OHR BiH Media Round-up, 21/8/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Payment of dividends to the FDS shareholders – Nijaz Durakovic signed the document of the share of the profit

Dnevni Avaz: Following the ultimatum to the Council of Ministers (concerning the BiH Information and Protection Agency) – Mikerevic responds to Belkic

Jutarnje Novine: After another terrorist act in Janja – Who protects terrorists in BiH?; John Sylvester on BiH's accession to the Partnership for Peace – Starting point is a single defense ministry

Dnevni List: The indictment for sale of the Mostar Ero Hotel – Bender accused of financial fraud worth up to 2.5 million KM

Vecernji List: Mostar taken of the list of hosts for Euro 2008 (football championship)

Glas Srpski: RS Pension Fund prepared for reforms – Pensions form the private fund

Nezavisne Novine: John Sylvester sent a letter to the BiH Presidency – BiH may join NATO only with a single defense ministry

Blic: Mladen Ivanic, the PDP party: "the RS is a more stabile part of BiH"; Gojko Savanovic: "Primary school education will last nine years starting next year"

BiH – European integrations

The SFOR Commander, **John Sylvester**, sent a letter to the **BiH Presidency** members in which he confirmed a NATO position that the creation of a single defense ministry at the state level was actually one of the main pre-conditions for BiH's accession to the Partnership for Peace Program. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 5, announced on the front page, **Glas Srpski,** p 3, **Nezavisne Novine,** cover page and p 3, **Blic**, p 3). **Nezavisne Novine** also carries the statement

of the OHR Spokesman, **Patrik Volf,** who said that BiH needs a lot of reforms in order to be admitted to Partnership for Peace.
The Chairman of the BiH Presidency, **Beriz Belkic**, confirmed in a statement for **RS Radio** given on Tuesday that the Presidency would change the structure of the Standing Committee for Military Matters (**SCMM**) but that this was still far away from entering the Partnership for peace program. He said that it was certain BiH would have to establish a single defense ministry. However, he added that was not the optimist this would happen before next year. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

The Chairman of the BiH Council of Minister, **Dragan Mikerevic**, supported on Tuesday a state Presidency's decision to reform the structure of the SCMM assessing it a step forward towards the establishment of a single army. *"The establishment of a SCMM secretariat is a good thing, but it is needed to ensure protection instruments in order to avoid majorisation,"* Mikerevic said in Ugljevik, where he visited the mine and the thermo-electric power plan located in the town. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2) According to **Glas Srpski** (p 3),Mikerevic also recalled that BiH and Yugoslavia are the only two countries that are not members of the Partnership for Peace program. The daily quotes Mikerevic: *"Most presumably, Yugoslavia will join PfP very soon and than the BiH would remain the only country out of that program. That would be a disaster for BiH, as well as for the RS."*

In an interview with **Dnevni Avaz** (front page, p 5), Mikerevic responded to an ultimatum set by the BiH Presidency to the Council of Ministers regarding the submission of the names of the candidates for the heads of the state **Information and Protection Agency**, saying that the lateness had been caused by a Council's wish to select the candidates on the basis of a public competition (vacancy notice published in the newspapers). The Council decided to do so in order to avoid possible criticism that it was selecting candidates on the basis of political suitability.

The outgoing Head of the European Commission's Delegation to BiH, **Hansjoerg Kretschmer**, told the FTV 1 on Tuesday that BiH was still at the very beginning of its integration into the European Union. *"It is unrealistic to expect that BiH accedes the Union in less than 15 years following the Dayton Agreement's signing,"* he said. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

Dnevni List (page 7 and front page) and **Vecernji List** (page 4, by **Dejan Jazvic**) carry a press release of the **BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, which says that they judge media writings on the involvement of the BiH Embassy in Moscow in human trafficking as ungrounded. The press release also says: '*The BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not received an anonymous letter, that journalists manipulate with and by which employees of the BiH Embassy in Moscow are being allegedly accused of helping human trafficking.*' VL carries on the same issue: '*In its attempt to deny existence of an anonymous letter, the aforementioned Ministry actually confirmed that an investigation on criminal activities in the Moscow's Consulate was carried out in June and July at the request of the State Border Service and some suspicions, no matter whether they are anonymous or not, had to exist in order to make them conduct the investigation.*'

