for unification of Mostar, Richard Williams, and an EUPM official, Nigel Moore, also requested the suspension of works, looking for the construction permit. VL carries another anonymous Croat official who says that some officials of the IC even presented the situation as the Croats putting barricades on the Rondo Square, which caused confusion among the IC officials. VL concludes the piece by saying that when HR Ashdown was about sign the decision, reason prevailed, because several Bosniak leaders, including the Mostar Mayor, Hamdija Jahic, said they had nothing against the monument.

VL interview with Mostar Deputy Mayor Beslic	Vecernji List pg 5 'This administration is too big for Mostar' by Zoran Kresic – Questioned whether the provisions of the new Mostar Statute will be tenable for a longer period of time, the Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Ljubo Beslic, says: "I think the IC will be tested in Mostar within one year. After that, it could be applying the principles on other multi-national areas. Otherwise, it will simply abolish these sorts of decisions for the City of Mostar. I do not see a way of Mostar staying outside the law, or laws will be made according to Mostar." Asked whether there would be problems in implementing the decision on Mostar, especially after the next (local) elections, Beslic says: "There will be problems in restructuring of city of Mostar for sure. We must be aware it is not an easy or short process. I hope the citizens will recognize it and help us". Deputy Mayor goes on to say that there are different opinions, when it comes to Mostar, within his party, the HDZ BiH that is, stressing that "the biggest part of the party supports me".
Mostar North Municipal Assembly holds its last session	RHB, Dnevni List pg 5 'Municipality North wants to continue to dispose of 'its funds'', NINA – Mostar North Municipal Assembly held session on Sunday, again voicing its disagreement with the new Statute for Mostar. It was said during the session that the legally elected councilors of the Municipal Council would not terminate their engagement in protecting the will of the citizens by all legal means, be it with domestic or international institutions. One of conclusions that was also passed says the municipal councilors will, together with councils of local communities, find method and ways that will prevent that bodies and individuals outside the local community dispose of its resources and funds which are legally collected in areas of local communities of Dreznica, Bijelo Polje and Vrapcici. Finally, DL reports that the MC requested principals of the City of Mostar to allocate funds, which will be transferred onto the joint account of City of Mostar from Municipality North, to complete decisions and projects that have been adopted by the Municipality North.
DA editorial praises unification of Mostar	Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Unification of Mostar' op-ed by Faruk Vele – Author says that today, 15 March 2004, is a historical even in Mostar, as municipalities will be abolished and that would open the doors to long-term soilution for the city. "This is the move that halted the desire for domination of one people, but also the end of the badly based ambitions of irresponsible leaders to ghettoise other people, all that for the purpose of small, scrupulous individual interests. The biggest number of the pre-war Mostar citizens left the city for these reasons exactly, running away from the time anf life in which the ethnicity is the only character of the human value. On the other hand, decision that would centralise powers of city authorities should help Mostar citizens to create preconditions for better life… Therefore, entire process should be helped. Obstructions and claims that isolation protects values of their people are false and they must be left in the past," concludes the editorial.

