

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 17/7/2002

Print Media Headlines

Oslobodjenje: Criminal charges against Capljina company Trgopromet; Island football team arrives in Sarajevo

Dnevni Avaz: Ashdown addresses the BiH Parliament: We have to destroy the webs of crime; Island football team to play against Zeljo

Jutarnje Novine: CRA announces election rules for electronic media

Nezavisne Novine: Ashdown: Criminals in BiH want to control politics

Glas Srpski: Pensioners dissatisfied with the Pension Fund decision

Nacional: Pavkovic: I will sue Kostunica; Plan of terrorist organization Hamas failed; Yugoslav President narrowly escaped assassination attempt in Sarajevo, SFOR prevented bringing down a plane

EuroBlic: Karadzic's picture on banknote in envelope with salary; 11 policemen removed; Paddy Ashdown: Laws for reconstruction of BiH needed

Dnevni List: Elections – Anic ahead of Covic?

Vecernji List: Ashdown suspends three judges

High Representatives' Activities

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, addressed on Tuesday, for the second time since assuming the post, the joint session of both chambers of the BiH Parliament. In his 15 minute speech, Ashdown called upon the deputies to pass the legislation necessary for securing the rule of law and economic recovery in BiH. Repeating his slogan "Justice, then jobs through reform", the High Representative said that with the application of the principle of ministerial responsibility, BiH started the process of application of European standards of accountability in Government. *"Now we must turn our attention towards dismantling the organized*

criminal networks that are attempting to capture this country's institutions, and control its politics. That is why, a few weeks ago, we submitted legislation to the Council of Ministers to establish Special Chambers in the Court of BiH and Special Departments in the Prosecutors' Office capable of dealing with organized crime, complex economic crimes and corruption. Getting the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Office of the Prosecutor of Bosnia and Herzegovina working at full capacity is an absolute priority. It is the means by which we can try and incarcerate the top-level criminals who are exploiting this country's national wealth for their personal profit. " Ashdown also called upon deputies to pass the Public Broadcasting System Law. Following the address, the High Representative was answering to questions and inquiries of the present deputies. (Dnevni Avaz f.p. *"Dismantling the organised criminal networks that are attempting to capture this country's institutions, and control its politics"*, Oslobodjenje p. 7 announced on the f.p. *"If it fails to pass the laws, BIH will lag behind its neighbours"*, Jutarnje Novine p. 4 *"The BIH's path to Europe is set"*; Blic p. 3, Vecernji List p.3, Nezavisne Novine front page) the address was the second/third item on the BHTV 1 and FTV prime time news – focus similar to that of the print media.)

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, issued on Tuesday three Decisions suspending, with immediate effect, President of the Siroki Brijeg Municipal Court Ivan Brekalo, President of the Capljina Municipal Court Marinko Katic, and RS Supreme Court Judge Svetislav Stanojevic. The suspensions will apply until the High Judicial Councils review each case and decide on appropriate action. "Each of the three cases involves alleged violations of the rule of law either through a disregard for proper court procedure, or by breaking the very laws that it is the duty of judges to uphold," reads the OHR press release. (**Vecernji List** f.p., **Dnevni Avaz** p. 5, **Oslobodjenje**, back page, **Nezavisne Novine** p. 3 and **Glas Srpski** p. 3, **Slobodna Dalmacija** back page, and **Dnevni List**, f.p. and page 2, **Blic** p. 11)

Veterans Law

In a statement for the press, the US Embassy joined other representatives of the International Community in BiH in their appeal to the Federation Parliament to withdraw the Proposed Law on Veteran's Rights from this week's agenda for discussion and thereby secure the conclusion of the "stand by" arrangement with the IMF. *"We are also asking the Federation government to initiate the audit of the existing program of veterans' protection, which could serve as a basis for a more focused and rational system of benefits that could be financed from the presently available funds,"* reads the statement. *"The BiH must conclude the stand by arrangement with the IMF in order to obtain over 100 million USD of new financial means from the International Community. These funds will be of crucial importance for supporting economic measures necessary for improvement of the living standard of BIH citizens."* (Dnevni Avaz p. 4, Jutarnje Novine p. 6, Oslobodjenje p. 4)

In his Tuesday's address before the BiH Parliament, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, also urged the deputies in the Federation Parliamentary Assembly to reject or withdraw the Proposed Law on Veteran's Rights, which suggests increasing veteran's benefits. *"On the surface, quite an attractive proposition you might think...But unfortunately, things are not that simple. Not when the economy is weak, when aid is falling and debts are mounting. We cannot afford to spend money we do not have, however worthy the cause. If we do, then we will put ourselves onto the road to bankruptcy and those who suffer will be the ordinary people of this country – and that includes the veterans too...As you know, the International Monetary Fund, with the World Bank, the EU and others in full agreement, is threatening to withdraw over \$100 million US dollars from BiH this year alone. One hundred million dollars! That's a high price to pay for a pre-election political ploy to attract votes."* (**Dnevni Avaz** p. 2, **Oslobodjenje** p. 7, **Jutarnje Novine** p. 4, **FTV** and **BHTV 1**)

