

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 16/9/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Lagumdžija addresses UN General Assembly – BiH moves towards a growing stability

Dnevni Avaz: Beriz Belikic's dramatic warning – BiH citizens remain without citizenship?

Dnevni List: According to data from the office of the Hercegovacka Bank Provisional Administrator – Over “unborn children,” with assistance of Covic, to hundreds of thousands of KM

Vecernji List: Dispute between Croatia and BiH over oil import – oil war agreed upon in a London restaurant

Glas Srpski: Problems of refugees and displaced persons in the Samac municipality – a lot of promises, little assistance

Nezavisne Novine: Zlatko Lagumdžija at the 57th UN General Assembly's session – BiH becoming a good news

Blic: Ivanic – Until the end of my mandate average pension will be 140 KM; Mirko Sarovic – Sarajevo should be a district; Dodik – Against drugs, crime and corruption; Spiric – To forbid Radisic to work in Sarajevo

Ljiljan: Dr. Nijaz Durakovic – Slobodna Bosna is a police bulletin being edited by Munja and Lagumdžija

Lagumdžija addresses the UN General Assembly; other BiH-related news

The last year's attacks on the USA united the world in the fight against terrorism, but it also brought BiH, as the only European country which has a relatively substantial Muslim population, into a situation of having to dispel the prejudices that it (the attacks) had given rise to the “conflict of civilizations”, BiH Foreign Minister **Zlatko**

Lagumdzija said at the plenary session of the UN General Assembly late on Saturday. Lagumdzija went on to say, that at present more than ever before, a conviction prevailed in BiH that all problems can only be resolved through a dialogue which was based on the political good will. *"Introducing the rule of law is our priority, and we are doing our utmost to build and strengthen those institutions, which will enable us to combat terrorism, organized criminal activities and corruption,"* Lagumdzija said. He added that he was grateful that BiH was "no longer a no man's land" or the CNN's news staple "due to the commendable work and assistance by the international community". *"After all that we have been through, we firmly believe that development, democracy, and compliance to the law and human rights, are the pillars of progress and the future, not only for BiH and its neighbours, but the region as a whole,"* stressed Lagumdzija. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page and p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page and p 3)

The Chairman of the BiH Presidency, **Beriz Belkic**, warned that if the law on dual citizenship is not amended by December 31 this year, dozens of thousand of BiH citizens living in Diaspora might automatically lose their citizenship status. (**Dnevni Avaz**, front page, p2)

The BiH Federation Prime Minister, **Alija Behmen**, on Sunday addressed the regular session of the Circle 99 Independent Intellectuals Association in Sarajevo. He emphasized that the BiH Constitution would have to be changed and brought in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as well as the European Union social policy. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 6, mentioned on the front page)

The Law on Telecommunications of BiH will not be adopted by October 5, **Milan Lovric**, Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications stated, **Dnevni List** (page 3) reads today. *"These days we should form a working group for drafting the first version of the law that should be forwarded to the Council of Ministers. We hoped that that version could be addressed to CoM by October 5, but now it is hardly feasible",*

Lovric stated.

Kostunica statement-related reactions

The Speaker of the BiH House of Peoples, **Nikola Spiric**, said in Banja Luka on Sunday that Saturday's decision by the BiH Presidency to seek an apology from Yugoslav President **Vojislav Kostunica** (over his statement that the RS is only temporarily separated from Serbia) also implied that the RS Government should ban the Serb member of the Presidency, **Zivko Radisic** from working in the Presidency. *"It was inappropriate for the BiH Presidency to hold (an emergency) session on Saturday, at the time when the top echelon of the RS government was attending a holy mass for the burial of the earthly remains of Archbishop Vladislav at the Serbian Orthodox Church in Sarajevo, served by the head of Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarch Pavle,"* Spiric said. He said that Radisic should have stayed until the end of the ceremony, instead of backing conclusions by the other two members of the Presidency, **Beriz Belkic** and **Jozo Krizanovic**. Spiric went on to say that Kostunica was entitled to making statements, but that Radisic also had the right to declare at all times that he belongs to the Serb people. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Blic**, p 7)

Commenting on Kostunica's statement, RS Prime Minister **Mladen Ivanic** told Novi Sad daily Dnevnik that *"Kostunica is a serious man, but that he must be careful about what he is saying and when."* However, Ivanic added, that it is actually just about a Kostunica's statement and not about an official position expressed by the FRY President, as the state institution. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3)

Glas Srpski (front page, p 3) carries reaction of the RS President, **Mirko Sarovic**, to the BiH Presidency's request that the FRY President, **Vojislav Kostunica**, apologizes for the statement he made recently in Mali Zvornik. The paper quotes Sarovic as saying that too much importance is being attached to the Kostunica's statement, especially by the Sarajevo media and especially during the pre-election campaign in both countries BiH and FRY. *"I think that the BiH Presidency's*