Spiric, Pamuk warn reforms progress too slow; Spiric on CoM	FTV – Speakers of BiH House of Representatives and House of Peoples, Nikola Spiric and Mustafa Pamuk respectively, announced that new Minister of Defence would be appointed on Monday if OHR approves candidacy of Nikola Radovanovic. Spiric and Pamuk have just returned from official visit to United States of America, and held press conference to stress that Washington demand fulfilment of the conditions necessary for admission to Partnership for Peace, including that cooperation with ICTY and arrest of war criminals. Spiric and Pamuk said that all levels of authorities are responsible for fulfilment of conditions and that International Community will not tolerate trivialities. On the current ruling Coalition rift, Spiric said: ”It is much better for incompetent Councils and Ministers to leave, it is much cheaper even to announce new elections than to send signals to democratic world that we are not capable of doing what they ask us to do.” RTRS – Spiric and Pamuk also said they were assured by US that it would continue to assist BiH’s road towards Europe. Representatives of State Department and Pentagon have pointed that BiH did achieve progress, but also that the process was slow. This includes the new state Defence Minister. “The US support is very important for the new Ministry and for the new Minister, especially because of significant assistance they promised,“ said Nikola Spiric. Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘We will ask removal of Council of Ministers’ – Spiric stated in that BiH parliamentarians would demand holding of parliament discussion on level of confidence in the work of BiH Council of Ministers, if pre-requisites for BiH admission into PfP were not met within scheduled time frame. Mustafa Pamuk, Chairperson of the BiH House of Peoples, who was also in USA with Spiric, said that USA views reform processes in BiH as proceeding too slowly.
DA: Political parties are preparing for municipal elections	Dnevni Avaz pg 4 ‘SDA ready for talks with pro-Bosnian parties’ – DA brings that despite the fact that the country did not ensure finances for upcoming municipal elections, BiH parties also began with the pre-elections campaign. SDA says it has started with preparations, and that it still did not consider possible coalitions, but also stressed that they are open to all pro-Bosnian forces, especially in RS. As for Party for BiH, its Secretary General Sahbaz Dzihanovic says that party is scheduled to discuss platform at its next session, but that it also did not think about coalitions. The same is with HDZ, and its spokesperson Pero Pavlovic said that HDZ’s activities are also preparatory. SDU held session with its presidents of cantonal and municipal organizations to discuss upcoming elections, and, according to its leader Miro Lazovic, “to define priorities.” Dnevni List pg 2 the “Statement of the Day” column carries Lidija Korac from the BiH Election Commission as saying: “It is possible that the municipal elections get postponed”.

BH Farmers to protest in Brcko today	FTV – BiH Farmers Association announced protests in Brcko today, demanding from the authorities to deal with agriculture related problems and overall situation in the industry. Last year, entities set aside 50 million KM used to assist and stimulate farmers, however they see it as almost symbolic amount. Announcing protests also in Sarajevo on 22 March, farmers said they would not quit holding them until their demands are fulfilled. Dnevni List back pg 'Bakic: We request 205 million marks in subsidies' – The President of BiH Association of Agricultural Producers, Ranko Bakic, announces also protests for April 1 in front of the Republika Srpska National Assembly.
NN editorial on EC decision regarding Public Acquisitions	Nezavisne Novine pg 7 'Percentage for procurement' editorial by Natasa Krsman – The author refers to the decision of European Commission to suspend euros 2 million assistance to BiH and to stop with the public acquisition project. She claims that this part, which makes only 0.1% of the entire assistance, is nothing for the RS Government, especially as it is not reflected through cash money, but as technical assistance to projects related to public procurement. She also claims that approximately BAM 600 million to 800 million is spent for public procurement purposes in BiH. She concludes the article by saying that the Law on public procurement has damaged the Republika Srpska budget for over BAM 200 million.

War crimes

Srebrenica survivors to ask for 1bn euros compensation from Netherlands	BHTV 1, FTV, Oslobodjenje cover, pg 3 ‘Srebrenica people asking for more than a billion euros’, Dnevni List pg 4 ‘Netherlands responsible for crime in Srebrenica’ – An international team of lawyers representing 8.000 survivors of the Srebrenica will request in the lawsuit against Holland compensation exceeding 1 billion Euro, a member of that team Semir Guzin told FENA on Sunday. The initially announced amount to be requested from Holland for “failing to act and implement the UN mandate” and in doing so “allowing Serb forces to enter Srebrenica in July 1995 and massacre Bosniaks”, was 1 billion Euro-Atlantic. The lawsuit will be filed early this summer and comes following repeated failed attempts to hold open talks with the Dutch side on a possible settlement. The lawsuit contains 350-400 pages. A lawsuit against the UN, as co-responsible for the events in Srebrenica, is also being prepared. Dnevni Avaz cover splash, pg 4 ‘A billion euros of damage demanded from Holland’ – Also brings statement by Guzin.

