

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 20/8/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: BiH missed first train for the European Union

Dnevni Avaz: Dispute over the BiH Agency for Information and Protection – the Presidency gives ultimatum

Jutarnje Novine: Senahid Sakovic, the Tuzla Canton Prime Minister, on the Polihem issue

Dnevni List: Why the wartime leader of the Bosnian Serbs has still not arrested: Karadzic protected by vehicles with SFOR signs?

Vecernji List: Faruk Balijagic, the BOSS candidate for the BiH Presidency member – Radioactive wheat imported by Milosevic's sponsors

Glas Srpski: SFOR monitors border with Montenegro

Nezavisne Novine: Presidents of the BiH entities in the Standing Committee for Military Matters

Euro Blic: Pensions via banks and post offices; Sarovic: Pressure from outside on the Srpska will stop; Legalisation of 100,000 illegally built buildings will be made possible; Dodik: Revision of the privatisation process is needed

BiH state-related issues

"If the BiH House of Representatives adopted the Law on PBS when it was supposed to do so – in July this year, the official Brussels (EU Presidency) would have before collective summer holidays in August given a green light for making a study to start the negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement," an European expert for Bosnia told **SENSE** news agency. **Oslobodjenje** published the report on the front page and p 6 under the title: "BiH missed first train leading to European Union." The European Union expert yet predicted that the RS authorities would be persistent in requesting the change of the draft, since they believed the

current solution had been imposed by the authority of the High Representative and was as such totally unsuitable for the entity. (**Jutarnje Novine**, p 5, also carried the SENSE report) At the session in Sarajevo on Monday, the **BiH Presidency** concluded there was a serious lateness in establishing the **BiH Agency for Information and Protection**. It therefore requested the BiH Council of Ministers to in a week (by the next session of the Presidency) submit names of the candidates for the Agency's heads. If the Council of Ministers does not respond to the request, the Presidency will appoint acting head and deputy head of the Agency. (**Dnevni Avaz**, front page, p 2: "Presidency sets ultimatum")

At the session, the BiH Presidency also discussed and initially agreed on the organization of the defense institutions at the state level. According to the new organization, the Standing Committee for Military Matters is likely to include, apart from the BiH Presidency members, the BiH entities' leaders and possibly the BiH Foreign Minister. *"The Presidency assessed that these changes in the structure of the Committee represented another step forward in fulfilling the conditions for the accession to the NATO Partnership for Peace Program,"* the Chairman of the Presidency, **Beriz Belkic**, told journalists following the session, adding that the final decision on the organization and work of the defense institutions at the state level would be made at the next session of the Presidency on Monday. The Presidency also supported the program of economic reforms in BiH presented by the BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, **Azra Hadziahmetovic**. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 6, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3)

At an initiative by the RS pensioners, a meeting was held in Sarajevo on Monday on the pension system reforms in BiH. The meeting was attended by the BiH Presidency members, heads of the entities' pension funds, representatives of the RS and Federation Governments and the representatives of the pensioner's associations. *"The BiH Presidency will call on the*

entities' prime ministers to urgently harmonize laws on the rights of the pensioners and carry out the reform of the pension system. The meeting on the issue will probably be held early in September," the Chairman of the Presidency, Bneriz Belkic, told **Dnevni Avaz** (p 2) following the session. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, also reported on the meeting)

The report on the case of 21 Prijedor policemen hand over to the ICTY, Srebrenica police issue

The RS Government's Bureau for Cooperation with the ICTY handed over to the Tribunal's office in Banja Luka the initial report on the case of **21 Prijedor policemen** suspected for committing the crime against civilians and involvement in an illegal apprehension. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Blic**, p 17)

Oslobodjenje, pages 4-5, published a story about the problems in functioning of the multiethnic police in Srebrenica. Asaf Becirovic says that if 24 policemen of the Bosniak nationality re-assumed their duties in the town at the cost of the BiH Federation Government as was previously agreed, they would have twice higher salaries than their colleagues of the Serb nationality doing the same job.

