

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 21/10/2002

Print Media Headlines

Oslobodjenje: Sven Frederiksen – Politicians cannot interfere with the work of police; SDP- new president to be elected at the congress

Dnevni Avaz: SDP conflict – Lagumdžija must go!

Glas Srpski: Bosniaks violently enter church yard in Brcko: Fence destroyed by truck; Belgrade: Carla [Del Ponte] without the address

Nezavisne Novine: Sulejman Tihic, newly elected member of BiH Presidency: Authorities cannot be established without SDA, HDZ and SDS; Mirko Banjac speaks for “Nezavisne Novine”: SND [Alliance of People’s Revival] will support union with Milorad Dodik

Vecernji List: ‘Orao’ was providing weapon for Iraq

Dnevni List: BiH Election Commission: List of parties and candidates that entered BiH and Federation Parliaments

Slobodna Dalmacija: Zlatko Tomcic on eve of his trip to Knin: Someone close to Bobetko hinders Bobetko to go to hospital

Nacional: Carla Del Ponte brings a ultimatum: Either Mladic in the Hague or new sanctions

Blic: 18 rapes in RS in 8 months; A girl beaten up to death; High turnout in elections in Montenegro

Elections

A member of the **BiH Election Commission Vehid Sehic** said on Sunday that the BiH Election Commission has not violated the election law by allocation compensation mandates to the political parties that did not collect the necessary 3 per cent of votes at the general elections. He told the session of the Association of Independent Intellectuals **“Circle 99”** that the commission allocated the mandate to meet the interests of

the voters who voted for them. Sehic explained that the commission in April of 2002 published in media instructions on the interpretation of the election law. He added there have been no objections to the interpretation until the general election results are published. *"When the commission, applying the election law, allocated the compensation mandates, the political parties began complaining... The deadline for the submission of appeals is three days, and then the commission will issue certificates to those who gained the trust of the people,"* Sehic said. (BHTV 1, Oslobođenje p. 3, Dnevni Avaz p. 2)

The HDZ BiH has opposed the results of a recent general election in the country as announced on Saturday, claiming they do not reflect the voters' choice as expressed in the 5 October vote. HINA reports all more important parties in both Bosnian entities, with the exception of the SDP, have said they will file complaints contesting the regularity of so-called "compensation mandates", which were allocated to parties regardless of the election threshold of three per cent. *"These are not the actual election results. These are compensation results because the losers' results are being improved with compensation mandates,"* said Veso Vegar, spokesman for a coalition headed by the HDZ. (HINA, Dnevni Avaz p. 2)

SDS said on Sunday that it will appeal to the relevant institutions of the RS and BiH with regards to the distribution of compensatory mandates. *"We declare that the Election Law has been seriously violated in handing of the compensatory mandates about which we officially warned the Election Commission, but no official response has arrived yet. This inadequate implementation of the Election Law has damaged the SDS, but other parties as well".*

Banja Luka Professo, Predrag Lazarevic, told Glas Srpski that the coalition between SDS and HDZ would be more logical than the one between SDA – HDZ. According to Lazarevic, SDS and HDZ have much more in common than SDA and HDZ. Lazarevic said that both, SDS and HDZ want to have close relations with 'mother

countries' and that even British are aware of that now, so the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, had to respond to an article which dealt with the issue and was published in UK press. According to Lazarevic, the SDA – HDZ coalition was established with only one goal and that is to confront the Alliance for change.

Nezavisne Novine (p.6) carry an extensive interview with the newly elected member of the BiH Presidency, **Sulejman Tihic**, in which he said that constitutional changes should also deal with the issue of the name of the Republika Srpska. *"The Article 1 of the RS Constitution – for which all Serb delegates voted and none Bosniak or Croat – says that RS is an entity of Serbs, Bosniaks, Croats and others. In line with that Article, the name of the entity must be harmonized with the definition in Article 1. As things stand now, the Article 1 corresponds to the old definition, which stated that the RS is a state of the Serb people."*

In a statement to **Vecernji List** (front page), **Boris Kujundzic**, Secretary General of the BiH Presidency, characterized the financial situation in the BiH Presidency as quite "modest". He added that according to the decision of **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, but also due to the efforts exerted by the parties themselves, administrative costs have to be rationalized. Also, the members of the new BiH Presidency have to give up their membership in Steering and Supervisory Boards or private companies, although this or similar provision does not exist in the book of rules. Kujundzic also said that the BiH Presidency does not have accumulated debts and that this is a well-organized institution, deprived of parallelism.