CIPS

In a letter to **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 9), the Presidency of the **SDP** rejects all the allegations put forth by this paper and which imply that the leader of this party, Zlatko Lagumdžija, sought to prevent the comprehensive investigation of the CIPS project and responsibility of certain ministers. *"At a recent session, the SDP Presidency unanimously adopted the conclusion proposed by Zlatko Lagumdžija ...whereby the party tasks **Sead Avdić**, the deputy chairman in the BiH Parliament's House of Representatives, to investigate the role of Minister Jadranko Prlić in the implementation of the project...The SDP concluded that the present information about the CIPS create confusion which could endanger the implementation of this project, which is of extreme importance for BiH citizens."*

In a statement for the press, the ProENS party of **Jadranko Prlić** says that it is unacceptable that the issuance of BIH identity documents is late for over a year. *"The ProENS will insist on responsibility of BIH institutions and ask international organizations for an explanation about the delay...The present media campaign about the CIPS project is again directed at maintaining the state of chaos in BIH."*
(**Dnevni Avaz** p. 9)

Dnevni Avaz rejects the arguments of Zlatko Lagumdžija and Jadranko Prlić that this paper's writing may delay the issuance of common identity documents and be detrimental to interests of BiH citizens. *"It is not the BiH interest that is endangered, but the interests of Lagumdžija's best man (Mirko Škrbić, director of the CIPS project) and Prlić's wife (the owner of one of the companies implementing the project)." The daily also writes, quoting anonymous sources, that the CIPS project is "planned to be used as a formula for the invasion of Serbian and Russian tycoons in BiH." "That tycoon lobby wants to gain control over the system of registration and identification of citizens."*

Nezavisne Novine (p. 3) reports that the CIPS Project may turn into a scandal. The Cantonal Attorney, **Mustafa Bisic**, confirmed to the daily that he addressed a request to the Federation Finance Police to launch an investigation into the CIPS project. Bisic did not want to go into details or give any explanations about the case until the investigation is ongoing. The Chairman of the House of Peoples of BiH Parliamentary Assembly, **Sejfudin Tokic**, said that the Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade in the BiH CoM, **Jadranko Prlic**, abused his position as the company co-owned by Prlic's wife has been entrusted with purchasing software for the project. The Minister for Civil Affairs and Communications to the BiH CoM, **Svetozar Mihajlovic**, emphasized that the CIPS project has to be fully transparent due to its importance for the entire BiH.

The president of the Graphic Design Workers Union, **Amer Toskic**, said that the chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Dragan Mikerevic, was "shocked" when he presented him data about capabilities of the BIH Graphic industry and its technical capacity. *"He promised to us that the will insist on searching for detail information about the CIPS project and on determining individual responsibility for this project,"* Toskic told **Avaz** (p. 10) after his meeting with the chairman of the BIH Council of Ministers. Later today, he is to meet with the BIH Presidency chairman, Beriz Belkic.

Federation government

Vecernji list (page 2) carries an article titled *"Croats in (Federation) Government don't have insight in financial transactions"*, in which **Mijo Anic**, the Minister of Defence of Federation BiH, says that although two Croats (him and **Zeljko Misanovic**, Minister of Health) were given a signing authority for financial transactions, neither of them has signed a single financial transaction so far. The daily reports that the leader of NHI, **Kresimir Zubak**, will meet with the High Representative today and ask him to appoint a new Minister of

Finance.

Cigarette smuggling

Oslobodjenje (front page) reports that the Federation Tax Administration filed criminal charges against the Capljina company Trgopromet-Jurkovic, which is owned by Andrija Jurkovic, the Federation Minister of Trade. According to the daily, tax officers discovered several shipments of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages with fake tax stamps.

ICTY-related Issues

The Chief ICTY Prosecutor, **Carla Del Ponte**, said on Tuesday that she knew exactly where Bosnian Serb wartime commander Ratko Mladic was hiding in Serbia and would ask Belgrade to go and arrest him. *"I know exactly where Mladic is and I will ask Belgrade for his arrest,"* said Del Ponte, quoted by her spokeswoman Florence Hartmann. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p. 2, **Oslobodjenje**, f.p., **Jutarnje Novine** f.p., **FTV**)

BiH foreign relations

Federation media report quite prominently about the upcoming visit of the Slovenian President, Milan Kucan, to Sarajevo which is scheduled for Thursday. Apart from regular protocol meetings with the members of the BiH Presidency and the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, it is expected that Kucan will be confronted with the controversial issue of Ljubljanska Banka pre-war savings. In an interview with **FENA** news agency (carried by **Dnevni Avaz** p. 5), Kucan said that this matter could be resolved in a satisfactory manner if there is good will on the part of both sides. *"However, we cannot regard the relations between our two countries through the prism of this problem,"* Kucan said.

