

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 23/7/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: The BiH Council of Ministers decides – SBS to withdraw from the border line until the agreement on the Kostajnica border issue is reached with Croatia

Dnevni Avaz: Sejfidin Tokic reacts once again – SDP was not consulted about the appointment of disputed directors in BiH telecommunication sector; Kostajnica border dispute – BiH did not accept Croatia's proposal

Jutarnje Novine: The BiH Federation House of Peoples to hold its session today – Veterans waiting for the law; the BiH Council of Ministers on situation at the Kostajnica border crossing – Dispute between Sarajevo and Zagreb over 20 meters

Dnevni List: The dismissed defenders to get agricultural machines at the end of this month; the BiH customs officers withdraw to the area between the rivers of Una and Uncica at an IPTF order; BiH Cardinal Vinko Puljic – We are not supporting political parties, but we are fighting for equal rights

Vecernji List: An UN report on human trafficking in the Balkans – Annually, 120,000 women and children are being sold

Glas Srpski: Kostajnica – the special policemen did not arrive in spite of the announcement by the Croatian officials; Dragan Mikerevic – I am moving to Srpsko Sarajevo

Nezavisne Novine: The BiH Council of Ministers discusses the Kostajnica border dispute – Common border crossing as a temporary solution; Svetozar Mihajlovic, the BiH Minister of Civil Affairs – Mikerevic and PDP stand behind the CIPS affair; Milorad Dodik, the SNSD leader – Partnership against crime to be established soon

FRY Nacional: Pavkovic: General Aca Tomic met Ratko Mladic on the highway

EuroBlic: Temporary solution – shared location at the border crossing; Dragan Mikerevic moves to Serb Sarajevo; General Nebojsa Pavkovic: Tomic met Mladic

Kostajnica border crossing dispute

The **BiH Council of Ministers** discussed the situation related to the **Kostajnica** Border Crossing dispute between BiH and Croatia at its extraordinary session in Sarajevo on Monday. The Council decided to prepare two documents for the next session scheduled for Thursday including the Annex to the contract on common location of the Kostajnica border crossing as a temporary solution and the draft protocol on the final solution for the border crossing with following infrastructure. The Council recommended the State Border Service members to remain on the line set by the IPTF until the agreement on the issue is reached with Croatia. *"We will offer our solution, and than we will together with a Croatian team do our best to find a compromise acceptable for both sides,"* **Svetozar Mihajlovic**, the BiH Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications, told journalists following the session. According to Mihajlovic, the solution offered by the Croatian side is not fully acceptable for the Council of Ministers. *"The re-categorization of the Kostajnica border crossing is not acceptable for us. We think that it still must be defined as an international border crossing for passenger and good's traffic,"* Mihajlovic said. (**Oslobodjenje** – front page, pages 4-5, **Dnevni Avaz** – p 2, announced on the front page, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4, announced on the front page, **Glas Srpski**, cover page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Dnevni List** front and p3, **Vecernji List** p8, **Slobodna Dalmacija** p5, **Jutarnji List** p2, **Vjesnik** front and p3, **FRYNacional** p11, **Vecernje Novosti** p4, **Blic** p11)

"I am standing for that BiH function as a well organized state with the institutions at the state level. In this line, not a single president or mayor at the local level can takes over the responsibilities of the state institutions," Croatian President **Stjepan Mesic** told journalists in Zagreb on Monday asked to comment on the situation related to the Kostajnica border dispute between BiH and Croatia. (**Oslobodjenje** – p 4, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4)

The Vice-president of the RS Government, **Petar Kunic**, said on Monday following his meeting with the Srpska Kostajnica municipal leadership that the RS Government would not allow the members of the Croatian border service to pass over on the right bank of the Una river. Kunic holds the leadership of the BiH State Border Service responsible for the newly-created situation, because the members of the service withdrew 50 meters from the bridge over Una without prior consultations and order by the BiH Presidency. *"BiH Presidency is authorized for the situation in Kostajnica and the SBS is under the Presidency's jurisdiction,"* Kunic emphasized. He expressed his hope that the Presidency would in near future terminate a contract related to the Kostajnica border crossing signed between the two states. (**Oslobodjenje** – p 5, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4)

The member of the Serb National Alliance (SNS) Main Board, **Jezdimir Spasojevic**, stated yesterday in Bijeljina that the problem in Kostajnica represents an agreement between the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, and the Head of UN Mission to BiH, **Jacques Klein (Nezavisne Novine, p 4)**. According to Spasojevic, Ivanic needs this artificially created crisis to distract attention from major social problems. The President of the Democratic National Alliance (DNS), **Dragan Kostic**, expressed expectations that the BiH CoM will find the best possible solution for the Kostajnica border dispute. The SDS Spokesman, **Dusan Stojicic**, stated that the most recent developments in Kostajnica proved SDS's stand that the RS Police should have stayed at the border crossing until the inter state agreement on regulation of the border between BiH and Croatia, in Kostajnica, is signed. The Serb Radical Party (SRS) member, **Milenko Mihaljica**, appealed to all Serb representatives at all levels to express unity in order to resolve the Kostajnica dispute in the best way possible for the interests of the RS.