Inter-party conflicts

The main board of SDP has adopted a decision to expel the founder of the party, Nijaz Durakovic. In addition, members of the SDP presidency Nijaz Skenderagic, Ivo Komsic, Bogic Bogicevic, Selim Beslagic, Tatjana Ljubic Mijatovic, Miro

Lazovic and the deputy chairman of the SDP main committee, Sejfudin Tokic, have tendered their resignations. Considering the party's poor election results at BiH's general elections, the chairman of the SDP, Zlatko Lagumdzija, requested that a vote of no-confidence be held [at the session] on himself, Tokic, Lazovic and Sead Avdic. The debate on the election results ended without the committee members passing a vote of no-confidence in these four senior officials. However, BHTV 1 and the Sarajevo-based media Aaz and Oslobodjenje reported that in a secret ballot held late yesterday evening, 67 members of the SDP main committee voted for and 11 against Lagumdzija retaining his position as chairman of the party until the extraordinary party congress, scheduled for November 23, takes place. (**BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje** front page, **Dnevni Avaz** front page)

In a statement for **Oslobodjenje** (p. 7), SDP vice president **Sejfudin Tokic** said that the Congress will also elect the new leadership, including the party president. *"This however does not mean that the present senior officials cannot apply – many of them deserve to stay in stay in these posts,"* Tokic explained.

In separate statements for **Dnevni Avaz** (front page and p. 4), senior SDP officials, **Nijaz Skenderagic, Bogic Bogicevic, Sead Avdic, Selim Beslagic and Miro Lazovic**, all said that it is necessary to elect a new leadership of the party at the upcoming congress, but shied away from openly criticizing Lagumdzija. *"This is not about some imagined project of removing the president,"* said Avdic. *"This is about the conflict of opinion about the nature of relations within the party between those who support intra-party democracy and those who are against it. Unfortunately, the SDP president belongs to the later said."*

International Community

In an interview with **Oslobodjenje**, commander of **IPTF Sven Fredriksen** and the future head of the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) said he will insist in his future work on the

full banishment of politics from the work of police. *"This is a clear message by the EU to BiH politicians if they want to join Europe. If politicians resist to such measures, I will ask the High Representative Paddy Ashdown to intervene."*

At a session scheduled for this week in Luxembourg, **EU Foreign Ministers** will dedicate a great deal of their time to the situation in the Balkans, including the election results in BiH. SENSE agency reports that the outcome of October 5 elections in BiH caused significant concern on the part of international officials, however, it adds that the Foreign Ministers will ask new authorities – whatever they might be – to fully commit to implementation of reforms. (**Oslobodjenje** p. 3)

The ICTY Chief Prosecutor, **Carla Del Ponte**, will visit Belgrade today and request Yugoslav officials to cooperate fully with the Tribunal and to arrest the fugitives. Most presumably, Del Ponte will meet with the Chairman of the Yugoslav Council for cooperation with ICTY, **Goran Svilanovic**. After Belgrade, Del Ponte will also visit Pristina, Sarajevo and Zagreb. It is expected that during visits to Belgrade and Zagreb, Del Ponte will focus the attention on extradition of Generals **Ratko Mladic** and **Janko Bobetko**. The Assistant to the Yugoslav Justice Minister, **Nenad Sarkic**, stated yesterday that Del Ponte failed to prove that Mladic is hiding in Yugoslavia. fugitives (**Glas Srpski, cover page, Nezavisne Novine, p.7**)

Reactions to HR decisions/initiatives

Vecernji List (front and page 5, conducted by Dejan Jazvic, titled *'VAT does not have to influence increase of prices'*) carries an interview with **Valeria Fichera**, a representative of International Monetary Fund in BiH (IMF). The daily notes that Fichera will be in charge of reform of the tax system through introduction of value added tax (VAT). Asked whether the introduction of VAT will result in the increase of prices, Fichera says that *'it is not an unavoidable consequence of the VAT introduction'*. She added that, *'in theory it, is possible*

to create such a VAT system that will have a neutral result on the change of prices.' Fichera also said that *'preparations for Law on VAT will last next 6 months and then it will take another 18 or 24 months for the implementation of that law, so that this law will be implemented in the next two years.'* *'Collecting of VAT on the state level would be the most efficient, because it would make possible unity of the economic space and it will be a goal of the law that will be prepared.'*

