

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 20/9/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Repovci case – Interpol searching for murderers from Konjic; Parliamnet investigates into Pogorelica and Leatura cases – Who let the witness Merim Galijatovic go?

Dnevni Avaz: Safet Halilovic on the Election Commission's mistakes – Regularity of the elections is being brought into question?

Dnevni List: Interview with Cardinal Vinko Puljic – the Church is guilty for any politics or authority

Glas Srpski: Hays is returning former JNA apartments; Serb students boycott school in Drvar; A mosque near Gacko damaged; Judge Lalic commits suicide

Nezavisne Novine: Chris Patten says BiH meets all conditions set out in the Rules of the Road – BiH steps in Europe; A mosque in Kljuc near Glacko demolished; NATO delegation visits BiH – Entity armies under control of a state level body; Clifford Bond-Citizens should vote for politicians who look into future

Nacional: HRH Prince Aleksandar supports Labus for 105,000 Euros

Euro Blic: Mosque in Kljuc near Gacko demolished; Tuzla's salt to be additionally checked; A girl killed in Visegrad; Bond: The Dayton is the basic law for BiH

BiH-EU/NATO relations

BiH has pretty much met the conditions from the EU Road Maps. Parallel to the reforms which must continue, the European Commission will propose to the Council of Europe a timely drafting of a feasibility study on the opening of talks on the Stabilization and Association Agreement. This can begin after 5 October, once a new Council of Ministers has been appointed, which will be the EU's partner in the serious and comprehensive dialogue, the EU Commissioner for External Relations, **Chris Patten**, said in Sarajevo on Thursday after the meeting with the chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers,

Dragan Mikerevic, and the Foreign Minister, **Zlatko Lagumdzija**. Patten also met High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** and other BiH officials. *"The speed at which BiH moves towards Europe is in the hands of your political leaders and if people want them to move faster in the direction of Europe and a brighter future, they will press them to do that and they will vote for the political leaders who believe in those things,"* Patten told **BHTV 1 (Oslobodjenje**, p 3, mentioned on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, mentioned on the front page, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 2).

Dnevni Avaz also reports, p 2, that Patten and Ashdown on Thursday the High Technical School in Sarajevo.

European Union Commissioner for External Relations **Chris Patten** will lay the foundation stone at the new Police Academy in Banja Luka today. High Representative **Paddy Ashdown**, and Head of the UN Mission to BiH **Jacques Klein** will attend the ceremony. (**Blic**, p 6)

Vecernji List (page 15, by Dejan Jazvic) carries article titled *"Patten is saving ruling coalition"*, in which the author stresses that visit of Foreign Commissioner of European Commission **Christopher Patten** is one among many visits of western diplomats in the past weeks. *"Although it was not said anywhere, it is obvious that Patten's visit, but also visit of many other international officials to BiH, is planned to happen before the October 5 elections in BiH. Just before Patten, in visit to BiH were French Foreign Minister and British Minister of Defence. Currently, a special delegation of NATO is also visiting Sarajevo. It is obvious that in that way support is being given to so called "modest" parties, that are facing loss in the elections because of unfulfilled promises and inter-coalition disturbances"*, the author wrote.

Although BiH's road towards European integration, precisely towards membership of the EU, is long and has numerous priority tasks, it seems that it is in any case shorter then the one towards NATO projects. In order to join the Partnership for Peace BiH must meet all necessary conditions.