Federation affairs

Dnevni List (page 5 and front page) carries that the Editorial Board of Sarajevo weekly **Slobodna Bosna** has issued another press release in which they talk about threats against the magazine made by **Ismet Effendi Smajlovic**, a military Mufti of the Federation Army and advisor of the Assistant of the Minister for Religious Issues. The press release says that Smajlovic was offending and accusing journalists of Slobodna Bosna and **Senad Avdic**, its Editor-in-Chief, during a religious service in a Sarajevo mosque. The press release says: *'We are convinced that such inflammatory, petty politics statements, given by the officials of the Federation Army do not contribute to its further democratization and its professionalism and we expect that those, who continue to do it, will be adequately sanctioned and prevented in the using of Army and religion for daily political purposes.'*

Oslobodjenje, p 3, reported on the same issue saying that the Slobodna Bosna Editorial Staff sent a letter with this contents to the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, SFOR Commander **John Sylvester**, and BiH Federation Defense Minister, **Mijo Anic**, and his Deputy **Ferid Buljubasic**.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 13, by Zlatko Tulic) carries an article in which the author says that honorary President of SDA **Alija Izetbegovic** and Head of Islamic Community Reisu-l-ulema **Mustafa Cerić** gave support to **Bakir Alispahic**, **Irfan Ljevakovic**, **Enver Mujezinovic** and **Ejub Ikić** who are indictees in the "Pogorelica" case. Izetbegovic gives support to suspects to defend from outside (pre-trial release) and called on citizens of BiH to back initiative "Appeal for justice" that was launched in Bihac, when several thousand signatures of supporters for deliberation of the group were collected. On the other hand, presidents of Bosniak Patriotic Party and People's Party, **Sefer Halilovic** and **Kerim Lucarevic**, ask for extension of indictment against group of people including Alispahic, because, as they claim, he was responsible for their liquidation. The author says that the fact that Alispahic was Minister during the war in Sarajevo, when the worst atrocities were done, such as Kazani case, when non-Bosniak civilians were killed, clarifies panic in the Bosniak wartime pinnacle and position of Cerić and Izetbegovic who support them.

BiH Federation Financial Police banned payment of the dividends amounting up to 3.9 million KM to the Sarajevo Tobacco Factory (**FDS**) shareholders. The FDS Director, Sefik Lojo, said the factory would lodge a complaint to the ban, as the BiH Federation Government's officials emphasized they would honor a Entity's Supreme Court ruling on the issue (FDS ownership structure). (**FTV 1**, **Oslobodjenje**, back page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3)

All Croat(ian) dailies deal with the situation in Drvar (**Dnevni List** page 5, **Slobodna Dalmacija** last page, **Jutarnji List** page 4, **Vjesnik** page 7 and **Vecernji List** pages 3 and 8).

According to DL, **Ivan Cosic**, the Minister of Interior of the Herceg-Bosna Canton, ordered that a certain number of members of the MoI from the Crime Police Department and Special Police goes to the Drvar Police Administration in order to help their colleagues to resolve crimes and incidents that have taken place recently. DL also carries **Jadranka Garic**, the President of the Drvar Municipal Council, as saying: *'Returnees in Drvar do not want co-existence, unlike Croats who left other people's property and who pay high rent. Croats in Drvar are concerned and scared.'* Garic says that she regrets the fact that International Community does not make any moves to resolve this situation. Garic also condemned the HDZ policy because this party gave many promises during the last pre-election campaign and then they betrayed Croats from this area, who mostly voted for this party. According to Garic, many Serb Councilors from the Drvar Municipal Council live in Banja Luka although they pass decisions that refer to Drvar. JL and VL carry a reaction of **Central Association of Croat(ian) Immigrants** which calls on the Croatian Government and international institutions in BiH and Croatia to protect Croats from Drvar from Serb nationalism. SD carries a similar press release of the **Herceg Bosna Canton Associations resulting from Homeland War**, which says that in case that competent Cantonal institutions and IC do not take proper measures as soon as possible, they are ready to defend the things that are sacred for them also in the other way.' VL carries that **Dragan Puzigaca**, the Head of the Drvar Municipality, took off a Cantonal flag from the Municipality building and he put the state flag. Puzigaca stated *'The flag and coat of arms of the HBC are not in accordance with the Federation Constitution and Article 2 and 3 of the HBC Constitution have not been valid for three years already.'*