(Oslobodjenje, p 3, Dnevni Avaz, p 4 also report on the issue)

Pre-election campaign

Both Banja Luka dailies carry extensive reports from yesterday's press conference of the RS Prime Minister and President of PDP, **Mladen Ivanic (Glas Srpski,** p 4, **Nezavisne Novine,** p 5, **Blic**, p 3, **FRY Nacional**, p 11, **Vecernje Novosti**, p 13).Ivanic spoke about the priorities of his party and these are as follows: stable RS, economic reforms, efficient application of laws. Both dailies quote Ivanic: *"The RS is more stable part of BiH and we will continue to work on its stability. In comparison to surrounding countries, the RS has the lowest level of political conflicts."* Commenting on the election campaign, Ivanic stated that his party will focus on

presentation of its own plans, not on other parties. However, he criticized the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats, led by **Milorad Dodik,** by saying that SNSD is campaigning using threats, sensationalism and political primitivism. He also commented on SDS campaign and said that SDS should make up its mind as it frequently changes its views. According to **ONASA** and **Oslobodjenje** (p 3), Ivanic also said that the situation in the RS judiciary was still dissatisfactory. He emphasized that the situation in this sector was however *"an achievement of the international institutions, since no one else had possibility to act in this area."*
In an interview to **Nezavisne Novine** (p 4),the HDZ candidate for BiH Presidency, **Dragan Covic,** stated that he is absolutely sure that he will win the elections, as he believes that the election results will reflect the reputation of his party. Covic said that BiH Presidency must become an institution that can help to achieve permanent stability of BiH, both politically and economically.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 18) carries a report from a HDZ BiH press conference held in Livno. According to **Barisa Colak,** the acting President of HDZ BiH, the party expects even better results than the ones achieved in the last elections. Colak hopes that it would be the same in the Herceg-Bosna Canton (Canton 10) despite internal HDZ conflicts in the canton.

Dnevni List (page 11) carries a reaction of Croat Party of Rights of BiH (HSP BiH) in which the party asks for explanation related to Federation Government's program of reconstruction worth 18 million KM. HSP BiH says that because of non-provided 6 million KM planned for reconstruction of 450 houses in Herzegovina, position of 1,000 refugees and DPs is endangered. Therefore, HSP BiH asks for help from OHR and OSCE in a way that they get involved in a dialogue with Federation Ministry of Social Affairs and NGOs and find a solution.

Vecernji List (page 2, by Dejan Jazvic) carries an editorial in which the author renders the announcement by **Azra Hadziahmetovic,** the BiH Minister for Foreign Trade and

Economic Relations, in which she promised opening of 60.000 jobs. Jazvic says that it is yet another pre-election promise, because Hadziahmetovic said that a former plan of the former Federation of BiH Finance Minister, **Nikola Grabovac,** to provide jobs to 30.000 people and the subsequent failure of it, should not be ascribed to the Alliance for changes because the Alliance never stood behind Grabovac's promises. *"She waited two years to tell us that and now she is probably expecting that there will be enough fools with a right to vote who will believe that the same political alliance will be able to create 60.000 jobs in the next two years",* says Jazvic.

RS-related news

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 13, by Petar Milos) carries an editorial in which Milos comments on the recent statement by the SFOR Commander **John Sylvester** who said that *"RS authorities, including the local population and local police co-operated with soldiers of international forces"* during the yet another failure to capture Radovan Karadzic. The author says that Sylvester's statement perhaps shows the key to the problem i.e. that the international forces cannot arrest Karadzic because of the very co-operation with the local population, police and RS authorities. The author goes on to say that Sylvester, with his statement, actually grants amnesty to the RS and its authorities for not arresting Karadzic, even more that Sylvester shows the Serbs as the victims in the whole deal. *"Anyway, it showed that no Serb, regardless how poor he/ she is, never wanted to give SFOR any useful information about Radovan not even for 5 million offered by the IC",* says Milos and adds that although media extensively reported on the failure to capture Karadzic, the media stay silent to successful Serb actions of intimidation of Croats in the Drvar area where vandals cut off a wooden cross that paid tribute to fallen Croat defenders.

