

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 21/11/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Following RS Government's decision to store radio-active waste in Kopaci, near Gorazde – Nuclear waste from Vinca unified Bosniaks and Serbs

Dnevni Avaz: Talks on the establishment of the BiH Council of Ministers – Party for BiH requests post of the prime minister designate?; OHR's Oleg Milisic – Occupancy rights could not be sold

Dnevni List: Meeting of Steering Board of Peace Implementation Council in Brussels: Economic situation in BiH worrying

Vecernji List: Former Finance Minister about scandal in Leutar case: Police knows where half million is

Slobodna Dalmacija: Analysis: Citizenry of Bosnia and Herzegovina sinks into poverty: Half the citizenry lives in poverty

Glas Srpski: Serious warning from Visegrad "Metalgas": Households packed with butane bombs; Bijeljina: Witnesses heard

Nezavisne Novine: How was the Banja Luka company "Krajina Borac" privatized? – "Terranova" is Minister Vilendecic's property; Conflict between inspector of BiH Federation MUP and Owner of "Avaz": Zoran Cegar runs away from Sarajevo because of Fahrudin Radoncic's threats

Blic: Njegus: President of Lopare's Socialists threatens Police Chief; Jovicic: Budget damaged for 1.7 million; Ivanic: Revenues of customs and taxation to entities

Vecernje Novosti: VMA's head: We have not nursed Mladic

FRY Nacional: Sljivancanin with a bomb on a DOS delegate

PIC Steering Board session in Brussels

The education reform in BiH will be in the focus of the Thursday's session of the Peace Implementation Council's

Steering Board at the level of political directors in Brussels. The Chief OHR Spokesman **Julian Braithwaite** told journalists in Sarajevo on Wednesday that, in the course of his stay in Brussels, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, would also address the Committee for Foreign Policy and Security Matters over the transfer of the authorities from the current IPTF to the future EU Police Mission at the end of this year. Apart from the education, other topics at the PIC Steering Board session will include the economic situation in the country and the war crimes processing in BiH. The session will be attended by a BiH delegation comprising BiH Presidency Chairman Mirko Sarovic, BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Dragan Mikerevic, Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija, Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Minister Azra Hadžiahmetovic and entity prime ministers, Alija Behmen and Mladen Ivanic. According to Braithwaite, the High Representative will appeal on the BiH authorities to carry out necessary reforms including the establishment of a single customs system, introduction of VAT at the state level and the removal of all obstacles to normal business operations. He will also urge that younger and non-compromised people are appointed as leading force in carrying out these reforms. (**BHTV 1**, **FTV**, **Oslobodjenje**, p 3: "Equal rights for children in schools", **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2: "Reforms in education and economy are crucial for the reconciliation and sustainable development of BiH", **Dnevni List**, front and p 3, "Economic situation in BiH worrying", **Nezavisne Novine**, p 4, **Glas Srpski**, p 3 – a brief mentioning of the PIC session with specifying names of the BiH delegation, **Blic** p 7, FRY **Nacional** p 11)

The **BiH officials** left on Wednesday for Brussels to attend the PIC Steering Board session there, and they on the occasion hired an aircraft owned by the Zagreb-based Krila Company, a rent of which cost \$16,300. As authorized persons in the state institutions claim that the plane was hired to reduce travel expenditures, a source from a BiH aviation company told *Oslobodjenje* that *"hiring of a plane in this company would cost domestic politicians approximately \$14000."* (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, p 3)

The Orao affair, building capacities of the BiH courts to

process war crimes, reforms in the sectors of education and economy, and the political situation in BiH in general were the main issues discussed during a Wednesday night dinner in Brussels organized by the Danish EU Presidency for the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, and the political directors of the PIC Steering Board members. During the dinner, Ashdown also addressed a so-called OHR exit strategy foreseeing much bigger engagement of the BiH domestic authorities in the implementation of all necessary reforms, as well as a significant reduction of the OHR staff in coming years, OHR Chief Spokesman **Julian Braitwaite** told **Dnevni Avaz** (p 2: "The High Representative presents a plan of OHR departure").

The RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, stated in Banja Luka on Wednesday: *"I will request at the session of the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels that customs income and taxes remain on the entity level."* Ivanic also said that RS does not accept single customs or VAT at the state level (**Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Blic** p 7, **Vecernje Novosti** p 12).

Post-election talks

Dnevni List (front and page 5, by Miso Relota) offers its view of the post-election situation in BiH. In the first part of the editorial, Relota retells and compiles reports from the past few days regarding the post-election combinations but in the second part of the piece goes on to say that the US Ambassador to BiH, **Clifford Bond**, the High Representative for BiH, **Paddy Ashdown**, and the Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**, and their advisors are playing a crucial role in the process of forming of authority at entities and state levels. In that context, Relota says that Bond and Ashdown do not share the common ground as to who should be carriers of the authority at the state level and that the rapport between the two is in fact a reflection of relations between the US and Europe. The author goes on to say that sources close to the IC say that there are talks about forming of a new Alliance which would include SDP, S BiH, SNSD, NHI, Working for Prosperity and PDP and that this option

is being supported by Ambassador Bond and that unofficial information say that the option is also supported by PDHR Hays.

Following the confirmation of the election results, the political parties are currently discussing on a possible share of the top posts in the legislative and executive authorities, wrote E.Sarac and M. Vidovic in a **Dnevni Avaz** story on the issue (front page, p 4). The Party for BiH leader **Safet Halilovic** told the newspaper that the Party would request the post of the BiH Prime Minister designate if its concept of government of the BiH unity is accepted. The SDA Vice-president **Adnana Terzic** said the Party would not mind if Party for BiH's Haris Silajdzic is nominated for the post of the BiH Prime Minister designate. The HDZ leadership has till not discussed the possible share of the top posts considering it too early, according to the party's Vice-president **Niko Lozancic**. *"The parliamentary majority must be established first and only than we can talks about the distribution of the individual posts,"* SDS Spokesman **Dusan Stojicic** told Dnevni Avaz.

Vecernji List (page 2, by Robert Bubalo) carries an editorial saying that the joint platform that HDZ and SDA will sign is a ground of the future Federation Government. The editorial also says: *"All proposals of **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, whose opinion is now being absolutely respected within HDZ and SDA, are included in this platform. It is obvious that each Lord's move is being welcomed by them and that none dares to criticize him, but SDP that has nothing to lose after the elections' failure."* The editorial goes on to say that such behavior is understandable since these two parties felt fury of the High Representatives more than the others. The editorial also says: *"For these reasons it is logical that that fear rules in their lines, since the High Representative does not need reasons to destroy someone's political career... The new relations will, perhaps, bring more cooperation on the relation OHR-executive authority, however,*

the question is whether it will improve the things crucially.” The editorial also says that SDS has even become obedient and that Paddy’s finger is a constant threat to legally elected officials. The editorial concludes: *“The HDZ-SDA platform is logical, however, the question is as to what extent it is sincere. The difference between these two parties is obvious: none from either SDA or HDZ has ever joined HDZ, that is, SDA.”*

Whether the RS will soon get the first post-war Government with four years mandate, depends mostly on the current RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic (Ekstra Magazin, p 15, by Danijela Vujic)**. These days, Ivanic is exposed to maybe the strongest political pressure in his entire life: he is under the pressure of internationals which does not allow him to, as he wanted in the first place, establish new RS Government with SDS. On the other hand, the pressure coming from SDS does not allow him to establish a minority Government composed from the PDP and RS Socialist Party Ministers. Thirdly, pressure coming from **Milorad Dodik’s** SNSD, does not allow Ivanic to maintain the image of a reformist in the eyes of international community, without giving the Prime Minister’s chair to his predecessor. The Ekstra Magazin source claims that, at certain point, Ivanic lost his temper and told international mediators, SDS and Dodik that he is no longer interested in negotiations and that he and his party will be in opposition. Of course, that is when the real panic begun as it is impossible to imagine establishment of any new RS Government without Ivanic. As the things stand now, Ivanic has the next two weeks to decide between two final offers: SDS one and the one advocated by Dodik. Most presumably, the decision will be made in the next two weeks and the choices are: either the RS will have a Government without SDS and SNSD or it would not have it, which means that current Ivanic’s Cabinet would continue working unless the US Ambassador, **Clifford Bond**, makes an offer to the Prime Minister so tempting that he cannot refuse it.

