

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 22/8/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: SBS broke chain of cars smuggling in Foca

Dnevni Avaz: Stojanov (Sarajevo University professor) on sale of Milkos – Unseen compromise with a Russian firm

Jutarnje Novine: Federation Prime Minister Alija Behmen's visit to Tuzla – PIO Director Bozo Misura to be removed today?; Radisic against joint defense ministry

Dnevni List: Turnaround in investigative procedure regarding illegal caches of arms in Mostar: Will Buljubasic betray state top?

Vecernji List: Who and how tricks Federation budget: A billion Marks have already been evaded

Glas Srpski: Serb member of BiH Presidency: A ministry for pressure; Brcko: A separate world

Nezavisne Novine: RS PIO Fund decided on the method of pensions payment: Pensioners to choose between banks and post offices; Paddy Ashdown's decision: municipal prosecutor's offices in RS and BiH Federation abolished; Families of killed Bosniaks and Croats visited Vlastic: Tenth anniversary of tragedy in Koricani marked

BiH – Partnership for Peace, SBS activities, ICC

According to **SENSE (Oslobodjenje, p 5)**, the Administration of the US President **George Bush** fully supports a letter sent by SFOR Commander John Sylvester to the BiH Presidency, in which the pre-conditions for the country's accession to the Partnership for Peace Program were reiterated, including the need for the establishment of a single defense ministry at the state level. At the same time, the State Department welcomes the announced reforms of the Standing Committee for Military Matters (SCMM) and its secretariat assessing them as a "step in the right direction."

Stating that the interest of BiH, including the RS, to accede to the Partnership for Peace Program was not disputable, Serb member of the Presidency, **Zivko Radisic**, told journalists in Banja Luka on Wednesday that, however, *“there is no need for the establishment of a single defense ministry.”* (**Oslobodjenje** p 5, **Dnevni Avaz** p 2, **Jutarnje Novine** p 3, **Glas Srpski**, cover page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3)

*“If Mr. Sylvester’s demand represents not only a warning but an ultimatum as well, than I have to say that BiH cannot make the constitutional changes at this moment. Therefore I want to believe and Presidency believes that this is not a precondition,”***BHTV 1** quoted Radisic as saying in the 1900 central evening news on Wednesday.

“The military and political structure in the RS actively acts against the BiH accession to the Partnership for Peace Program. Such the obstruction must stop since it destabilizes the BiH’s integration into Europe,” the Vice-president of the BiH SDP Main Board, **Sejfudin Tokic**, told a press conference in Sarajevo on Wednesday. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7)

The International Crisis Group (**ICG**) warns that BiH will not be able to join the Partnership for Peace Program if a negative trend continues of non-fulfilling the necessary pre-conditions. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

Dnevni List (page 10) and **Vecernji List** (page 4) carry a press release signed by the HDZ BiH and a HDZ-HKDU-HNZ candidate for BiH Presidency **Dragan Covic** which reads that the aforementioned signatories fully agree with the SFOR Commander John Sylvester regarding the pre-requisites for BiH candidacy in joining the PfP program.

Oslobodjenje reports on the front page (the story continued on the p 3) that, in this year, the members of the BiH State Border Service (**SBS**) temporarily confiscated at the state border with Montenegro near Foca 17 vehicles, which had been reported

stolen.

Dnevni List (page 4) carries excerpts from an ICG report in which an ICG analyst **Kristina Hemon**, commenting on the US requests on striking bilateral agreements that would exempt American soldiers from extradition to the ICC, says that *“the US are sending a clear message that all countries are equal but some are more equal. By doing that the US are undermining the international legal system and efforts of the ICTY to process those who violated international humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia”*. Hemon goes on to say that some countries will not be able to refuse the US proposal, like Romania, whilst others like Switzerland or very brave Slovenia and Croatia will not sign such an agreement.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 17, by Dino Mikulandra) carries an editorial on the American attitude regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC). The editorial says that after his return from the US, **Zlatko Lagumdžija**, the BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated that American President **Bush** and the whole American Administration strongly support BiH and stand behind ‘reformatory democratic forces’ led by SDP. The editorial says: *‘Nobody doubts that America will not support its obedient pupil at ‘democratic elections’ in October. The only thing that still should be done is that Clifford Bond, the American Ambassador to BiH, persuades Lagumdžija, behind the closed door, to make requital to Washington as soon as possible by initialling of the Agreement on non-extradition of American citizens to ICC.’* The editorial also says that an epilogue of this story will not help **Alija Izetbegović**, an honorary SDA President, and his appeal for rescuing of **Bakir Alispahić** and his AID associates because America would rather turn its back to the whole BiH than let these AID officials, suspected of terrorism, from the hands of judicial bodies.