In relation to events in Drvar, **Vecernji List** (page 2, by Frano Matic) carries an editorial in which the author says that the incidents in Drvar are no news because similar incidents are part of everyday routine. Matic also criticises

competent institutions at all levels of authority for not responding to the situation but waiting for incidents to happen and only then to react with promises only. *"Maybe it will be too late because incidents are becoming more frequent and there is less understanding for suffering of a population, in this case for suffering of refugees"*, concludes Matic.

Oslobodjenje (pages 4-5) carries that parallelism in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton still exists when the **Health Insurance Bureau Mostar** is in question. The article carries that Inter-Cantonal Health Insurance Bureau Mostar, that covers Cantons with Croat majority still exists, and **Pero Milanovic** is a Head of both Bureaus, the aforementioned one and the joint Cantonal Health Insurance Fund. **Dubravko Opijac**, his Deputy, says that the joint Bureau practically does not exist. According to a representative of the HNC Parliament, who wanted to stay anonymous, money illegally ends up on the account of the Inter-Cantonal Bureau. He says that it is necessary to shut down this account and to return money to the joint Bureau.

Vecernji List (page 2, by Zdenko Jurilj) reads that the Steering Board of the Federation Pension and Disability Fund (MIO-PIO) reached a conclusion which reads that the implementation of Decision on postponement of payment of contributions for pension and disability insurance would have a negative effect on financial stability of the Fund. According to the Steering Board, the implementation would result in decreased pensions in the Federation so the Board will request the OHR and World Bank to declare themselves about the Decision.

Vecernji List (page 6) reads that 23 families from west Mostar whose flats were flooded in December 1999 are still seeking compensations from JP Elektroprivreda BiH and Elektroprivreda HZ HB. The daily carries a representative of the families, **Zvonko Pandza**, as saying that Elektroprivreda BiH, by a decision of its manager **Enver Kreso**, allocated money to 81

persons whose flats were flooded in east Mostar. *"If Elektroprivreda BiH compensated people from east part of the city only, we wonder whether the money was distributed along the ethnic principles"*, says Pandza.

Brcko District – "Laser" employees gave up announced traffic blockade

After Monday's meeting between the representatives of the **"Laser"** companies syndicate organizations, the District Trade Union and members of the District Government, the representatives of those two transport companies gave up of the traffic blockade, which has been announced for today. The Government showed readiness to help in solving problems appeared in "Laser" and to create such economic policy that would enable those companies to participate in privatization. It was also concluded that the problems, which "Laser" addressed before the Government, as well as some relating issues would be discussed at the new meeting scheduled for Wednesday. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 7, **Glas Srpski**, p 2, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 19, and **Blic**, p 16)

International Community

Glas Srpski reports on its **cover page** that even though SFOR officially announced that its action in Srbinje/Foca was successfully completed, SFOR troops continue with similar actions. Apart from regular patrolling, which is more frequent than usually, SFOR combat vehicles are deployed at the border area between the municipality of Srbinje/Foca and Montenegro, as well as in the area of Cajnice municipality.

Dnevni List (page 3 and front page, by P. Gasparevic) carries that according to military officials, who wanted to stay anonymous, **Karadzic's** supporters in eastern parts of the RS started to use vehicles with SFOR license plates when they found out that SFOR wants to track Karadzic down and extradite him to The Hague. They explain that this conclusion was made after a movement of SFOR vehicles, which are not owned by SFOR, was registered. DL says that **John Sylvester**, the SFOR Commander, confirmed that he informed a leader of the RS about

the action in the area of Foca a day before the action and this leader could simply inform Karadzic's associates what will happen. The article concludes that this is a good test by which it can be determined whether Karadzic's in(direct) associates are among the leaders of the RS.