Commenting on the initiative of the Federation government to boycott the import of Slovenian goods to BiH market until the issue of Ljubljanska Banka savings is not resolved, the Slovenian ambassador to BiH, **Tadej Labernik**, said that the *"boycott reminded him on the attitude of the former Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, who wanted to boycott the*

products coming from this country because he disliked its politics.” (Oslobodjenje p. 4-5)

Presidents’ Summit in Sarajevo- Reactions

In an editorial in **Vecernji List** (page 15), Dejan Jazvic notes that not a single serious problem has been discussed during the meeting of the three presidents in Sarajevo. *“Perhaps the most important result of the meeting is the fact that the two Presidents and the three members of the BiH Presidency talked without an international mediator and managed to agree upon some sort of a statement.”*

In **Slobodna Dalmacija** on page 2 Bisera Lusic says that the summit in Sarajevo was not a historical one because **Vojislav Kostunica**, the Yugoslav President, did not apologize to BiH. *“Perhaps it was **Paddy Ashdown** ... who gave the best evaluation of the summit by saying that the value of the meeting is the very fact that leaders of the parties, which were in conflict during the war, met in Sarajevo, one of the greatest symbols of suffering during the war in BiH.”*

Jutarnji List’s Snjezana Pavic writes that *“**Paddy Ashdown** envisaged correctly that the meeting in Sarajevo will symbolically mark the end of the post-war period and the beginning of the new one, in which the connections, which were cut during the war, will be renewed not because of the renewal of some sort of Yugoslavia but as a prerequisite to approach the unified Europe.”* Pavic also says that the **International Community** has been revising the **Dayton Peace Agreement** for a few years already by building the joint institutions, which are necessary for one state. *“With the arrival of Ashdown, this process has been sped up.”*

In an article in **Vjesnik** (page 8), Mario Marusic quotes Ashdown’s statement that the “way to Brussels goes through Sarajevo”. *“There is not too much euphoria and support to the Ashdown’s judgment that this is a historical meeting. As a matter of fact, there is a general impression that nearly all*

BiH media are trying to be realistic about the summit and agree that the time has come to stop using fancy words."

The **United States** on Tuesday commended the leaders of BiH, Croatia and Yugoslavia for holding their first post-war summit, describing the meeting as a *"good model for the future."*

"We note that this was the first summit meeting among the three countries since the end of the conflicts that for too long racked the former Yugoslavia," said State Department deputy spokesman Philip Reeker. **(AFP)**

Nacional (page 24) reports that Croatia will, together with Serbia and Montenegro, BiH, Albania, Macedonia and Ukraine, become a full member of the NATO in 2006. The weekly notes that Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and BiH have to fulfill some requirements (return of refugees, repossession of property, fight against corruption and organized crime), the requirements that the countries have to work together on because of the links between them. *"No one questions the advantage and developments that Croatia has over the future candidates, for example over BiH and Serbia and Montenegro. But there are obvious differences even between the current candidates, but all this will not affect the end result".*

Belgrade's **Nacional** (p. 5) reports that on Monday **Islamic extremists** planned to bring down the plane in which Yugoslav President **Vojislav Kostunica** flew to the Sarajevo's summit. Reliable intelligence information gathered by SFOR indicated that members of **Hammas** had prepared all the necessary weapons and logistics for the attack. That was the reason why the Sarajevo's meeting was protected with so many SFOR soldiers and local policemen in uniforms and civilian clothes.

Electronic Media Headlines

- A bank note with a portrait of the indicted war criminal, Radovan Karadzic, appears in Lukavica branch of Razvojna Banka
- IPTF de-authorizes 10 police officers from Banja Luka, Srpsko Sarajevo and Bijeljina for their role in war crimes
- The High Representative suspends three judges because of violations of the rule of law
- The High Representative addresses a joint session of the BiH Parliament and urges the deputies to pass the necessary legislation which promotes the rule of law and economic development

FTV

- BiH Parliament's House of Representatives passes the Draft Law on Securities Deposits and the Draft Law on Concessions
- The issue of (ir)regularities of the CIPS project raised at a session of the BiH Parliament's House of Representatives
- The High Representative addresses a joint session of the BiH Parliament and urges the deputies to pass the necessary legislation which promotes the rule of law and economic development
- The High Representative suspends three judges because of violations of the rule of law

RTRS

- Haris Silajdzic says the Presidents' Summit was a good move. "It was necessary for our neighbours to say that they have no intention of attacking BiH, changing its borders or meddling in its internal affairs
- SDS hails the Sarajevo Summit and the priorities defined here
- Directors of the RS, Federation and Brcko Tax Administrations discuss how to prevent double taxation

of excise goods in BiH

- RS government fails to discuss the resignation of the RS Defense Minister