HR visits an agricultural laboratory in Mostar, harmonizes prosecutorial systems in BiH and BiH Federation Law on Internal Affairs

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Wednesday visited an agricultural laboratory in **Mostar**, which supports the economic development in the area and analyzes the composition of the soil and water thereby helping the organic production. *"The agriculture might be a great source of creating and accumulating the wealth in this country,"* Ashdown said. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

Dnevni List (page 5), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (last page) and **Vecernji List** (page 4) also covered yesterday's visit of **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, paid to Agricultural Laboratory and the Mostar Municipality Southeast. DL carries the HR as saying: *'The thing that makes me sad is that agricultural cooperatives, which are active, which give hope for future, need investments, loans. The Federation Government promised them these things, however, these people have not received anything from the Federation Government.'* He stressed that he knows reasons because of which this happens, saying that, perhaps, Cantonal and Federation authorities believe that agriculture is not important.' Dailies also carry that the HR called on voters to vote for the politicians, who will fulfill their promises.

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Wednesday issued Decisions harmonising the Prosecutorial systems in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its ten Cantons and in the Republika Srpska. The High Representatives Decisions amend the existing laws governing the Prosecutors Offices in the FBiH Cantons and in both BiH Entities consolidating Prosecutors Offices' at Canton and District levels. The High Representative also amended the Entity High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council Laws to allow for these changes. (**Oslobodjenje**, back page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 5, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3)

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Wednesday issued a Decision harmonising the texts of the Law on Internal Affairs of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative issued this Decision following close

consultation with, and support from, the FBiH Government. This legislation replaces the existing FBiH Law on Internal Affairs, introducing international standards with regard respect of human rights and is one of the post accession requirements set by the Council of Europe. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Dnevni List**, front and p 2)

Economy: Foreign investments promotion, reaction to the sale of Sarajevo Milkos enterprise

"The economy and new jobs creation are top priorities of the BiH Presidency, and it will therefore support all activities contributing to the resolution of these issues," the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, **Beriz Belkic**, said at the presentation of the Foreign Investment Promotion Agency's (**FIPA**) promotion and informative material in Sarajevo on Wednesday. However, taking part in the presentation, the outgoing Head of the European Commission's Delegation to BiH, **Hansjoerg Kretschmer**, said that the *"BiH authorities are not enough supporting the FIPA activities."* (**Oslobodjenje**, p 9, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 10, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 7)

Dnevni Avaz (front page) quoted **Dragoljub Stojanov**, the professor of economy at the Sarajevo University, as saying that the Sarajevo Canton Government, which should not interfere at all in the privatization process, had made an unseen compromise with the Russian Ekotek Oil Company regarding the sale of the Sarajevo Milkos enterprise. According to Stojanov, the privatization process should be carried out and directed only by the authorized agencies.

Federation affairs

Dnevni List (page 2 and front page) carries that **Ferid Buljubasic**, the Deputy Federation Minister of Defense, had a meeting with **Esad Pobric**, the General Manager of Mostar Tobacco Factory, and **Ibro Rahic**, the President of the Steering Board, on the same day but immediately before SFOR revealed mortar rounds in this factory. DL says that Buljubasic himself gave this information to an investigative judge, while Esad Pobric was silent on this fact during the hearing and for this

reason his status has been changed from a witness to the accused one. A source from the Ministry of Defense reported that after the end of the meeting with leaders of Mostar Tobacco Factory, Buljubasic informed SFOR about a warehouse of mortar rounds and then SFOR raided the factory. Pobric stressed: *'The court has accused me because the Court does not want to reveal the most responsible ones, who must be in Sarajevo.'* Pobric confirmed that Buljubasic invited him at the meeting and that he learnt that the mortar rounds are stored in Mostar Tobacco Factory during the meeting. **Mijo Anic**, the Federation Minister of Defense, stated that he did not know about Buljubasic's meeting with Pobric and that the MoD informed SFOR about the mortar rounds. Also, Buljubasic was supposed to inform **Beriz Belkic**, a Chairman of the BiH Presidency, about the mortar rounds before he informed SFOR, however, Belkic was informed about this action from media. DL says that: *'The possibility that the investigation comes again to a standstill at Ivan Sedlo is not excluded. Whenever investigators were on the way to investigate the most responsible ones in Sarajevo something was bringing them back.'* **Vecernji List** (p 4) carries a similar article.