The formation of a standing military committee at the level of state is only one step, it was confirmed by NATO's director for the Balkans, **Robert Serry**, after the meeting with the **BiH Presidency** in Sarajevo on Thursday. The decision on the formation of a standing military committee at the level of state comes to force on 25 September this year. This is the first step taken by our country toward membership of the Partnership for Peace programme. Is it enough? *"That is not enough yet. It is only the beginning,"* Serry told journalists. The Presidency believes that this is the most important content which the defence structures have received with the new organization/structure of the standing military committee. *"They are now not only coordinating bodies, but also decision-makers. They will also be executive bodies, through their operation units of the secretariat of the standing military committee and the military commission, where, according to the existing legal provision, all current military authorities are based, in one place, at the level of state,"* **Beriz Belkic**, the Presidency's Chairman, said for his part. What NATO wants is functioning of the military structures at state level. *"Establishing a state control over the military forces is a key issue in order for BiH to join the Partnership for Peace,"* Serry emphasized. The Presidency in this mandate will appoint the general secretary of the standing military committee which will represent the military forces of our country in NATO. (**BHTV 1, Nezavisne Novine, Dnevni List**, front page, p 3)

Vecernji List (page 2, by Dejan Jazvic) carries an editorial which says: *'A further destiny of the BiH application for the admission to the NATO's program Partnership for Peace depends on the report of the high NATO delegation that arrived to Sarajevo yesterday. People in BiH know and the NATO delegation will also see that, obviously, in a apart of BiH that is called the RS they are not ready to sacrifice their political goals for admission to Partnership for Peace. Unfortunately, war goals of Serb leaders will prevent BiH to be admitted under a NATO flag soon.'* The editorial concludes that,

'although it seems absurd, it is very possible that Yugoslavia, that was in war with NATO, will become a member of this Alliance before BiH, the country that NATO was defending'.

Federation affairs

At a session in Sarajevo on Thursday, the BiH Federation Government concluded the Health Ministry was indirectly responsible for purchase of the disputed and damaging "diteper" vaccines. It therefore requested that a comprehensive investigation into the matter is launched. (Oslobodjenje, p 3, mentioned on the front page, Dnevni Avaz, p 4, Dnevni List, p 3, Slobodna Dalmacija, p 15, front page)

Glas Srpski reports on its **front page** that Serb high school students from Drvar on Thursday started to boycott the school. The students decided to boycott the school because they because their request for introduction of the curriculum foreseen for national group of subjects has been denied. According to the paper, they request to be taught in Serbian, not in Croatian language. The students are also dissatisfied because their School Principal threatened them. According to them, he said they would all be kicked out of school unless they return to the class. They are dissatisfied because their Croat schoolmates "advise" them to build themselves another school. The Chairman of the Drvar Returnees Association, Mile Marceta, stated that this NGO supports the students and blamed the Herceg-Bosnia Canton authorities and HDZ for these problems.

Vecernji List (page 3, by Zdenko Jurilj) carries that the Federation budget was damaged for 3,5 million Dollars because of a purchase of radar that, by all accounts, will never be used in the control of the BiH air space, since it was never delivered to BiH. Namely, only the first installment, amounting to 3,5 million Dollars was paid and then the competent ones gave up the whole project. This purchase was approved by the Department of Civil Air Traffic, with the BiH

Council of Ministers, as early as in 1998 and the contract was signed by **Alija Izetbegovic**, who was a member of the BiH Presidency at that time. VL says that the contract was signed without a prior consultations with an expert Commission of International Association of all air companies of the world (IATA) and European organization 'Eurocontrol'. Since this contract could not be signed without their approval they sent a harsh response saying that they do not want to accept the purchase of this radar because it would increase the price of flight of international airplanes from 20 to 50%. According to the article, leaders of the RS tricked the contract and they did not participate in paying of a single instalment because they believed that the whole project is another form of a political and economic centralization of power in Sarajevo and strengthening of BiH as a state. **Amadeo Mandic**, the Head of the Federation Agency for Civil Air Traffic, stated: *'I have asked competent institutions many times to tell me as to what happened with 3,5 million Dollars which were paid in for the purchase of the radar, however, we have not received an official response yet. Our Agency would like to get this money.'* VL says that American inspections might involve in the investigation on the purchase of nonexistent radar. VL concludes that four years after signing of the agreement none from the competent institutions knows where the money is and whether it could be get back from an American company, which was supposed to sell the radar.

