

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 18/2/2003

| CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs) | BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs) | FED TV (19,30 hrs) | RT RS (19,30) |
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| Ivica and Janica Kostelic | Summit on Iraq | Drug dealing in Tuzla Can. | Cavic and his deputies |
| Del Ponte in Belgrade | Del Ponte in Belgrade | De-mining in question | RS MoI on fighting crime |
| EU summit on Iraq | HR on Law on State Ser. | Old Bridge project | Serb caucus in HoP |
| Pope's ambassador | FBiH HoP | FBiH govt handover | Civil servants in FBiH |

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| Oslobodjenje | Ivanic treated employees with paid leave; A grave stone of Dr. Bogdan Zimonjic also vandalised; Gas ensured by October 1; Higher petrol prices as of yesterday; Milosevic's trial – the war in Sarajevo caused by green berets |
| Dnevni Avaz | Telecom robbing citizens; Hadzipasic interested in the state of the budget; Appointments in public services according to the new Law; Trade lobby in authority protecting foreign goods; Defence requesting Delimustafic's release; Muhamed Pergic brutally murdered |
| Dnevni List | The constituting session of the Federation government was held – new government with its own program soon |
| Vecernji List | Health – the inspection of areas endangered by damaging radiation starts: depleted uranium is waiting for money |
| Slobodna Dalmacija | Statistics for the Federation published – the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton has the highest salaries |

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| Glas Srpski | The Federation Tax Administration –pursuit for 800 ‘phantoms’; The RS Association of Pensioners – what is bigger: cheque or charges |
| Nezavisne Novine | Qualifications of Minister Gojko Savanovic falsified; Agreement between the OHR and Federation authorities – the removals of civil servants frozen; Banja Luka – Tomljenovic and Osmanovic give up on changes of the RS Constitution; Carla Del Ponte visiting Serbia and Montenegro – KFOR arrest two Albanians on the ICTY orders |
| FRY Nacional | Svetozar Marovic – we will arrest Karadzic if he is in Montenegro |
| Blic | Higher fuel prices in Srpska; RS Prime Minister declined invitation by Bijeljina’s Assembly; Mensur Sehagic – no mercy for illegal building |

Political Affairs

FBiH government

Avaz pg. 1 and 3 – the new FBiH government, led by PM Ahmet Hadzipasic, was inaugurated yesterday. Hadzipasic first held a consulting meeting with former Federation PM Alija Behmen. He informed Hadzipasic with strategic responsibilities, especially in relation with the IC and projects by the IMPF, WB, GTZ and USAID. Hadzipasic stated that certain projects started or completed by former government would be most helpful for the new one, especially the functioning of the treasury (vault). After the meeting, the inaugurating session was held where the problem of accommodating five new ministries was discussed. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'The hand over ceremony in two to three days' – informed that the final hand-over would take place in the next couple of days. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 16 'Living standard in focus of government's interests' and Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – ministers agree that the respecting of constitutional and legal solutions, economic issues and the improving of living standards of citizens have to be a focus of activities of the Federation government. Vecernji List pg. 2 'Job in administration bodies is being offered to former Ministers' and Dnevni List pg. 3 'Handing-taking over of duties in the Federation government' – ministers agreed that former and current ministries will be cooperating for a while.

**Ashdown on appointments in
public services**

Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – HR Ashdown announced at yesterday's press conference that he reached an agreement with members of the SDA, HDZ, SBiH, Sulejman Tihic, Safet Halilovic and Barisa Colak to halt any further personnel changes in the federation public services until the Law on Public servants was adopted. The deadline for the adoption of the Law is March 31, and Ashdown said he was convinced it would be adopted in the next three or four weeks. "Until the Law is not adopted there would be no further appointments, removals or transfers in the Federation public sector," said HR Ashdown. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'No new appointments until March 31' – "This time I did not have to impose the decision, even though I could have frozen the appointments. But we agreed there would be no further appointments until the Law is adopted, which, I hope, the Parliament would treat as a priority," said Ashdown. Slobodna Dalmacija back page 'No appointments in Federation without law on state service' and Dnevni List back page 'There will be no appointments to FBiH's state services' – HR Ashdown said the process should prevent the patronage and revenge when it comes to the appointment of civil servants in the Federation. Nezavisne Novine pg. 5, Glas Srpski pg. 3 – HR Ashdown noted that the goal of this agreement was to establish a civil service to serve the citizens, rather than politicians. "In this manner, any eventual acts of revenge and patronage would be prevented," concluded Ashdown.