Obstacles to signing the new stand-by arrangement with IMF – veteran's law

The BiH **Council of Ministers** on Monday called on the entities' authorities and all other authorized institutions to take necessary steps in the next seven days and allow removing of the obstacles to signing of a new stand-by arrangement with the IMF. *"It is about the draft veteran's law in the BiH Federation, harmonization of the pensions payment in the RS and the debts of the under-entity bodies, primarily cantons,"* the BiH Council of Ministers Chairman, **Dragan Mikerevic**, told journalists following the session.

"Without the new stand-by arrangement, BiH is going to uncertainty whose negative consequences can already be seen," BiH Treasury Minister **Ante Domazet** said.

(**Dnevni Avaz** – p 4, **Oslobodjenje** – p 6, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4, **Vecernji List** – front and page 2 and **Dnevni List** – page 3)

The **Bosniak caucus** in the BiH Federation House of Peoples on Monday did not make a final position on the draft veteran's law proposed by a deputy to the House **Munir Karic**. The caucus will continue the discussion on the issue on Tuesday before the session of the House of Peoples. (**Oslobodjenje** p 5, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 6)

"The Association of the Demobilized Soldiers expects deputies to the BiH Federation House of Peoples not to accept the suggestion made by the BiH Federation Government to reject the draft law on veteran's rights," the Association President, Mehmed Focic, told Dnevni Avaz (p 11)

"Only the next elections will show how much the current opposition will benefit and how much the governing political parties will lose because of unresolved problems of the veteran's population," Mirko Sagolj wrote in the Oslobodjenje In Focus editorial (p 2).

As of next Monday, the representatives of the BiH graphic industry might be included in the CIPS project implementation. This was promised to the representatives of the printing firm workers trade unions at their Monday's meeting with Mirko Skrbic, the CIPS Project Implementation Director, and an OHR representative.

"STROM Telecom has no any links to the CIPS project implementation. This company did not participate in the tender, it does not implement any part of the project, nor it is in any way financed from the project's budget," said the company's press release signed by the STROM Director Nihad Hurem. (Oslobodjenje – p 5)

"The disputed directors in the BiH telecommunications and members of the so called STROM Telecom lobby have not been appointed by the SDP neither the party has been consulted about their appointments," the Vice-president of the SDP Main Board, Sejfudin Tokic, told Dnevni Avaz (front page, p 3)

The Minister for Civil Affairs and Communications to BiH CoM, **Svetozar Mihajlovic**, stated for **Nezavisne Novine** (p 5) that the launch of so called CIPS affair was nothing else but a pre election campaign of the PDP (Party of Democratic Progress) led by the party high official, Chairman of BiH CoM, **Dragan Mikerevic**. The daily quotes Mihajlovic: *"There is no CIPS affair and what Mikerevic is talking about has no grounds."* Mihajlovic also accused RS officials by saying that they are trying to manipulate citizens before the elections by opening fake affairs and political disputes. **Dragan Mikerevic** did not want to comment Mihajlovic's allegations and said he has no intention to argue with him.

Due to some announcements that there will be removal in the BiH Council of Ministers because of the CIPS, Minister for Civilian Affairs and Communications in BiH Council of Ministers, **Svetozar Mihajlovic** said he would request a revision of the CIPS project from the BiH Council of Ministers, in order that the documentation be checked and that

a report on the implementation of the CIPS project be submitted, **Vecernje Novosti** (p12) reports.

He stressed that the CIPS project, which is important for Bosnia-Hercegovina and costs approximately 33 million marks, must comprise all elements of security and protection, in accordance with the European standards, and that is the reason why Siemens got it and not some BiH printing house.

OHR, international community related news

The Council of the EU General Secretariat said in the conclusions adopted in Brussels on Monday that the October general elections represented a significant opportunity on the BiH's road towards the European integration. The Council encouraged the BiH electorate to take over the responsibility for its own future by voting for reform programs, which are aimed at bringing the country closer to Europe. The Council reiterated that the BiH's peoples and citizens could move towards Europe only in the framework of a single state.

A report on the situation in BiH made by the first monitoring group of the Council of Europe Secretariat was published on July 15 and delivered to all relevant Council's bodies as well as permanent missions of the 44 member countries. In general, the report speaks positively about the social, political and legal developments in BiH emphasizing that the situation in the country is better and better every day, and that a strong willingness exist for fulfilling of the post-accession requirements.