In an editorial titled "The spirit of divided sovereignty" in **Dnevni List** (page 4) Slavo Kukic writes about the fact that domestic 'heroes' are hardly accepting changes in their brain chips and that a spirit of divided sovereignty is dominating over nationally marked territory. However, Kukic says that, unexpectedly, such logic was also supported by the Office of the High Representative. *"Recently, mister Ashdown signed decision on appointment of members of High Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils. We should leave aside the fact that some of them have got credit through that decision which they did not deserve. (...) And much more important is the fact that the High Representative himself agreed to the logic of divided sovereignty by appointing only Serbs to the High Councils of Republika Srpska and only Croats and Bosniaks to the same ones in Federation. In spite of constitutions and all efforts that his predecessor has made to achieve the constitutions that unable such divisions. Well, Paddy, you have scored an own-goal. Devil knows if you really wanted to,"* Kukic wrote.

The OHR Spokesman, **Oleg Milisic**, denied claims of the BiH Federation Defense Ministry Public Attorney, **Nura Zimic**, who said that the Federation Government sent to OHR a proposal for changes of the housing laws, by which the provisions related to the military apartments will be harmonized with the decision of the Human Rights Chamber (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 6). Milisic also denied Zimic's claims that the expert's group and OHR were supposed to have a meeting about this issue last week. Milisic said that OHR has regular meetings with the Government representatives but that this issue was not announced to the OHR. The Daily quotes Milisic as saying: *"We expect the Government to resolve this issue respecting the*

decisions made by the Human Rights Chamber.” (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, and **Vecernji List**, p 4 by Dejan Jazvic, carried a similar statement by Milisic)

Vecernji List (page 2, by Dejan Jazvic) reads that institutions of BiH started internal consultations about signing of a bilateral agreement with USA on immunity of American citizens in BiH before International Criminal Court. Anonymous source told reporter of VL that by the end of month Ministry of Foreign Affairs will analyse the whole situation and than bring eventual decisions. The same source stated that the Foreign Ministry will observe behavior of neighboring and other countries but the decision will be made on basis of evaluations, standards and needs of BiH. The author speculates that, regardless of eventual decision, and after a statement of American Ambassador Bond that USA are supporting integration of BiH to ‘Partnership for Peace’ program, the support of United States to BiH should not be questioned.

Sarovic in Rogatica: Census may be organized in 2003

Delegation of high RS officials, led by the RS President, **Mirko Sarovic**, visited Rogatica on Monday and attended the celebration of the patron saint of the municipality (**Glas Srpski**, p 3). Addressing the gathering, the RS President stated that he is satisfied with the results achieved so far in the implementation of the Annex 7 and added that such rate of implementation creates conditions for organizing of a Census in 2003.

Sarovic told **Srna** that the implementation of property laws in the RS was approaching 50%, which justified expectations that by the end of the year the RS might be ahead of the BiH Federation in regard to the percentage of the reinstated property. *“In that case the need for pressures on the RS by the international community ceases to exist, because at this point the BiH Federation is to deal with more cases of usurped property than the RS. This will also meet the condition for*

scheduling a census in BiH in 2 years at the latest, which should bring the constitutional changes into balance", Sarovic said.

President Sarovic also briefly commented on the UNHCR report on the implementation of property laws in BiH. He pointed out that the most recent results were not paid much attention to. (Blic p 17, Nacional p11)