Dnevni List (pages 6 and 7 and front page, conducted by Valentina Rupcic) carries an interview with Cardinal **Vinko Puljic**, the Vrhbosna Archbishop. With regard to the return of Croats, Cardinal Puljic says: *'Croat politicians do not give enough support to returnees, while International Community discourage the process of return by its double standards.'* According to Puljic, *'the Church has a task to express its critical stand and for this reason it becomes an obstacle to those, who primarily want power and who want it at any cost. Some representatives of the parties would like to order Church*

representatives to stand behind some politicians and their promises and sometimes they succeed to achieve it with some priests, however, such cases are exemptions.' Puljic also says that 'representatives of International Community usually believe that domestic politicians are immature and they impose them such solutions that people in BiH do not know as to who is responsible for these solutions.' Asked as to what he expects from **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, Cardinal Puljic says that he 'cannot talk about some great expectations'. He says that he 'does not expect anything special, besides that the HR treats Catholics as all the others'. Cardinal Puljic reminded that he had a meeting with the HR a few days ago and that the HR stated that he 'wants to open a new page in co-operation between Croats and International Community.' Cardinal also says that 'Church calls on its believers to vote at the elections and adds that Church does not suggest them to vote for some political party but for political programs.'

A mosque destroyed near Gacko

Unknown perpetrators destroyed a recently reconstructed **mosque in Kljuc near Gacko** on Wednesday night, activating an explosive device, Chief of the Republika Srpska Interior Ministry's Crime Police **Milorad Jelisavac** told reporters on Thursday in Banja Luka. He said that the police investigation into the incident was underway (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page and p 2, **Blic**, p 7). **Glas Srpski** reports on its **front page** that an explosive device was planted and that the minaret and the roof are damaged. The **RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic**, condemned this incident and commended the Gacko municipal authorities to reconstruct the mosque. Ivanic assessed this criminal act as someone's attempt to "raise the temperature" before the elections.

BiH Federation Prime Minister **Alija Behmen** on Thursday condemned the destruction of a recently reconstructed mosque in Kljuc near Gacko and said that "extremists expressing fascism will not bear fruits." (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 2)

The mayor of Gacko, **Milan Radmanovic**, condemned the destruction of the mosque in the village of Kljuc and urged the police to find the perpetrators and punish them. *"I sharply condemn this act calculated at disturbing extremely stable political atmosphere in the municipality before the elections,"* Radmilovic told **SRNA. (Nezavisne Novine, p 2)**

Pre-election news/statements

Dnevni Avaz says in a front-page story (Indira Catic, continued on p 2) that the incorrect printing of the ballots for the election of the RS President and Vice-president seems to be another scandal shaking the BiH Election Commission. A fact that re-printing of the 1,115,000 ballots will cost taxpayers additional KM 300,000 clearly show how alarming the entire situation is. "I am concerned the most about whether the election material will be provided on time. If not, the regularity of the entire elections will be brought into question," the Party for BiH President, Safet Halilovic, told the newspaper. Commenting on the issue, Fadil Mandal wrote in Dnevni Avaz Commentary of the Day, p 3, that the loss of KM 300,000 was quite good reason for holding responsible or even moving the key BiH Election Commission's officials.

Vecernji List (page 5, conducted by Gorden Knezovic) carries an interview with **Lidija Korac**, the President of the BiH Election Commission, who says that *'this Commission mainly receives complaints of political parties, that refer to campaign of other political subjects.'* Asked whether the non-adoption of amendments on constituency of three peoples on entities' Constitutions might cause a constitutional crises and blockade of the application of the election results Korac says that it cannot happen since the HR's decision is binding. With regard to **Fikret Abdic**, a candidate who is in Karalvac prison due to charges on war crimes, Korac says that she voted against his candidacy because according to the court file from the Karlovac prison that he did not turn himself in to the Croatian authorities, however, after the Interpol's report from Zagreb the Election Commission determined opposite.