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, and the BiH Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, discussed in Sarajevo on Monday the prepared package of the economic reforms, which will be presented to the Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board on July 30-31. (Dnevni Avaz – p 2, Oslobodjenje – p 14, Jutarnje Novine – p 3)

The Regional Board of Association of Refugees and DPs from Tuzla sent a letter yesterday to the High Representative,

Paddy Ashdown, warning him on frequent cases of illegal allocation of land plots to Serb refugees who do not want to return to their pre war homes in BiH Federation. In its letter, the Board claims that people address them on daily basis with information related to illegal land allocation taking place in Kotorsko, Modrica, Zvornik, Bijeljina, Janja and Bratunac. The Board called the High Representative to visit the above mentioned areas and see the situation in field by himself.

Dnevni List (page 6) carries a reaction of **Ivan Bacak**, a Deputy Secretary General of HDZ BiH, to an interview titled *"We broke Ante Jelavic's gang"* that a former SDHR **Matthias Sonn** gave to **Dnevni Avaz**. Bacak says that he personally did not read the interview and goes on to say that, based on what he heard about it, there are people within the IC who *simply cannot leave HDZ alone until is tailored to their liking or simply gone. Protestant theologian Sonn is not interested in ethics and truth, he wants to curry favour with the former and new High Representative so he could last as long as possible either in BiH or elsewhere*, says Bacak and goes on to say that Sonn will, because of decisions the former SDHR signed in cases related to former Governor of C10 **Ivan Ivic** and former Head of Glamoc Municipality **Ivan Damjanovic**, be held accountable before the Strasbourg Court sooner or later. *Fin*

ally, I am convinced that Mr. Ashdown will, judging by what he has done so far and judging by his statements in the media, know to find a wiser Deputy and more responsible advisor than Mr. Matthias Sonn was, and as far as HDZ is concerned, I could say that it has never been cleaner, stronger and more determined to once again win and get a compleye, absolute support of the Croat people in BiH, concluded Bacak.

Bozo Misura sends letter to Behmen, Ashdown

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 17) carries that provoked by writings of **Dnevni Avaz** and statements given by **Mirza Cerić**, a Manager

of ERC ZIP0, a company that offers information services to a part of Pension-Disability Fund Bureau, **Bozo Misura**, an acting Head of Federation Pension and Disability Fund (MIO), sent a letter to **Alija Behmen**, the Federation Prime Minister. The article says that a copy of the letter was also sent to **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, **Joseph Ingram**, a Head of the World Bank in BiH, and Federation Minister **Mijat Tuka**. The letter says that according to the statements given by Ceric, he (Ceric) did not work much for the Public Fund of PIO BiH and the Federation Bureau and that he exerted most of his efforts to export his intellectual services to sell equipment. Misura says that Ceric earned 2,5 million Marks. Misura also said that they warn Ceric not to threaten pensioners by suspension of printout of checks because it would be a very dangerous game.

Interview with Cardinal Vinko Puljic

Dnevni List (page 6) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 15) carry parts of an interview that **Cardinal Vinko Puljic**, the Vrhbosna Archbishop, gave for yesterday's issue of **Nezavisne Novine**. Puljic said that Bishops do not support any party but they fight for equal rights. Puljic also said that Croats in power do not have support of the people and, according to the Cardinal, this is the problem that caused discouragement among the people. Asked as to who is pulling down Catholic Church, Puljic said that they are many representatives who wanted to change politics and for this reason they tried to pull down some persons from the Catholic Church. According to Puljic, the main sin of the Croats is the fact that the Croats are Catholics and for this reason Croats do not have support of European representatives and the others. Puljic believes that even bigger sin of the Croats is the fact that they are Croats from BiH and added that *'it seems to them that it would be easier to resolve the issue of internal organization of BiH if there were only two peoples in BiH'*. Puljic believes that the BiH has to be regionalized or cantonized, but prior to this the state with mechanisms, that will build equality and not outvoting, should be created.

Dragan Mikerevic moves to Serb Sarajevo

The Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, **Dragan Mikerevic**, stated yesterday to **Glas Srpski (cover page)** that he will return the keys of the apartment in Federation Sarajevo that was broken into few days ago and move to the Serb Sarajevo. Commenting on the statement by the Federation Interior Ministry that they did not secure his apartment due to the fact that they did not know he lives there, Mikerevic stated: *"It is impossible that the police does not know where the Chairman of the Council of Ministers live."* Mikerevic added that it is scandalous and inappropriate that the police did not ask him any questions about the incident.

Ivanic on the privatisation of the media

Blic (p11) and **Nacional** (p11) report that RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic** stated that local radio stations, which had been given the licenses for work by the Communication Regulatory Agency, could successfully continue their work only if they were privatised. Ivanic resented municipalities, the founders of the public media, for not planning sufficient assets in their budgets for technical modernisation and organisational improvement of the media. This is why several local radio stations in the RS have lost their work permits. According to Ivanic, in the privatisation of the state owned capital in the media, only the RTRS will keep the majority ownership.