*request is unnecessary, because in that case we would need to see much apologising especially by some politicians from Sarajevo who keep calling for the elimination of the RS", said Sarovic. **Nezavisne Novine** reported on the same issue (p 2).*

Speaker of the RS National Assembly and the SDS President **Dragan Kalinic** said in Pale on Sunday that a statement of Yugoslav President **Vojislav Kostunica**, according to which RS was just temporarily separated from FRY, was not coming out of the Dayton agreement's framework (meaning does not violate the agreement). Kalinic added that the BiH Presidency members had unnecessarily raised tensions over the Kostunica's statement. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Glas Srpski**, p 3)

VL on "oil war between Croatia and BiH"

Following a decision of the BiH Council of Minister on a new, stricter regime on import of oil derivatives, **Vecernji List** (front and page 3, by Robert Soldo) carries a rather blurry article on the issue, which says that the "oil war" between Croatia and BiH was in fact conceived in a London restaurant two years ago, when it was agreed that the Croatian national oil producer "INA" was to be pushed out from the BiH market (INA covers 60% of BiH market) and that the Oil Refinery in Bosanski Brod was to step in (**NB**: VL does not state any names or anything). According to VL, a waiter of BiH origin overheard the conversation whose contents are being realized nowadays.

VL goes on to say that the Federation Deputy Finance Minister, **Sefika Hafizovic**, immediately after **Nikola Grabovac**, a former Federation Finance Minister, got removed, issued a decision to Energoinvest-Energopetrol Company of Sarajevo on honouring of tax and customs obligations which in turn allowed the Company to import oil and oil derivatives, although, according to VL, the decision, signed personally by Hafizovic, reads that the Company owes 634.729 KMs in unpaid customs and 102.436 KMs in unpaid tax duties.

A separate article in the same papers reads that it is obvious

that Hafizovic knew that the Council of Ministers would take the aforementioned decision on quality of imported oil and oil derivatives and in that context, that she knew that the High Representative for BiH, **Paddy Ashdown**, would not repeat a mistake by his predecessor **Wolfgang Petritsch**, and remove senior officials, not before the elections. VL says that it got an unofficial confirmation on this from the OHR South. VL goes on to say that the HR Ashdown took that decision a month or two before the elections because if the Federation Government were to fall just before the elections, something that would have happened had the Deputy Minister of Finance been removed, the Party for BiH would have left the Alliance which would end the premature end of the current Federation Government.

On the issue of the CoM's decision, **Dnevni List** (front and page 5) carries **Azra Hadziahmetovic**, BiH Minister of Foreign Trade as saying: *"There will be no changes to prices of oil, unless there are changes on the world market"*. DL also reads that the CoM's decision, despite being passed on last Friday, does not mean that it would be applied immediately because other technical requirements have not been made yet (such as laboratories for testing of quality of oil). On the same issue, **Vjesnik** (pages 1 and 2, by Zeljko Buksa) reads that INA will not be eliminated from the BiH market because, according to sources close to INA's management, the company will export oil that meets the new criteria from its more up-to-date refinery in Rijeka. Vjesnik speculates that CoM passed the decision in order that the Alliance for changes wins over **Milorad Dodik** of SNSD from the RS, because the only BiH refinery is in Bosanski Brod in the RS.

Federation affairs

Dnevni List (page 4) carries that the amendments to the Federation Constitution, whose proposal was sent to the Parliament procedure, envisage the abolishment of the special regime Cantons. It was also envisaged to secure to have equal

standards in all ten Cantons of the Federation by which national interests would be protected and full equality of all three constituent peoples and others in BiH would be secured. According to **Zvonko Mijan**, the Federation Minister of Justice, *'the amendments, whose proposal was determined by the Federation Government, actually give answer to the questions, which have been opened, after the High Representative proclaimed Constitutional amendments, which refer to mechanisms for protection of vital national interests at a Cantonal level.'* The amendments also envisage abolishing of a position of the President of the Canton and together with abolishing of the special regime Cantons this means a sort of rationalization of a huge administrative apparatus in the Federation and BiH. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