Election related news

The Secretary General of the Serb Radical Party (SRS RS), **Ognjen Tadic**, called to all political parties that will run at the October elections to contribute to the creation of a democratic atmosphere in pre-election campaign and election process. Tadic criticized SDS and its candidate for RS President, **Dragan Cavic**. He said that it seems that rumors about Cavic's involvement in some criminal affairs turn out to be true. Tadic said that all people who are in power in the RS, except the SRS, are criminals. (Nezavisne Novine, p 4, Blic p 3, FRY Nacional p 11). In an interview to **Nezavisne Novine** (p 4), the candidate of the Party of democratic development, **Radovan Simic**, stated that the unemployment in RS is over than 50% and that the production level dropped for 20 %. According to Simic, crime and corruption have reached their peak. The Alliance of Independent Social Democrats presented its economic and social development program (Nezavisne Novine, p 5, Glas Srpski, p 4). The SNSD leader, **Milorad Dodik**, stated that if political change does not happen after the elections, the RS might disappear due to the fact that it might loose sovereignty over its institutions. Dodik added that in the coming period, the SNSD will request the cancellation of OHR authorization and transfer of responsibility from OHR to local authorities. Participating at the session of Novi Grad SDS board, the SDS candidate for RS President, **Dragan Cavic**, stated that being the biggest party, the SDS has a responsibility to constantly cooperate with all Serb parties on defining and preservation of the national interests (Nezavisne Novine, p 5, Blic p 3, Vecernje Novosti p 13). Member of the SDS main board, **Cvijetin Nikic**, welcomed the statement of the US Ambassador to BiH, **Clifford Bond**, who said

that the US have no favorites at the coming elections (**Glas Srpski**, p 4). Nikic assessed that Bond's statement represents a great encouragement to all political parties and voters. The Democratic National Alliance announced that SDS is leading an "epic type campaign" by which it deceives public. According to DNS, those who feed people with lies, cannot represent them (**Glas Srpski**, p 4). **Jezdimir Spasojevic**, a member of the SNS Main Board, requested the RS Ministry of Internal Affairs to inform the public whether it is true that the Austrian government has refused cooperation in the investigation into the murder of **Ljubisa Savic-Mauzer**, a former high-ranking police official. He explained that the SNS has information that the RS police have identified the owner of a stolen car from which Savic was killed and much more details in connection with the car, but when the RS police requested the cooperation of the Austrian government, everything has been halted. (**FRY Nacional** p 11)

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 13) carries **Zeljko Matic**, a HDZ-HNZ-HKDU candidate for Vice President of the RS, as saying that the coalition is expecting good results in the elections in the RS and to win three out of four mandates in the RS Assembly that are allocated to the Croats. Questioned what he would do if he were to be elected the Vice President of the RS, Matic says that he would do everything to make a cheaper State and make the State a service of the citizenry. The same papers on the same page carries a HKDU candidate for the Croat member of BiH Presidency, **Zarko Misic**, as saying that he does not see his HDZ counterpart **Dragan Covic** as his rival because Covic declared himself a Yugoslav in 1991 census. Misic also wonders why the BiH Election Commission allowed Covic to run for the Croat member BiH Presidency and announces that he would request the Commission to annul Covic's candidacy or introduce another list of candidates for the Presidency i.e. a list for candidates of Yugoslav nationality.

Vecernji List (front and page 5) carries an interview with **Faruk Balijagic**, a well known attorney-at-law from Tuzla and BOSS candidate for BiH Presidency, in which he claims that his party is still convinced that wheat imported to BiH from

Russia via a Yugoslav company "Delta M" is radioactive. Balijagic also claims that BOSS contacted several competent bodies in the Federation including the Federation Minister of Interior, **Ramo Maslesa**, in order to investigate into the imported wheat saying that all the party's efforts were in vain.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Danube level in permanent increase – threats of new floods
- BiH Presidency supported the economic reforms
- Will entities' pension funds merge
- Homage on seventh year from perish of the US diplomats on Igman

FTV 1 (1930)

- Federation Finance Police prevented Sarajevo Tobacco Factory shareholders from receiving 4 millions KM of dividend.
- The Council of Ministers has 7 day deadline to appoint a head of the Agency for protection of information
- The main Veterinarian office in BiH asks for prevention of the import of hoofed animals from Croatia

RTRS (1930)

- Crowds in front of the banks. Huge interest for the housing loans
- PIO Fund representatives from both entities with Presidency members
- Slovenija for decrease of tensions in Piranski gulf.