Criminal charges against ten employees of RS Customs Administration

The Banja Luka Public Security Center (PSC) pressed two charges against ten employees of the RS Customs Administration, due to a reasonable doubt that they committed criminal act of unprofessional behavior in service (**Glas Srpski**, p 10, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 7, **Blic** p11). The PSC claims that employees in question fail to implement valid law provisions and regulations while doing their job and thus caused damage to the RS budget.

Pre-election news

The President of the Party of Democratic Progress, **Mladen Ivanic**, stated at the party convention held in Doboj that PDP

preserved the RS and that RS nowadays looks much different than in the two last years (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4). Explaining his statement, Ivanic said that the most critical thing for the RS was the implementation of the constitutional amendments, but thanks to PDP, which called for unity of all Serb representatives and joint approach, the RS was preserved. The leader of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), **Milorad Dodik**, stated that a project Partnership for Victory will be offered to all political parties which intend to advocate the fight against crime and corruption and implementation of the Dayton Agreement (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4). The project will be offered to the SDS and PDP as well, said Dodik.

Vecernji List (page 2, signed by Milo Jukic) carries an editorial, which says that according to public opinion polls national parties will return to power after October elections. Jukic says that it is no wonder because newspapers are full of articles on financial scandals (Jukic states example of the Am Sped case), economic collapse, discrediting of successful Aluminij etc. The editorial also says that representatives of International Community were helping Alliance to come to power and they (IC representatives) still believe that members of the Alliance are not nationalistic parties in spite of their conflicts on national grounds. According to Jukic, IC has completely lost its orientation after they promoted force as the highest degree of democracy in Hercegovacka Bank.

Dnevni List (page 4) carries that holding a press conference in Tomislavgrad on July 22, the Election Headquarters of **HSP BiH** has officially started its pre-election campaign. The basic message that HSP BiH will send to voters is: 'HSP believes that as soon as possible BiH has to create a strategy of development, which would be passed by consensus of all three constituent peoples.'

Session of Municipal Council of Stolac

Under a title: *Session of Municipal Council of Stolac again marked with excess: Six Councilors from Coalition and SDP left the session*, Slobodna Dalmacija (p16, by Ivo Raguz) carries a report from yesterday's session of Municipal Council of Stolac saying that 6 Bosniak Councilors from the Coalition and SDP led by the Chair of Municipal Council Zoran Turkovic have again boycotted the session. The session was attended by 10 Croat Councilors from HDZ and HSP (Council comprises of 17 Councilors in total). The daily reports that Suad Sefo, Head of Municipal Department for Economy, and Eno Mulac, a man in charge of social affairs, attended the first part of session only to leave it later on being unhappy its course i.e. discussion by the Croat Councilors. Raguz stresses that the education issue deserves a special look back saying that *the Bosniak side (with a help from a part of IC) as a minority, tries to impose its solution to the Croat side without listening to the "opposing" opinion.*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- The BiH Council of Ministers "energetically opposes" further complication of the situation on the border between BiH and Croatia at Kostajnica, Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic said on Monday.
- The BiH Council of Ministers on Monday called on the entity governments and other institutions to take the necessary measures and remove the obstacles to the signing of the stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) within the next seven days.
- The Federation House of Peoples is to discuss a proposal for the law on the rights of soldiers, disabled veterans, and the families of fallen at its Tuesday session in Sarajevo.

FTV 1 (1930)

- In cooperation with RS Ministry of interior, Banja Luka

Public Security Center has pressed criminal charges against 10 employees of RS Customs administration for unprofessional behavior in service.

- After yesterday's events, the situation in Kostajnica today is calm.
- The BiH Council of Ministers "energetically opposes" further complication of the situation on the border between BiH and Croatia at Kostajnica, Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic said on Monday.
- Croatian president S. Mesic made a comment on the Kostajnica border crossing that Croatia always tried to function on the rule of law, and wanted BIH to be so as well.

RTRS (1930)

- The BiH Council of Ministers "energetically opposes" further complication of the situation on the border between BiH and Croatia at Kostajnica, Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic said on Monday. (2)
- RS prime-minister said the decision of Croatian authorities to take control of the area between rivers Una and Uncica is unacceptable. (2)
- SRS is worried with the situation in Kostajnica. Member of SRS Executive board M. Mihajlic said he is also worried with the accusations between some politicians of parties in RS. (1)
- In cooperation with RS Ministry of interior, Banja Luka Public Security Center has pressed criminal charges against 10 employees of RS Customs administration for unprofessional behavior in service. (2)