The RS PIO Fund prepared and forwarded to the RS Government the laws referring to essential changes of the PIO system (**Glas Srpski, cover page).** In line with the proposed changes, establishment of the private pension funds is envisaged.

According to the RS PIO Fund Director, **Ostoja Kremenovic,** the Fund is ready to open discussions on the issue and to begin the reform of the entire system, in line with the conclusions adopted by the RS Government and RS National Assembly.

"In September, in six schools within the RS, an experimental program will be introduced, in accordance to which primary school education will last nine yeast, instead of eight years as it has been the practice before. The nine-year primary school education program will be introduced to all primary schools next year", the RS Minister of Education, Gojko Savanovic, stated. (**Blic,** p16)

Brcko disputes

The Education Department of the Brcko Transitional Government has for the third time refused to approve the project related to the establishment of the Orthodox Education Center (**Glas Srpski, cover page).** The decision explains that the Initiative Board for establishment of the Center failed to make necessary corrections so to harmonize the project with the District Education Law. The Initiative board has a right to complain to the Appellate commission of the Brcko District within 15 days. On the other hand, the Initiative board announced that they see no purpose to complain to Brcko institutions and thus, they will address some international court. (**Blic**, p 16)

The RS citizens in Brcko have no right to apply for the credit, intended for **housing** purposes, approved by the RS Housing Fund. This was stated by the RS Government Co-ordinator for Relations with the Brcko District, Risto Stjepanovic. Stjepanovic explained: *"According to the RS Law, 80% of resources of the RS Housing Fund will be divided amongst the RS municipalities. Since the RS has no right over the resources collected through sale of apartments in Brcko, unfortunately, it is inevitable that Brcko is excluded from this process."* (**Srna**, **Nezavisne Novine,** p 10, **Dnevni List,** p 4, **Jutarnje Novine,** p 8, **Oslobodjenje,** p 5 and **Glas Srpski,** page 3, August 21, 2002)

The representatives of the private landowners at the **Arizona Market** who oppose to the expropriation of the land, still have not responded to the request of the Brcko District Government set on the Friday meeting. The Government requested from the landowners to define their positions regarding the reconstruction of the Arizona Market latest in three days. (**Glas Srpski,** p 2)

*"The Croatian Democratic Union (**HDU**) of BiH is very worried over the developments related to the expropriation of land on the **Arizona Market** in Brcko"*, the Party stated in its press release issued on Tuesday. The Party points out the fact that the land is taken from the owners to be sold to somebody else at a higher price, and somebody would then sell it to a third person at an even higher price. This is intolerable and no one in BiH should support it. (**FENA**)

The President of the Association of the Private Landowners at the Arizona Market, **Toma Tomcic**, says that on Tuesady, at approximately 5:30 in the morning, the inspectors and police officers arrived to the market and tried to block the parking area managed by Ivo Vozetic, as well as to seal 200 shops. The owners of the shops prevented them from doing this. (**Dnevni Avaz,** p 12)

Financial, economic issues

The banks in which the Sarajevo-based Tobacco Factory (**FDS**) has its accounts are likely to implement the solution made by the Federation Financial Police which banns the payment of dividends to the FDS shareholders. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3) However, Oslobodjenje says in the front-page story that the FDS Supervisory Board, at its session of February 27 this year chaired by Nijaz Durakovic, made a decision on the adoption of the report on the FDS financial operations in the last year with a proposal for the share of the dividend amounting up to 3.9 million KM. According to the newspaper, such the proposal was just unanimously confirmed by the shareholders assembly held on

August 16.
"The Financial Police is definitely right. Yesterday, I received the text of its solution banning the payment of dividends to the FDS shareholders. I absolutely agree with such the solution," BiH Federation Prime Minister, **Alija Behmen**, told **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3.