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Dejan Jazvic) reads that in the past several months some minutes and transcripts from wartime sessions of BiH Presidency were found, although it was believed that they were destroyed. With additional search that was initiated by members of state Presidency, documents that ICTY asked in order to investigate war crimes committed by members of BiH Army were found. At the end of last year, BiH Presidency submitted criminal charges against unknown person for destruction of documents and materials from wartime Presidency sessions. The article says that request from The Hague was kept for 34 days in drawer of former Secretary of Presidency **Sejdalija Mustafic**, and it is obvious that in that period scandal was deliberately hidden.

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Zoran Kresic) reads that Cantonal Panel of Judges of Herzegovina Neretva Canton confirmed indictments against **Ivan Bender, Mario Boras** and **Nikola Antunovic** for misuse of office and authorities,

embezzlement and forgery of documents in purchasing Hotel "ERO" in Mostar for less than 2,5 million KM. The Cantonal Panel of Judges confirmed that the evidences collected in investigation process are sufficient for issuing the indictment. The article reminds that the High Representative removed former judges **Kata Zovko** and **Nenad Gvozdic** for their verdict that purchasing of Hotel "ERO" was legal. The author says that before new judge that will be in charge of "Bender" process, **Mladen Jurisic**, is a difficult task because Ivan Bender is high ranked official of HDZ and holder of this party's list for Herzegovina Neretva Canton Assembly.

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Zdenko Jurilj) reads that this daily is in possession of a document, which says that Units for Investigation and Information, which act under Federation Tax Administration, found out that in first half of this year more than 210 million KM of taxes were evaded. Largest amounts of evaded taxes were noticed with oil-trade companies that have not reported over 70 million-KM of taxes and cigarette importers that have evaded more than 40 million. After conducted investigation criminal charges were issued against 19 companies in oil business. The daily says that the report includes business of Oil Refinery in Bosanski Brod that was dealing with 'phantom' companies.

Dnevni List (page 3 and front page) carries that a meeting of Central Headquarters for Protection of Rights of Pensioners of a Croat component of the Federation Army with the Federation Ministry of Defense was held yesterday. DL says that the aforementioned Headquarters reduced a number of retired HVO soldiers from 750 to 480 and the reduction mostly included those members who resolved their status in some other way while the Headquarters mostly represents the group of soldiers who were in some way tricked and brought to a hopeless situation due to the mistake of representatives of competent institutions. The press release says: *'A joint agreement regarding the proposal of measures for permanent resolving of*

their status was finally reached yesterday. In terms of this, the Federation Ministry of Defense will urgently a package of measures for permanent resolving of the status of number of HVO pensioners send to the Federation Government .'

Dnevni List (page 4, by D. Raguz) carries an article on the situation in Stolac, mostly reiterating previous reports and stories on the situation and events in the municipality. The author says that the Head of Municipality, **Zeljko Obradovic**, has in the last year made positive developments in the municipality especially when it comes to the security situation which, according to the author resulted in extremely good results in implementation of property laws. The daily also says that problems pertaining to schooling of Bosniak children in Stolac have been solved and that competent municipal authorities and institutions are working well.

Vecernji List (page 2, by Frano Matic) carries an article about the situation in Drvar and carries a reaction of Governor of Herceg-Bosna Canton **Dragan Bagaric** on recently removed cantonal flags from municipal and other buildings: *"Municipal Council of Drvar is implementing illegal decisions that are not in line with the Statute of Drvar Municipality nor Constitution of the Canton, and its work is illegal. All those who are breaking cantonal law will be disciplined."* According to the daily, cantonal Minister of Interior **Ivan Cosic** stated that the police would have concrete results on several suspects for destruction of cross in Drvar in a couple days. In a separate article VL says that another cantonal flag was taken off from the building where the premises of HDZ political party are, but flag of HDZ was not taken. The article says that many citizens are concerned because police patrols are intensified and cantonal special police units are also in Drvar.

Peoples Party **Working for Prosperity**, **Dnevni List** (page 10), issued a press release condemning *'the vandalism of destroying of the cross'* in Drvar saying that *'religious facilities and*

symbols cannot be a testground for showdown of extremists from either side i.e. for taking over of supremacy in the municipality of Drvar”.