In a lengthy and centrally placed article in **Ljiljan**, Enes Jakupovic argues that by imposing a freeze on all removals in state agencies, companies and institutions in order to prevent the patronage, Paddy Ashdown is "merely protecting" the personnel appointed by the former Alliance. *"Everywhere in the world, new authorities bring new administration...With his decision, Ashdown wants to bring us back to the time when the Central Committee of Communist Party was making all important decisions, now revived in the shape of the Agency for Civil Service."*

In an interview with **Ljiljan**, **Adnan Terzic**, a vice president of the SDA, also complains about the freeze on appointments and removals. "I think that the High Representative made an unwise and hasty decision. However, the time will show that this will not be sustainable

Feral Tribune (page 28-29) carries an editorial by Ivan Lovrenovic in which the author says that election results in BiH would make anyone in **Paddy Ashdown's** shoes very nervous. To substantiate his claim, Lovrenovic goes on to say that the High Representative lost control during the "60 Minutes" show on the Federation TV, when the host, **Bakir Hadziomerovic**, quoted *Oslobodjenje's* journalist **Gojko Beric** *"It is true Paddy, you are not a God, but you are an authorized administrator of the chaotic state and not a humanitarian worker running a Red Cross' kitchen"*. Lovrenovic says that Ashdown's reaction to the quotation, when the HR said that he

did not pay attention to writing of some café circles and that journalists would always wrote what they wanted, was counterproductive firstly because Gojko Beric is “a top professional and because Ashdown’s reaction during the show was perceived as a general attack on journalists and their profession in general.” In that context, Lovrenovic says that such things were reminiscent of the communist times and times when **Alija Izetbegovic** divided journalists into “*honest ones and prostitutes*” and when **Franjo Tudjman** used to call journalists “*those scribblers*”.

Incidents

Glas Srpski reports on its cover pagethat some hundred Bosniaks destroyed a pillar in the fence around Orthodox church in Brcko settlement of Meraje on Friday and violently entered the church yard, preventing the construction works on the parish house to begin. The daily quotes Brcko priest, **Slavko Maksimovic**: “*They attacked the priest **Branko Djuric** yelling ‘this is Moslem land’. Also, they used a truck to destroy the concrete fence around the church. After that, the priest called the police.*” Maksimovic emphasized that he is disappointed with the work of the police which did nothing to penalize those responsible for the incident. According to Maksimovic, the Serb Orthodox Church obtained all necessary documents from the Brcko municipal administration for construction. (**Glas Srpski**, page 1, **Blic**, page 8, **Dnevni List**, page 10, **FENA**, **SRNA**)

Miscellaneous

Dnevni List (front and page 3, by D.L.) carries article titled “Ministries of Interior among tax evader?” The article says that there are many luxury automobiles (Mercedes, Audi, Jeep Cherokee...) with license plates that start with 202, 303, 606, that are registered as vehicles of Ministries of Interior. However, as the daily learned from a source close to MoI, neither customs nor taxes were paid for any of such cars. The source estimated that the damage in Federation budget is in hundreds of millions of KM, and that the situation in the RS is probably even worse. The daily reads that those expensive

vehicles are used by political officials at all levels, municipalities, cantons and the Federation, but also by their relatives and friends. *"Who and why has allowed such modern and very widespread robbery of the state, it is still not known, but it is for sure that all institutions, customs administration, tax administration and police have failed in their work"*, concludes the author.

Electronic Media Headlines

BHTV 1

- Main board of the SDP supported Zlatko Lagumdžija
- Compensatory mandates attracts appeals of the political parties to the Appeal Court
- Large response at the Montenegrin elections
- Irish voted for EU enlargement

FTV

- Another penitent story of the war crimes perpetrators in BiH
- Main Hague Prosecutor to demand arrest and extradition of Ratko Mladic from Yugoslav authorities
- Montenegrin polling stations close down at 21:00 tonight
- Ireland citizens supported the EU enlargement to east
- Ecological catastrophe threatens western Mostar

RTRS

- A month for analysis of the Orao Aeronautical Factory documents.
- Political parties have been informed on compensatory mandates in April, claims BiH Election Commission.
- Shaking in the SDP BiH.
- Special parliamentary elections in Montenegro.
- Iraq once again called weapons control inspectors