Dnevni List (front and page 7, conducted by Drazen Bosnjak, titled "*They have won battle, but not war*") carries an interview with **Zlatko Lagumdzija**, the SDP President. With regard to the Leutar case, Lagumdzija says that **Mustafa Bisic**, the Prosecutor in this case, has shown that he is completely incompetent to do his job and that Bisic should resign. Lagumdzija added that in case that Bisic does not do it, **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative for BiH, should remove him and according to Lagumdzija, people from the International Community, who are in charge of the judiciary reform, are responsible for the fact that Bisic has not done it already. Talking about the IC, Lagumdzija criticizes some IC representatives saying that some of them have been here so long that they have forgotten as to what their mandate is, while on the other hand some IC representatives have just arrived and they do not know much about the situation in BiH and for this reason their results are even poorer. Asked about the information that the HR was thinking about his removal, Lagumdzija says that it is not a secret and that some well-intentioned people suggested him to go abroad for a few years, not as a BiH representative, but as the representative of the international institutions, however, he does not even think about it. Lagumdzija also says that the national parties that won the elections and some structures of the IC want to create an illusion that multi-ethnic parties are not the future in BiH because they cannot gather people, and there is a thesis that BiH can be saved through the national parties that will divide BiH. Lagumdzija says that he strongly believes that such plans belong to the past. Asked whether it is possible to form the authority without the national parties at the state level, Lagumdzija says that it is possible and that he does not want to say yet as to who are those who want to obstruct it since it is, perhaps, still possible to make them come to their senses.

In accordance to the Constitutional Changes, the House of People in the Federation Parliament should have 17 Serbs.

However, there are only 9 of them. (The House of People is formed of Cantonal Assemblies' delegates). According to vice-president of the Electoral Commission **Vehid Sehic**, the only solution is that Serb candidates who did not get enough votes at the elections should be delegated. But, the BiH Constitution does not foresee such a solution. Therefore, the Constitution should be changed, but that cannot be done because that is the Parliament's job and the Parliament cannot be constituted because of the lack of Serb delegates. *"Due to that we will ask OHR to help. The High Representative should make a temporary decision that would enable forming of the Federation Parliament which first task would be to change the Constitution"*, Sehic said. (FRY **Nacional** p 10)

International community activities; reactions to OHR initiatives

A one-day conference on **fighting organized crime in the Balkans** is to take place on Monday in London. The conference has been prepared by the British Government and the introductory speeches will be delivered by the British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and the Interior Minister David Blunkett. The British Prime Minister Tony Blair, EU's Javier Solana and Chris Patten, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, UN Administrator in Kosovo Michael Steiner as well as many other international officials are expected to attend the conference, according to OHR Chief Spokesman **Julian Braithwaite**. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 3).

Blic (p 2) reports that representatives of political parties and the international community these days discuss tasks given by the High Representative Paddy Ashdown – implementation of six reforms in six months. The most burning issues are the customs' reorganisation and reform of the Council of Ministers. For the time being the RS politicians are avoiding to say what has been achieved in these talks, what proposals they have and whether that is a step toward transferring important entities' competence to the state level. *"Our aim is not to change your Constitution, but to create a Council of*

Ministers that would be functional, unburdened with unnecessary bureaucracy and which would implement economic and political reforms needed for BiH entering the European Union," **Oleg Milisic**, OHR spokesman, told Blic. According to his words, thus far two meetings with representatives of 14 parties (that will participate in the BiH House of Representative) have been held, but almost everyday there are unofficial talks with politicians. He claims there is a general agreement of politicians on abolishing the post of rotating chairman in the CoM. Milisic said that IC positively assessed BiH politicians' mood regarding the CoM reform.