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the **US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond**, met yesterday in Banja Luka with the representatives of Serb People's Alliance (**SNS**), RS Democratic Party (**DSRS**), **RS Pensioners' Party**, **SBiH** (Party for BiH), New Croat Initiative (**NHI**) and Social- Democratic Party of BiH (**SDP**). Bond also had separate meetings with PDP, SNSD and SPRS. After the meetings he said he met with the representatives of the parties, which will implement the reform. When asked whether he would meet with the SDS representatives, Bond said he never meets with SDS representatives because they are not committed to the implementation of the DPA, apprehension of indicted war criminals and a concept of BiH as one state.

BH DANI calls catastrophic the move of the **BiH Election Commission** to order the incorrectly designed election ballots for the upcoming elections. The weekly argues that in any normally organized country, the Commission's president would resign over a *"mistake which will cost the BiH tax payers over 150,000 KM."* *"[Lidija Korac] should have resigned even earlier – the day she damaged one BIH printing company and awarded the job of printing election ballots to a Hungarian firm."*

In **Slobodna Bosna**, Asim Metiljevic argues that the **NDI poll** which was presented last week and which predicted that Haris Silajdzic, Mirko Sarovic and Dragan Covic will be the most likely members of the Presidency was quite misleading. According to Metiljevic, the results may be completely different because the NDI incorrectly presumed that it is members of constituent peoples who will be voting for candidates for the Presidency, rather than people within the previously determined election units. *"In other words, citizens of the Federation (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) will be electing the Bosniak and Croat members of the presidency, while the citizens of the RS (Serbs, but also Bosniaks and Croats) will be voting for the Serb member of the Presidency. This means that Serb votes in the Federation could be a*

determining factor in the run between Silajdzic, Alija Behmen and Sulejman Tihic as could the Croat and Bosniak ones in the race for the Serb member of the Presidency." Metiljevic notes that political parties have understood this, however, and are already trying to strike post-election deals most notably with the SDP.

In a lengthy article in **Slobodna Bosna**, Suzana Andjelic and Suzana Mijatovic argue that all religious leaders in BiH are engaged in pre-election activities and have their election favorites, despite their claims of impartiality. Noting that they are not 'discovering hot water', the authors write that the Serb Orthodox Church and its officials present the SDS as the only viable political option in the RS, while Catholic Church across Herzegovina still tries to protect the supremacy of the HDZ.

RS-related news

Glas Srpski (front page) quotes the **RS Defence Ministry Defender, Branko Mitrovic**, as saying that the RS Army and the RS Defence Ministry are encouraged by the PDHR Donald Hays' statement in which he urged the Federation authorities to implement the Human Rights Chamber decision. *"This is the first time, since the Human Rights Chamber reached this decision, that an OHR official, who holds ambassadorial position, contacted the Federation Government regarding this matter. It has always been the job of spokespeople or officers. That makes us draw conclusion that the Federation authorities cannot keep procrastinating with the implementation of the decision"*, said Mitrovic. According to him, the RS Defence Ministry Defender is trying to get in touch with the OHR in order to discuss this matter in details.

Glas Srpski reports (front page, p 10) that **a judge with the Banja Luka Basic Court, Zeljko Lalic**, on Thursday committed suicide in Banja Luka. The former High representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, suspended Lalic because he did not resolve a case quickly. Lalic also wrote the new High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, asking him to reconsider his case, but he has

not received any reply.

Dnevni List (page 3) reads that IPTF Commissioner **Sven Frederiksen** removed the provisional authorization to exercise police powers in Trebinje from **Rade**

Nosovic, Milorad Ilic and **Goran Vujovic**. Spokesperson for the UN Mission in BiH **Kirsten Haupt** said that their the provisional authorization has been removed

because of their taking part during war events. *"In the period of June to December 1992, many non-Serbs from Bileca Municipality were arrested and taken to Bileca Police Station where they were subjected to severe maltreatment including beatings and electric shocks,"* Haupt said.