Regarding the request of the Steering Board of the Federation Pension and Disability Fund (MIO-PIO) addressed to the OHR and World Bank to declare themselves about the Decision on postponement of payment of contributions for pension and disability insurance, **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 17, by Miroslav Landeka) carries an article, saying that such decision would have negative effect on financial stability of the Fund. SD reads that OHR Sarajevo gave its public support to work of the Director of the Fund **Bozo Misura** and his deputy **Svjetlana Hasanagic**.

Vecernji List (front and page 5) carries an interview with **Jago Lasic,** the President of the Federation of BiH Economic Chamber, in which he talks about the current state of affairs in BiH economy. Lasic sees reasons behind the level of poverty in BiH in the war, severed business ties, unnecessary bureaucracy, non-existence of specialised courts that would deal with economic subjects only and improper engagement of the international community.

Affairs in the Federation

The **Federation Defense Ministry** announced on Tuesday the draft amendments had been prepared to the law stipulating the status of the abandoned military apartments, and it would now be discussed by the BiH Federation Government. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Dnevni List,** p 2)
Vecernji List (page 2 and front page, by Zdenko Jurilj) carries an article about recent homily of Vicar General of Roman Catholic Mostar-Duvno Diocese **Msgr. Luka Pavlovic** in Prcavci near Capljina, where he stated that one foreign

diplomat (NB: the author speculates that it was **William Montgomery**) after finished his diplomatic mission in Zagreb stated that *"he succeeded in everything, except reducing Catholic Church for 50%*". Luka Pavlovic stated that he received that information from Vicar General of Split-Makarska Archdiocese **msgr. Ivan Cubelic**: *"In one conversation he confirmed that he was present at the conversation of an American diplomat who claimed that he was sorry that number of Catholics is not reduced for 50%."* Pavlovic added that he does not possess any document to proof that international community had such a plan. Msgr. Cubelic confirmed the authenticity of Pavlovic's statement but he added that it is sensitive issue and that he would like to talk about the mentioned statement and other plans related to Catholic Church and International Community in some other time. The author reminds that former head of OHR South **Colin Munro**, within action of destruction of Croat self-rule, known as "Antenna", openly suggested to representatives of international community to make political pressure through higher Catholic authorities, in order to prevent politically flavoured speeches of Bishop of Mostar **Msgr. Ratko Peric**.

Nacional carries an interview with **Senad Avdic**, the Editor-in-Chief of Slobodna Bosna, regarding the conflict between Avdic and Slobodna Bosna with some officials of the BiH Islamic Community. Avdic says: *'The statements, which have been given in mosques these days, literally mean encouraging of believers to assassinate me. I believe that Reis Mustafa Ceric protects a part of a political, military and religious clan, which was resolving destiny of BiH and to whom he (Ceric) belonged, and all of them directly or indirectly were using money, which was coming for defense of BiH.'* Asked whether he believes in the judiciary reforms that **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, announced, Avdic said: *'I believe that the new reform that Paddy Ashdown announces will just be symbolical and cosmetic if judicial bodies do not get free hands to investigate all criminal acts which have been committed in BiH during the last*

ten years.'

Dnevni List (page 2) carries editorial signed by Pejo Gasparevic who criticises BiH journalists and their associations for hesitating to show team spirit and support **Senad Avdic**, Editor-in-chief of Slobodna Bosna weekly, in his polemics with Head of Islamic Community in BiH Reisu-l-ulema **Mustafa Ceric**. The author says that out of all media, only "Oslobodjenje" and "Dani" from Sarajevo, together with Journalist Association "Apel" from Mostar, directly supported Avdic.