The Chairman of the SNSD Executive Board, **Nebojsa Radmanovic**, stated that the reform of the BiH Council of Ministers, in order to improve its efficiency, is not under question (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4). According to Radmanovic, that is what **OHR** wants and what the representatives of RS and BiH Federation political parties want. However, that is the only thing on which the above mentioned agree, claims Radmanovic. In his view, it is disputable that parties from the Federation want bigger number of Ministries, and no rotation in chairmanship. Parties from the RS do not support this idea presented by OHR and Radmanovic confirms that that is true: RS parties do not want more Ministries nor the cancellation of rotation principle. The daily quotes Radmanovic as saying: *"If they manage to convince us with arguments, we would not be stubborn"*. He also said that he is pessimistic and that it will be very difficult to harmonize such different views.

Dnevni List (front and page 3) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (back page) carry FENA's report in which the Federation Justice Minister, **Zvonko Mijan**, supports a determination to have war crimes processed in BiH, as recently made topical in a joint statement by **Paddy Ashdown and Carla del Ponte**, the High Representative for BiH and Chief ICTY Prosecutor respectively. *"Processing of cases of war crimes within the BiH judiciary is necessary and possible, and the only logical solution because*

it is obvious that The Hague Tribunal will not be able to process all the cases due to its capacity”, says Minister Mijan. Minister Mijan is convinced that the ongoing reform of the BiH judiciary will result in strengthening of rule of law which is a guarantee that it could meet the new challenges including the war crimes. “In that sense it is necessary to create pre-requisites for functioning of the BiH Court in its full capacity”, says Minister Mijan.

War crimes

Globus (page 19, by G.M.) reads that the Chief ICTY Prosecutor, **Carla del Ponte**, decided to pay a visit to Sarajevo after reading negative reports about the work of **Paddy Ashdown’s** office, reports that were prepared by del Ponte’s associates. According to the reports, Ashdown took a few decisions that contravene the policy of cooperation with the ICTY i.e. that Ashdown removed **Munir Alibabic Munja**, former Head of FOSS, whose work was commended by del Ponte. Globus goes on to say that Ashdown’s office stated Alibabic’s “*lack of cooperation with The Hague*” as one of the reasons behind the removal which in del Ponte’s eyes is not only incorrect but impudent too. Globus also reports that the BiH press covered an alleged letter by **Radovan Karadzic** who allegedly commented the change at the helm of the OHR as “*departure of Ferdinand (Wolfgang Petritsch) and arrival of our friend (Paddy Ashdown)*”. According to Globus, del Ponte is not happy that the FOSS is now being run by **Ivica Vukusic** who is believed to be an obstructionist in the cooperation with the ICTY. Finally, Globus says that Alibabic told the weekly that he has already sued Ashdown with the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The ICTY Chief Prosecutor, **Carla del Ponte**, stated on Wednesday that the former Commander of the RS Army, **General Ratko Mladic**, is in Serbia and that “*he walks freely in Belgrade*” (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Glas Srpski**, p 7). Del Ponte also stated for Radio B92 that there is no will to arrest Mladic. After meeting the UN Secretary General, **Kofi Annan** in Belgrade, del Ponte said that “*Mladic is being protected in*

Serbia, especially by a part of the Army". The daily quotes del Ponte as saying: "Neither the Army nor the police do not do nothing to arrest him."

*"General **Branko Krga**, deputy commander of the Yugoslav Army General Staff, has not denied that Ratko Mladic, former commander of the Serb forces, is moving freely around Serbia", – this is what Hague Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Carla Del said, confirming that she met Krga in Belgrade on Tuesday's night. In a statement to journalists following her meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Del Ponte also said that she had not received any guarantees from Krga that Mladic would be arrested. She said that the discussion about Mladic was the reason for her meeting with Gen. Krga and his aides. The Hague chief prosecutor confirmed on Tuesday's report in The Washington Post that, during her visit to Belgrade last month, Mladic visited Belgrade's Konak restaurant at the same time as she was staying at the Swiss ambassador's residence nearby. (FRY **Nacional** p 3, **Vecernje Novosti** p 9, **Blic** p 17)*