RS Police Chief **Dragan Gacesa** told a press conference that preparations for certifying the RS Ministry of Interior as an institution were underway and that as part of this process the number of employees in this ministry would be reduced by 1359 over the next two years.

"With this done the RS Ministry of Interior would receive authorisation and would be certified for work by the international community," said Gacesa. *"There are some 1,500 police officers in both entities in question due to their war time background",* said Gacesa and added that some 200 members of the RS police had their authorisations withdrawn over suspicion that they were involved in war crimes. He said that in order to reduce the number of police officers they would be offered 9,000 KM in severance pay and added that 340 officer already showed interest. Some 400 officers will be transferred to the Court Police which should soon be established in the RS and a number will be transferred to the SBS and the BiH Information and Protection Agency. (**Blic**, p 7

ICTY/war crimes

Dnevni List (page 3) carries article which says that SFOR

Commander **John Sylvester** called on the Hague Tribunal not to grant temporary release to wartime Serb parliament speaker **Momcilo Krajisnik**. Sylvester said in his letter that Krajisnik is the most senior Republika Srpska official that has been arrested, and he was the long-time close associate of top war crime indictee **Radovan Karadzic**, who is still at large. He said that there is a sophisticated network in the RS providing financial support and personal security to Karadzic, which enables him to avoid arrest attempts. Due to his links with Karadzic, Krajisnik is likely, if granted temporary release, to return to the RS and disappear thanks to Karadzic's network. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Glas Srpski**, p 3)

All CRO press on their cover pages are having story on ICTY's request to question Croatian general **Janko Bobetko**, who was the country's wartime chief-of-staff. Croatian president **Stjepan Mesic** sent public message to Bobetko that he should cooperate with The Hague War Crimes Tribunal as any other Croatian citizen. **Vecernji List** reads that a delegation of US State Department will travel to Croatia next week to try to help Croatian judiciary to take over the case from ICTY. Croatian HDZ and other patriotic-oriented parties are giving support to Bobetko, while Parliament and Government of Croatia are still negotiating ways of dealing with this case. (The issue is also prominently covered by Sarajevo, RS electronic and print media)

In an interview with **BH DANI**, the Chief ICTY Prosecutor, **Carla Del Ponte**, noted once again that RS authorities are minimally cooperating with The Hague Tribunal when it comes to the indicted Serb perpetrators. *"This is especially true when it comes to the arrest of Radovan Karadzic, who in the RS enjoys protection of all elements of authority – the president, Parliament, Police, Military and of the population which perceives him as a hero. That is scandalous and shameful."*

In a three page article titled "**Paddy Ashdown** only mildly reprimanded **Ivanic** over **Srebrenica report**", **Slobodna Bosna's Edina Becirevic** writes, among other things, that the reaction of the OHR and Paddy Ashdown on the controversial Srebrenica

report by the RS government's Bureau for Cooperation with the ICTY was shocking. *"As days go by, it is becoming increasingly apparent that Mladen Ivanic and the neo-nazis surrounding him are going to come out of this whole story as winners: they scored political points in the RS, and despite denying the genocide, they will stay unpunished by the OHR."*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Thursday, 1900)

- BiH has mainly fulfilled hers conditions from "the Map of Road" toward EU
- On the way to "Partnership for Peace" the first step has been made
- Newly built mosque in Gacko has been knocked over
- The official Zagreb waits for Hague charge against Janko Bobetko

FTV 1 (1930)

- The Government of Croatia officially informed about the charge against general Janko Bobetko
- The Commander of SFOR, general John Silvester, has sent a letter to Hague Tribunal in which he disagrees with Momcilo Krajisnik temporary release
- American President George Bush sent a plan of possible military intervention against Iraq to Congress
- Federal Government approved means for getting new DTPR vaccines

RTRS (1930)

- Mosque in Gacko destroyed
- BiH a step closer towards the Partnership for peace
- Chris Paten discussed BiH- EU integration processes with BiH officials in Sarajevo
- A new bomb attack in Tel Aviv