Dnevni List (front and page 3, by Zoran Vidic) claims to be in possession of documents that have allegedly leaked from the Office of the Provisional Administrator for Hercegovacka bank which show that the founder and former President of Croat Christian Democrats (HD), **Petar Milic**, and his brother **Pavle** have been illegally paid a few hundred thousands of KMs with help from a former Federation Deputy Prime Minister **Dragan Covic** and the **Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Government**. According to DL, everything started in 1998 when Milic made into the Federation Parliament on the list together with NHI. After assuming the position in the Fed. Parliament, Petar Milic strikes a deal with Dragan Covic (HDZ) according to which he was to leave NHI and form a new right-wing party that would denounce Covic's opponent within and outside HDZ, which according to DL, eventually happened through various press releases coming from HD. As far as the money issue, Dnevni List says Petar's brother Pavle founded an association of citizens called "Movement for family and birth of conceived children" which had an account in the Hercegovacka bank. According to daily, senior officials of HDZ abused their offices in the executive authority by illegally depositing money into the Association's account, DL cites that on February 7, 2001 Covic paid 15.000 KMs into the account, the payment that was followed by the HNC Government that paid

10.000 KMs into the same account two hours later. The daily says that even other members of Milic family had their private associations which helped them acquire big fortunes.

Dnevni List (page 5 and front page) and **Vecernji List** (page 4 and front page) carry that an unknown man about 40 years old raided premises of Dnevni List Sunday morning. This person was protesting because of a photo, which was published as a photo of a day on last page of Sunday's edition of Dnevni List showing last year's events regarding Hercegovacka bank incident. The attacker was accusing journalists that they work for People's Party Working for Prosperity. The attacker damaged furniture and equipment of Dnevni List, threatening journalists and slapping one of them on the face. Journalists of Dnevni List called police, which came on the spot and brought in the attacker. After twenty minutes the attacker left the police car and stayed in front of the premises of Dnevni List. A duty police officer stated that criminal charges would be filed against the attacker. **Mirjana Skoko**, the owner of Dnevni List, stated: *'We hope that the police will be prompt and inform Dnevni List and also the public about the name of the attacker and his mastermind, since, obviously, this attack was well planned.'* In addition to the article on this issue, Dnevni List carries press releases of the Office of the Federation Prime Minister, **Franjo Topic**, the President of the Croat Cultural Society, People's Party Working for Prosperity and NHI who all condemn the incident. **Dnevni List** (page 2, by Valentina Rupcic) carries an editorial on the issue, which says that *'it is not a coincidence that this attack took place during the pre-election time and that the first daily in Croatian language was attacked'*. The editorial says that this attack was done according to someone's order and that politics stands behind the whole incident.'

On the issue of construction of Croat National Theater (HNK) in Mostar, today's **Vecernji List** (page 5) carries the CEO of

"Aluminij" of Mostar, **Mijo Brajkovic** who recently told a VL's journalist: *"They can lock me up, but be rest assured that the "Aluminij" will still support construction of HNK"*. The daily also quotes the Head of HNK, **Ivica Ovcara**, who says that the HNK had to contact international organizations because of pressures coming from some Bosniak political structures: *"But all the political games have not stopped our cooperation with cultural workers from the line of Bosniak people (...)* Eventually, we want to host our friends (NB: from Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla) *but in our premises"*, says Ovcara. VL reports that the small stage (130 seats) of the HNK is to be completed during October and that a construction of the big stage (450 seats) should commence in November this year.

Vecernji List (page 6, by F. Matic) carries that after the resignation of **Stipe Barac**, a Cantonal Minister of Education, who promised Serbs from Drvar that they will have classes according to a national group of subjects, new problems shake a Primary School in Drvar. Namely, parents of children of a Serb nationality demand a Serb language, employing of a Serb cadre and national group of subjects in the Drvar Primary School. The parents announced that they would stop education of their children if the Cantonal Ministry of Education does not meet their requests.

Vecernji List on idea of organizing "Balkan Conference"

Vecernji List (page 2, by Dejan Jazvic) carries that, obviously, the organizing of a sort of 'Balkan Conference' during which the states of the Southeast Europe would finally resolve all disputable inter-state and national issues with the assistance of international organizations is not possible at the moment. VL says that a discussion between **Haris Silajdzic**, a candidate for the position of a Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, and **Aleksandar Grischenko**, a Russian Ambassador to BiH, shows that this initiative is being seriously considered. Silajdzic is not in favor of organizing of this Conference because he believes that it would made

possible for the Yugoslav political top to realize its idea on re-tailoring of borders in Balkan with the assistance of the Russian Government. Grischenko rejected this idea by saying that the Russian Federation never stood for division of BiH. VL concludes that *'the idea to organize this sort of conference was not completely rejected and the BiH authorities might agree to hold it if they receive guarantees that the purpose of the Conference will be confirmation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states in the region especially since the statements coming from Belgrade and connecting destiny of the RS with destiny of Kosovo have become quite frequent.'*