Vecernji List (page 2) carries editorial by Milo Jukic in which he says that trial against six Croats, alleged assassins of Jozo Leutar, is just one more argument that support thesis that the Sarajevo, a predominantly Bosniak judiciary is still dependent on will of certain political and (para)police structures. In the same way that was visible in cases of Ibrahim Djedovic, wartime assistant of Fikret Abdic, war criminal Vlatko Buzuk, and Serbs from Sarajevo Damjanovic and Herak. The author says that even Dragan Stupar, who represents prosecutor’s side in this process, believes that this process was politically staged. As the editorial says, in several days it will be almost two years that the indictees in the Leutar case are imprisoned and in that period not any Croat political party reacted in written form, except that some of them recently called this process staged (HDZ, HSS, Croat Rightists Block). Therefore, says the author, it is visible that these parties only wanted political points in pre-election period.

Dnevni List (page 11) carries an NHI press release, signed by **Ivica Karlovic**, which says: ‘We are strongly against a proposal of the **Herzegovina-Neretva Canton** on increase of contribution rates on net salaries of employees, when we are aware that economy is at its last gasps, apart from some areas such as power-supply, telecommunications etc. We are especially against it because non-productive branches would be financed from these funds in order to prevent social riots announced in the Canton. We believe that this is not a way for a long-term resolving of social crises and we propose reduction of number of employees in the state administration and reduction of contributions from net salaries.’

<p>RS PIO Fund decision: Pensioners to choose between banks and post offices</p>

Both Banja Luka dailies report (**Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 8) that the pensioners can choose whether they will receive their pensions through commercial banks or post offices. The above was stated to the press by the RS PIO Fund Director, **Ostoja Kremenovic**, after an extra ordinary session of the PIO Fund Managing Board. Kremenovic also stated that so far, only one thousand out of 182 000 pensioners decided to collect their pensions in banks. The Chairman of the RS Pensioners Association, **Rade Rakulj**, stated that he is satisfied with the PIO Fund decision that pensioners can choose how they will be paid their pensions.

Election related activities/statements

The Democratic National Alliance (DNS) called to all parties in RS which have "RS in their heart" to take a joint stand on the issue of a single command over the BiH Army. The DNS also announced that coalition SDS –PDP that is currently in power in RS does not protect the interests of Serb people (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4, **Glas Srpski**, p 4). The Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) issued a press release yesterday which says that by his request for establishment of a single defense ministry, the SFOR Commander, **John Sylvester**, lost his impartiality. The PDP believes that by such requests, General Sylvester supports those political options which advocate anti-constitutional solutions (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4, **Glas Srpski**, p 4). The leader of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats, **Milorad Dodik**, stated that after the elections, his party will be the strongest political party not only in the RS and BiH but in the entire region as well (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 5). Speaking at the election rally in Doboje, Dodik said that with the people's support, the SNSD can undermine the fake patriotism of SDS. Criticizing the work of **Mladen Ivanic's** Government, Dodik said that his promises were never fulfilled, that RS now has more unemployed people than ever and that the privatization process turned into a robbery.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 15) carries a report from a visit that a delegation of HDZ BiH led by the acting President **Barisa Colak** and the party's candidate for BiH Presidency **Dragan Covic** paid to Citluk yesterday. Following a meeting with the Head of Municipality, **Jure Dzida**, and President of a

local HDZ branch, **Stjepan Krasic**, Colak and Covic addressed the journalists. Colak reiterated that HDZ expects extremely good results in the October elections. *"I am convinced that there will be no election games like before. I hope that a democratic role of the electorate will be respected and that the ones who are victorious at the elections do participate in the authority and that any election rigging will not take place. The time has finally come that Croats are represented by the ones elected by the Croat people"*, said Barisa Colak. The same delegation visited Ljubuski yesterday.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Wednesday, 1900)

- The US Senators in Sarajevo- national security is an issue
- BiH politicians: there is a dilemma between USA and EU
- Floods in Yugoslavia
- Soccer game BIH-SRJ to take place this evening

FTV 1 (1930)

- Serb member of the BiH Presidency, Zivko Radisic, refused possibility of establishment of a joint Ministry of Defense
- Drvar: between nationalisms political games and media speculations
- SFOR informed Federation Ministry of Defense on storages of grenades in Mostar.
- After yesterday failure, Arizona market gets under control of police and Government of Brcko District

RTRS (1930)

- Pensions payment will be as it was before, decided RS PIO Fund
- Radisic: Changes in the Standing Committee are bringing BiH closer to Partnership for Peace
- Carnex pastes are not harmful, confirmed experts of the Military-medical Academy in Belgrade.
- Natural disasters are taking human lives around the world.
- Friendly soccer match between FRY and BiH will take place tonight in

Sarajevo