SDA

Avaz pg. 2 'Double standards by Jakob Finci' – a public announcement by the SDA as a reaction to a letter by Jakob Finci, Director of the Agency for State Service, to the CoM where he raises as problems the appointments of the acting secretaries in the ministries of foreign affairs and security. According to the SDA, this clearly shows that Finci applies double standards for he is the most responsible for not reacting in accordance with the Law to a number of appointments conducted by the Alliance in the past four months (during so-called technical mandate) without the knowledge of the Agency. "The sudden and aggressive determination of Mr. Finci only when the new government has been established in BiH causes suspicious due to its political background," reads the announcement. Nezavisne Novine pg. 6 – "The Agency has become operational as of 6th of February. Since its started working, the Agency's principles were professionalism and expertise," stated Finci.

Cavic-Osmanovic-Tomljenovic

Avaz pg. 4 'Cavic blamed journalists for misunderstandings with Osmanovic and Tomljenovic regarding the authorities' by M. Vidovic – Dragan Cavic, RS President, held a meeting yesterday with his deputies, Adil osmanovic and Ivan Tomljenovic. After the meeting, Cavic told Avaz that certain media houses tried in the past few days to sy something negative about relations of people performing public duties. "We are all obligated to follow the constitutional frames and laws because all three of us are supporting the legislative measures and believe that all issues could be solved only through institutions, not some revolutionary positions that could lead to bad relations," said Cavic. Osmanovic stated that in case of the authorities for the RS president and his deputies, he was well aware of those when he accepted the nomination for the post. Tomljenovic said that they agreed a course of the further cooperation and that they would hold meeting to talk about and solve certain misunderstandings. Added he was still unhappy with the Article 80 of the RS Constitution, and that time would show whether it would be necessary to change it. Oslobodjenje pg. 48 'Ivan Tomljenovic gave up on the changing of the RS Constitution' – a very short piece on Tomljenovic giving up the changing of the Article 80 of the RS Constitution. He said so after the above-mentioned meeting with Cavic and Osmanovic. Glas Srpski pg. 3 – the three agreed that all of them are legalists and that constitutional and legal standards should be respected.

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| <p>FBiH HoP Commission</p> | <p>Avaz pg. 4 ‘The changes of the Constitution will allow the election of Serb delegates’ – the FBiH HoP Commission in charge of filling the Serb caucus, will suggest to the Parliament an amendment to the federation Constitution that allows delegating of Serb reps to the HoP. Commission President Spomenka Micic stated this yesterday. “We discussed certain solution and at the next Commission session we will decide which option is the best,” said Micic. She could not tell whether the final proposition will be run by the OHR.</p> |
| <p>Ivanic’s decision</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3 by <u>V. Zivak</u>– the biggest story on Oslobodjenje’s front-page marked as ‘Scandalous’. The story is that Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic recently treated Bosniaks and Croats employed at the BiH Foreign Ministry to a week of paid leave. The decision was made by the ministry Collegial after concluding that a week leave in January by Serb employees due to a number of holidays) be paid. “It is scandalous that such decision are being made in the country that is in poverty. By doing this Minister Ivanic disrespected a recent decision by the BiH CoM that employees can be granted one paid and one unpaid day for the celebration of religious holidays,” reads the daily.</p> |

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| <p>SDS</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'The SDS shocked with a statements from US' (taken from FENA) – Cvijetin Nikic, a member of the Bijeljina SDS Main Board, said his party was shocked at the latest decision by the US to move the deadline for issuing certificates for helping Serbia and Montenegro from march 31 to June 15. Furthermore, the US government conditioned the issuing with the ceasing of help by Serbia and Montenegro to certain RS institutions. Nikic emphasized that it was a moral right of Serbia, Montenegro and the RS to promote the cooperation in the spheres of economy, culture, tradition and others. He also said he was surprised that the RS institutions were keeping quite about this as if it was not an important matter concerning the relations of the RS and BiH with Serbia and Montenegro.</p> |
| <p>Bajolet on Mostar</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'The city of Mostar needs one mayor' – French Ambassador in BiH, Bernard Bajolet, told a press conference yesterday after visiting Mostar that he was disapproving the structure of the Mostar city and the political situation in the town. "Mostar should have one mayor. One budget is enough for Mostar because there can be no seven different budgets in one city. The status quo of Mostar is really no longer acceptable," said Bajolet. He said the IC should finally give a sign that the time has come to solve the issue of Mostar.</p> |