Pre-election news/commentaries

*"The latest pre-election polls indicate a fantastic turn which was until recently even hard to imagine. **Mladen Ivankovic – Lijanovic** (the Economic Block HDU – Working for Prosperity) has been seriously jeopardized the position of **Dragan Covic**, the HDZ BiH candidate for the Croat member of the BiH Presidency. If Lijanovic wins, and current prognosis are in his favor, it will probably be the most significant BiH's political profit in the past seven years. Even more significant than the SDP BiH results at the last elections," Ibrahim Prohic wrote in the **Oslobodjenje** In Focus column.*

Dragan Mikerevic, the BiH Council of Ministers Chairman and the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) candidate for the RS President, said that he did not think it was the right time to experiment, and backed the continuation of the economic reforms initiated by the RS Prime Minister **Mladen Ivanic**. At the PDP rally in Sokolac, near Sarajevo on Sunday, Mikerevic committed himself to introducing the European standards in the RS, and preserving its national identity. The PDP chairman, Mladen Ivanic, highlighted the party's three main objectives, which include (ensuring) the stability of the RS, completing the reforms, and creating a society where laws would apply equally to all citizens. Ivanic appealed to the youth to vote at the elections, and to insist on changes.

Mirko Sarovic, an SDS's candidate for a member of the BiH Presidency, said *"the SDS will lead the RS in next four years*

on the road showed to us by our fathers". He said that he would support the idea to change the status of Sarajevo, which should become a district or something similar. (Blic p 7, Nacional p 11)

Vecernji List (page 4), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 5) and **Jutarnji List** (page 2) carry results of the latest opinion poll, conducted by agency 'Fibro', based in Mostar, by which a candidate of the coalition of HDZ BiH, Croat Christian Democrats and Croat People's Union for the Croat member of the BiH presidency, **Dragan Covic**, leads with 63 percent of the votes. The agency conducted the poll throughout the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, among 1,500 respondents in Sarajevo, Mostar, Capljina, Livno, Vitez, Orasje, Zepce and Tuzla. The second-ranked is **Mijo Anic**, a candidate of NHI with the gathered 12 %, and the candidate of the Economic Bloc HDU-Working for prosperity, **Mladen Ivankovic**, has gathered 7 % of the votes.

Vecernji List (page 3, by Robert Bubalo) carries that although it has been estimated that **Ivic Pasalic**, a former high-ranked official of HDZ Croatia, has numerous supporters within HDZ BiH, there was no official delegation of HDZ BiH at the public presentation of Croatian Block, a newly formed Pasalic's party. **Barisa Colak**, acting HDZ BiH President, stated that *'some of HDZ BiH members were at the presentation of Pasalic's party, however, the official delegation was not sent to Zagreb'*. Colak said that he *'believes that this split in HDZ Croatia could not divide HDZ members in BiH.'* VL carries an anonymous HDZ source as saying that *'many members of HDZ BiH were supposed to go at the presentation of Croatian Block, however, at the same time they wanted to preserve their positions in various authority structures and for this reason they were inventing that they had to go on some business trips in order to have alibis before Pasalic.'* Also, many Herzegovinans wonder as to why there is no Ljubo Cescic Rojs in Croatian Block, since he was practically Pasalic's right hand

during the inter-state campaign in HDZ Croatia.

RS developments

Glas Srpski reports (p 3) that the RS National Assembly session has been adjourned until next Wednesday (September 18th) when the deputies will most probably discuss the RS Supreme Auditor's annual audit report only. The session was adjourned because the SNSD deputies left the RS NA building because as they say "the great majority of deputies did not want to discuss the Supreme Auditor's report just because the audit report is not favourable for the RS Government". The RS NA passed the Law on electricity and the Law on Budgetary system.

Nezavisne Novine reports (p 3) that **SNSD** deputies will not attend the RS NA session, which is scheduled to take place on Wednesday. The RS NA is supposed to discuss the RS Supreme Auditor's report on Wednesday.

Glas Srpski reports (p 8) that the judge with the Banja Luka District Court, **Obren Buzanin**, issued a detention order to two Bosniaks from Kozarac, who are suspected of shooting at a police officer in Kozarac. The paper reports that the Police apprehended **Nedžad Besic** and **Emir Beslagic** on Friday that the hearing took place on Saturday and that both persons will stay in detention for a month.

Nezavisne Novine reported on the same issue (p 2).

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Sunday, 1900)

- Many incidents took place during the elections in Macedonia
- Despite disbelief of some RS politicians, yesterday's decision of the BiH Presidency was adopted unanimously
- The US Senate's resolution does not facilitate BiH joining the Partnership for Peace
- Journalists of *Dnevni List* attacked

FTV 1 (1930)

- Parliamentary elections in Macedonia: incidents at the polling stations
- The US asked Pakistan to extradite the suspect for 11 September attacks
- Introduction of order into the oil market in BiH: registration of the stored fuel started
- Re-registration of the companies in Brcko District: elimination of fictive companies