*The **RS Commission for search after the missing persons** possesses information that the Bosniacs have re-locate the bodies of 26 Serb civilians from the location near Motel in Bosanski Petrovac. The Serb civilians were murdered by the Muslim troops under the command of General **Atif Dudakovic** in September 1995."*

*The above was confirmed on Wednesday by a member of the Commission. He added that according to some information, the bodies of the murdered Serb civilians were taken and buried at unknown location in the area of Bosanski Petrovac. The Head of the RS Government Bureau for Relations with the ICTY, **Dejan Miletic**, confirmed to Srnanews agency that the RS authorities are compiling evidence against General Dudakovic, after which the criminal proceedings would be brought. (FRY **Nacional** p 10)*

<p>Former Federation Finance Minister Nikola Grabovac on Leutar case</p>

Vecernji List (front and page, conducted by Zdenko Jurilj) carries an interview with a former Federation Finance Minister **Nikola Grabovac**, in which he talking about 500.000 KMs paid out to the protected witness number 30 in the Leutar case, **Merim Galijatovic**, says: *"This Ministry (Ministry of Finances) has nothing to do with the money. The 500.000 KMs can only be traced by the Federation Ministry of Interior on whose account the money was paid. There is an invoice that the money "settled" on their account. It is not the problem in the mode of the payout of the money, the problem is whether the money, after all that happened, should be paid out to the protected witness before the end of the process"*. Grabovac goes on to say that there is a legal possibility that the Federation budget gets refunded through a lawsuit against Galijatovic and eventual confiscation of Galijatovic's property.

RS affairs

There is a panic amongst both Bosniaks and Serbs living in Gorazde, who live on two sides of the Soca RS military storehouse in the town's suburb of **Kopaci**. And they are all asking whom they would sell their fruits and vegetables to if the Soca facility is transformed into a **nuclear waste** storehouse. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, pages 4-5: "Nuclear waste from Vinca unifies Bosniaks and Serbs")

Eight witnesses appeared yesterday before the Bijeljina Basic Court to testify in the case of "Orao" Institute officials (**Glas Srpski**, cover page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 6). The hearing took place behind the closed doors, no media were allowed to attend. The daily quotes the RS Interior Minister, **Dragomir Jovicic**, who said yesterday that during the investigation of "Orao" Institute documentation, no contract was found yet that would link this company directly with the export of military equipment to Iraq. According to Jovicic, the equipment was sold indirectly, through some other companies, therefore, through Interpol, bank accounts with Yugoslav Yugarant Bank and some other banks in Hong Kong, Frankfurt and United States are being checked. (**Blic** p 7, **Vecernje Novosti** p 5)

Nezavisne Novine (p 2) reports that the Banja Luka Basic Court released former RS Minister for Trade and Tourism, **Nikola**

Kragulj, from charges that he misused his position and authorization. According to Kragulj, the Court did not give up under the media pressure and he expected such decision.

Director of AD "Krajina Borac", **David Tomic**, claims that RS Finance Minister, **Simeun Vilendecic**, and former official of "Krajina Borac", **Mihajlo Kovacevic**, have misused their positions and illegally bought the shop owned by the company and registered it as a new one, known as "Terranova" (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 3). Tomic claims that Vilendecic misused his position in the time when he was the RS Deputy Finance Minister and member of the Steering boards of "Krajina Borac" and "Zepter Fund".

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Wednesday, 1900)

- BiH delegation arrived in Brussels for tomorrow's session of PIC
- "Bosnian Ideal Future" on USA list of financial supporters of terrorism
- Carla Del Ponte accused part of FRY Army of protecting Ratko Mladic
- Fight against terrorism could put aside NATO plans of expansion towards east

FTV (1930)

- While Ratko Mladic walks freely in Belgrade, there is no political will for his arrest, stated Carla del Ponte
- Kofi Annan finished tour on Balkan in Zagreb
- In the process against 4 accused persons in "Orao" case, 8 witnesses will be heard

RTRS (1930)

- Del Ponte demands arrest of Mladic
- Witnesses in Orao case heard
- Former minister Kragulj released from charges
- Seven countries expect to be admitted into NATO