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| <p>Constitutional Court HQ</p> | <p>Vecernji List pg. 3 by <u>Milo Jukic</u> 'Court building was a torture chamber?' – Regarding the criticism coming from the RS against the allocation of the BiH Court to the 'Ramiz Salcin' barracks, VL says that although HR Paddy Ashdown has passed a decision on the seat of the BiH Court, 'the question is what stops the international organizations, including The Hague Court, to investigate. In case the claims turn out to be false, deny charges by Serb leaders'. VL notes that the then judges of court marshal denied the charges speaking about events that took place when the court within the barracks was institutionalized, and that nobody spoke about the events when the prison was governed by 'the infamous Ismet Bajramovic Celo'. Apparently, Serb prisoners had said that even Alija Izetbegovic had visited the barracks-prison camp.</p> |
| <p>Ashdown on the constitutional matters</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine, page 5 – HR Paddy Ashdown said the issue of the compliance or non-compliance with the constitution, in regard to the establishment of legislative and executive authority in the Federation 'should be dealt by national courts'. The whole issue is actually about the appointment of Ahmed Hadzipasic on the position of the Federation Prime Minister. Responding to a press question as to whether the OHR did send 'the letter' and warned of the violation of the Constitution, the OHR Spokesperson, Mario Brkic, said the OHR did not comment on any correspondence they might have with any institution in the BiH.</p> |

SNS

Blic pg. 3 'The SRS asks Cavic for elections' – RS SRS SG, Ognjen Tadic, said that RS President, Dragan Cavic, should call for early parliamentary elections as soon as possible, since this is the only way to overcome the difficult situation in the RS. According to Tadic, the RS government neither made any important decisions during its one-month work, nor it demonstrated its reformist character. "This government has continued with the former government's practice. It is the generator of crisis and it will remain as such until the end of its mandate. That is the reason due to which the citizens will express their dissatisfaction, and it is expected that RS President will call for early elections in order to break up the SDS – SDA coalition that blocks the political and public life in the RS," Tadic said.

SPRS split

Nacional pg. 11 'Split in the SPRS because of giving support to the government?' – Although the SPRS top claimed there was no split in this party following the expelling of two members, the Sipovo Municipal Board announced the formation of a new party. Rajko Todorcevic, SPRS delegate in the RS NA, by the decision of the party's Main Board, was expelled from the party because he gave support to the RS government, despite the Socialists' leadership's position. Krsto Jandric, President of the Sipovo SRPS, was expelled because he supported Todorcevic. Petar Djokic, President of the SPRS, denies that there is the split in the party because of this. However, expelled socialists claim that they did not violate party principles and decisions of the Main Board. "The problems arose much earlier, and they culminated when President (Petar Djokic) said that in Vienna he had joined some Alliance for Changes, which was contrary to the Main Board's decision," Todorcevic said. After Djokic's statement, a session of the SPRS Main Board was held at which President's view was unanimously rejected.

As Todorcevic says, after several contradictory statements by Djokic regarding the formation of executive authority in the RS, Sipovo SPRS decided to support the government that could be elected by the parliamentary majority, regardless of all political combinations. Since that they did not get any return information from the party's top leadership, Todorcevic acted in the RS National Assembly according to Sipovo Board of SPRS's decision. According to Jandric, Sipovo Municipal Board of SPRS will persist in its views and will struggle for them as a new party that will, for starters, act on the local level.

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| <p>Liberal Party's imitative</p> | <p>Vecernji List pg. 5 by <u>Robert Bubalo</u> 'Change of insignia as a start of the abolishment of entities' – Rasim Kadic President of the Liberal Party announced that the liberals would launch an initiative in the Parliament with the aim of changing the Federation coat of arms and flag. He said such an initiative should be launched in the RS too. "If we have constitutional equality in both entities, then it's pretty logical to have the same insignia for both entities. And in that case, we would have an absurd situation and entities would become surplus," says Kadic and adds that presidents of the entities are also surpluses. In that context, Kadic says the High Representative already abolished cantonal governors so there'd be no need to have presidents of entities.</p> |
| <p>Tomislav Grad</p> | <p>Dnevni List pg. 7 (taken from ONASA) 'Signing of petition for remaining of Municipal Court' – the Tomislavgrad Municipal Board of HDZ Youth, citizens of this Municipality, both Croats and Bosniaks, started to sign a petition demanding the withdrawal of the OHR's decision on the abolishment of the Tomislavgrad Municipal Court and its merger with the Livno Municipal Court. Over 300 citizens signed the petition by yesterday.</p> |