(Oslobodjenje, p 7, dedicated the whole page to the dispute between Ceric and Slobodna Bosna, as **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, also published an article on the issue.)

Vecernji List (page 4, by Z. Jurilj) carries that **Hasan Cengic**, who was in charge of logistics of the BiH Army during the war and currently an MP in the BiH Federation Parliament, and his father **Halid** will show up before the Mostar Municipal Court II tomorrow in order to give testimony on the Mostar mortar rounds case. **Faruk Balijagic**, a lawyer of **Jusuf Piralic**, a suspect in this case, stated: *'Their testimony can radically change a course of the process. They have to give testimony because, according to our information, they planned the whole action.'*

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Robert Soldo) carries an article with regards to joint candidacy of BiH and Croatia to host the 2008 European Championship in football. The article says that four hosts of possible football games in BiH include Sarajevo, Tuzla, Banja Luka and Zenica and that Mostar was left out of the picture. The daily contacted the Secretary General of the BiH Football Association, **Munib Usanovic,** who "*commented on the scandalous decision",* as VL puts it, when he said that there was not a political consensus between representatives of Bosniak and Croat authority which resulted in Mostar not being on the list of possible hosts of football

games.

Terrorism-related items

Vecernji List (page 15 and front page, by Eldina Medunjanin) reads that the Sarajevo Cantonal Prosecutor's Office and Cantonal Police, after six months of investigation, have some relevant information about leaders of Serb terrorist organisation "*Gavrilo Princip*", which is responsible for threats to some Serb politicians. Cantonal Prosecutor **Mustafa Bisic** submitted names of ten people to Federation Police as suspect leaders of "*Gavrilo Princip*", which, according to the daily, is responsible for series of attacks on Bosniak returnees in the RS. The author says that it is believed that "*Gavrilo Princip*" is military wing of "*Chetnik Ravna Gora Movement*".

Vecernji List (page 3 and front page, by Zoran Kresic) carries that evidence on acting of Al-Qa'ida in BiH can be seen at CNN these days. VL says that *'recorded material from BiH show Islamic religious rituals, but also crimes and ritual murders that Islamic fighters committed in BiH'.* VL also says that it has been believed that followers of humanitarian organization Bosnian Ideal Future, whose 8 branch offices have been raided this year, are responsible for planting of explosive devices during Pope's visit to BiH, assassination on former Deputy Minister of Interior Leutar, explosion of a car-bomb in Mostar etc. According to VL, legal procedures have been launched against **Enaam Arnaout**, a Head of Benevolence International Foundation from Chicago, because he was suspected of having connections with Al-Qa'id and terrorism. VL says that Arnaout was in BiH a few times and there is suspicion that he even organized a visit of Osama bin Laden to BiH.

Dnevni List (page 2) reads that business partners of **Abdulahim Maktouf**, who is suspected of organising drug smuggling and who escaped from BiH to Canada, are still putting public pressure on witnesses in the case against him. According to the daily, **Aldin Loso**, Maktouf's legal representative and business partner, threatened a journalist of Federation TV saying that

he is armed and "*that such stories should stop*". The pressures started after Maktouf's business partner **Husein Cosic** witnessed about ways of transport and distribution of drugs from Pakistan to Europe.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Tuesday, 1900)

- Kretschmer : BiH between USA and EU
- Delimustafic case: 8,5 mil. KM bail offered
- Arbitrary as solution for Slovenian- Croatian crisis
- Iraqi opposition took over Iraqi Embassy in Berlin.

FTV 1 (1930)

- Armed oppositionist took over Iraqi Embassy in Berlin
- SFOR reminded BiH Presidency: there will be no joining the Partnership for peace without BiH level Ministry of Defense
- BIH is on the beginning of the road towards the European integrations, said Hansjorg Kretschmer, a Head of the delegation of the EC in Sarajevo in departure

RTRS (1930)

- SFOR reminds Presidency on the conditions for the BiH participation in the Partnership for Peace
- The siege of Iraqi Embassy in Berlin.