Arsovic meets Mikerevic to discuss work of Srebrenica Commission	Dnevni Avaz pg 5 'RS Government did not discuss possible dismissals' by M.V. – DA says that according to their source in Srebrenica Commission, its Chairman, Marko Arsovic, will restrain from giving any statements in the future. On Tuesday, Arsovic is scheduled to meet RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, in order to discuss the work of the Commission. Mikerevic's spokesperson, Goran Radivojac said: "For anything more than that there is neither time, nor they were appointed for that reason, and we can say that the Commission of such composition is not competent to giving statements."
VL on RS MoI failed operation to capture Karadzic	Vecernji List pg 2 'Demonstration of lack of power' by Dejan Jazvic – The author says that two most wanted ICTY indictees, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, had plenty of reasons to laugh over the last weekend, and that the credits for this go to the Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior and its operation to arrest Karadzic and to SFOR, which "congratulated" Mladic his birthday by placing poster depicting handcuffs intended for him. With regard to the latter, VL says SFOR's behaviour was miserable and sad, not becoming of SFOR, since the posters can only make Mladic and his followers laugh and show SFOR's lack of power to arrest the ICTY fugitives.

Police and security issues

Tihic says Presidency was not aware of criteria Kovac fails to meet for SBS Director position	Dnevni Avaz cover 'Will appointment of Relja Kovac be withdrawn', pg 3 'Presidency did not known that Kovac must have a rank of Chief Inspector and over 16 years of experience' – Following OHR's letter to the BiH Presidency questioning the appointment of Relja Kovac as director of the BiH State Border Service that stresses that Kovac does not satisfy criteria as he did not have a rank of a chief inspector and at least 16 years of experience of service with the police forces, Chairman of the BiH Presidency Sulejman Tihic said that OHR's letter is to be discussed at the upcoming Presidency session on Wednesday. "Everything that is contained in OHR's letter talks about Relja Kovac, about his references and criteria that he as the Director of SBS would have to fulfil, are completely new facts for me. Those things that are in OHR's letter, and which are something new for me, should be been submitted to the Presidency by Legal Office. They did not do so," said Tihic. In addition, Tihic claims that "no institution we contacted and consulted with in regard to this appointment submitted to us anything that could prevent us to appoint Kovac. So, neither SIPA, nor people from BiH Civil Service Agency, nor – and I repeat – Presidency Legal Office submitted any objects regarding this appointment." Asked whether BiH Presidency would withdrawn appointment, Tihic answered that he "personally was in a favour of absolute respect for the all principles of rule of law." In separate inset, DA claims that outgoing director of SBS Slavisa Vukovic has been relocated to the position of SBS Chief of Central Investigation Office. DA further claims that such office doesn't exist.

Chief of Paravac's cabinet says IC slows down positive processes in BiH	Nezavisne Novine pg 5 'Foreigners obstruct positive processes via complaints against Relja Kovac' – Simo Bozalo, Head of Cabinet of Serb member to BiH Presidency, stated on Sunday that constant complaints against the appointment of Relja Kovac as Director of the BiH State Border Service show that some officials of the international community are trying to stop positive processes in BiH. He said that last weeks' complaints by EUPM and OHR against Kovac's appointment were ungrounded, as BiH Presidency passed an unanimous decision on his appointment last Tuesday, in accordance with Rule Book of Presidency.
VL says Police still looking for assassin in Mostar area	Vecernji List front pg splash, pg 2 'Croatian Interpol submits composite picture of assassin' by Robert Soldo – Following reports that the FBiH and Canton 7 Ministry of Interior is searching hotels and conducting vehicle checks in the Mostar area, looking for a paid assassin allegedly paid to kill a senior BiH official, today's VL says the BiH Interpol received a memo from their Croatian colleagues on Friday, which said the risk of assassination would last for 5 days. Apparently, the Croatian Interpol sent the assassin's identity and composite picture. VL also reminds that the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, is visiting Mostar today, which triggered the Police investigators to take into consideration "other assassination targets".