DL editorial

Slavo Kukic signs an editorial in Dnevni List on pg. 6 in which he says that the new authority, despite being presented as dedicated to reforms, still does everything to maintain the status quo in the country. In that respective, Kukic does not spare politicians from either the RS or the Federation. With regards to the former, Kukic says that 'everything that integrates is anti-constitutional to them – the unified customs, the unified tax administration, the unified army, the unified police and who knows what else'. "Everything that even smells BiH-like." Second part of the editorial is dedicated to the idea of the 3rd republic in BiH in which Kukic said that local politicians were against it because they would found themselves behind the bars if the idea was seen through. Kukic says the IC received the idea with a dose of sarcasm. "A statement by an OHR spokesperson indicates it. It's said that Ashdown's office has no time to deal with frivolous issues because he has much more important business. What can you say about that? Does that mean that the gentlemen are not in the hurry to essentially change things? Changes to customs and tax policy are important, there's no question about that (...) But if they are to be used as an excuse to postpone other issues stipulated in the request by BiH intellectuals, which are more urgent and important, then something weird reeks within the walls nearby Vrbanja," says Kukic.

Economic Affairs

**BiH telecom
companies**

Avaz pg. 1 and 5 by S. N. – the daily warning that the BiH telecom companies are robbing the local citizens. According to a study devised by reps pf the IC in Sarajevo, the costs of calls to countries abroad are on average five times more expensive than in other country in the EU. The daily claims that ten minutes of talk with any other neighbouring countries costs 12,2 Euro, while the same call from any EU country would cost on average 2,32 Euro. The daily quotes some of the IC experts (no names) on the issue as saying that the BiH telecom companies are simply robbing people in the country. This and other problems will be discussed at today's meeting in Holiday Inn in Sarajevo where members of the IC, embassies in BiH and local institutions will meet today.

Vecernji List pg. 5 by Dejan Jazvic 'Dialing is too expensive' – announces that 'key international institutions in BiH – the World Bank, European Commission, USAID and OHR' are organizing a roundtable on the liberalization of telecommunication sector in BiH. VL notes that such a roundtable is necessary in BiH given the prices BiH citizens have to pay for telecommunication services.

**Terzic –
Boucher**

Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – Chair of the BiH Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, yesterday met with the Head of the Sarajevo Office of EU Monitoring Mission, Tim Boucher. The two talked about topical issues in BiH. Terzic informed Boucher about the need for the implementation of fiscal reforms and in that context underlined the importance of the introduction of VAT and strengthening of tax and customs discipline. “Currently, only 30% of taxes are being collected in BiH. That does not lead BiH forward,” said Terzic, adding that a process of the introduction of VAT and the establishment of single customs system has given in to political pressures, which postponed the implementation of reforms.

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| <p>Elektroprivreda update</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 – updates on the Elektroprivreda affair on the power exports from the RS. Drago Skulic, member of Executive Board of RS Elektroprivreda, and years-long Director of Electric Power Coordination Centre Belgrade, yesterday told the daily that the business dealings of the RS Elektroprivreda with the London EFT were performed by the Tender Commission and people from Trebinje, whose names he did not know. He further said that his firm had been engaged, on a daily basis, in some dealings of the RS Elektroprivreda, such as the organisation of secondary regulation settlements, transition costs, statistics and data processing. Skulic stressed that although ‘an exchange between the electric power distributors’ were one of his firm’s activities, his firm had not been engaged in any business dealing with the firm led by Vuk Hamovic. He agreed with the observation that the costs of power production at thermal power plants were extremely high.</p> |
| <p>Ashdown on Vilandecic</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 – HR Paddy Ashdown said he was informed that RS Minister of Finance, Simeun Vilendecic, decided to file his resignation. Responding to a press question (at yesterday’s press conf.) as to whether he would remove Vilendecic if he failed to file the resignation himself, HR replied he never announced his future decisions.</p> |

Privatisation in Brcko

Glas Srpski pg. 4 'Tender writes – failure' – only four, out of 31 publicly owned firms in Brcko, have been privatised so far. All four firms were sold for symbolic prices. According to the Head of the Privatisation Agency, Suada Fazlovic, tenders for 'Palis' hotel and 'Mladost' firm failed because due to unsuitable offers. The tender for the privatisation of Merkur was annulled because bidders did not meet the criteria. The tender for Majevisa, Tesla, Laser and Interplet was closed. There were no offers for Laser and Interplet, while applications for Majevisa and Tesla are currently being revised.

"All unsuccessful tenders will be repeated, but prior to this, reasons for a poor response should be determined," Fazlovic said. She thinks it would be very difficult to find a strategic investor for some firms, primarily regarding the Interplet firm. "The firms in Brcko are in big debts that buyers must to take over, technology is outdated and firms lost their market as well," Fazlovic stated. According to Fazlovic, the main criteria for evaluating offers for the privatisation is the anticipated number of employees within next three years, an investment plan that is very carefully revised, while a purchase price comes third. Not a single employee had lost his job due to the privatisation process until now said Fazlovic.

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| <p>Commentary in Patriot</p> | <p>Patriot pg. 9 carries a comment by Slobodan Vaskovic entitled 'Dictatorship of foreign reformists'. The author refers to Paddy Ashdown and Julian Braithwaite as the only reformists in BiH. The author says that everything they speak of and even think is a pure reform. In a rather critical article, the author makes reference to Annex A of the High Representative's Decision for the formation of a Commission. The author's interpretation of the Annex, entitled 'Macroeconomic stability' is as follows. "First the joint institutions are to be fed, and this will be done in large amounts. Then, these huge, headache-causing loans will be repaid. The RS citizens will be the ones to pay off these loans taken out by Alija Izetbegovic and Haris Silajdzic during the civil war, which were used for the purchase of arms to deal with the Serbs."The author concludes the article by saying that 'foreigners intend to put the noose around our neck'. "And in the name of reforms and democracy, we are to tighten the noose by ourselves."</p> |
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| <p>Military Issues</p> | |
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| <p>Tihic – Ward</p> | <p>Avaz pg. 2 ‘Common doctrine of defence necessary for BiH’ – on yesterday’s meeting of a Presidency member Sulejman Tihic and SFOR Commander William Ward. The two discussed the position and status of the FBiH Army soldiers and possibilities of rationalising current military capacities in accordance with the DPA. Tihic announced the need for strengthening the role of the Permanent Military Committee as the basis for the establishment of the defence Ministry at the state level.</p> |
| <p>DL editorial</p> | <p><u>Ivica Glibusic</u> signs an editorial in Dnevni List pg. 2 ‘Reduction of armies in BiH necessary’ – says that the existence of two armies and two chains of command in BiH makes the economic development of BiH more difficult and that many recommendations coming from the NATO, that BiH should downsize the entities’ regular armies (conscripts) and train the professional armies better, have not been responded to.</p> <p>Glibusic says that Sulejman Tihic’s statement, that the Federation Army will not downsize until there’s a joint BiH Army and until Croatian and Serbian and Montenegrin armies have downsized, is worrying. “Finally we thought we got rid of the wartime stories about us and them, about state being endangered, but it seems that BiH could not do without it,” says Glibusic</p> |

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| <p>Police Affairs</p> | |
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| VL on FOSS | <p>Vecernji List pg. 1 and 4 by <u>Zdenko Jurilj</u> 'Tihic chases away Lagumdzija's people' – the SDA, HDZ and SBiH's first plan upon taking the authority in the Federation is to install their people to the leading positions at the Federation intelligence service (FOSS). In that context, the parties are said to be lobbying with the OHR to appoint their people to the prominent posts in the FOSS. VL goes on to say that since the removal of former Head of FOSS, Munir Alibabic Munja, the office has been vacated for months so the SDA started a media and political campaign to install its candidates. The campaign is said to be led by SDA leader Sulejman Tihic. Furthermore, VL says that the OHR will have to get involved in the process and that the OHR is closely following Tihic's criticisms of the OHR.</p> |
| Crime fighting | <p>Glas Srpski pg. 3 – on yesterday's meeting among the RS Minister of Internal Affairs, Zoran Djeric, Director of the RS Tax Administration, Milica Bisic, Director of the RS Customs Administration, Djuro Bulic, and the RS Minister of Trade, Boris Gaspar. The participants of the meeting agreed on the manner, in which these bodies and institutions would be cooperating in the future on stamping out the crime.</p> |