

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 24/11/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Agreement of opposition	Elections in Croatia	Election in Croatia	Elections in Croatia
	Agreement of opposition	Opposition agreement	Opposition agreement
	Resignation in Georgia	Resignation in Georgia	

Oslobodjenje	Opposition's block for early elections
Dnevni Avaz	Interview with mufti Mustafa effendi Ceric: Some are irritated with the freedom in Sarajevo; Paddy Ashdown warns: We must work better and much faster; Senad Hadzifejzovic claims: Citizens do not want to pay subscription
Dnevni List	HDZ the election winner; HDZ's list wins
Vecernji List	Marko Mikerevic's story about life in besieged Sarajevo: I was loyal in order not be killed; Elections for Croatian Parliament: Queue in Mostar
Slobodna Dalmacija	HDZ's victory
Glas Srpske	Refugees from Kotor Varos Hotel ":Borik": evicted: Winter full of fear
Nezavisne Novine	Sarajevo: SDP, SNSD, SPRS and NHI signed platform for co-operation; New rules at BiH schools: No room for religious greetings

Blic	SNSD, SDP, NHI and SPRS confirmed their joint appearance; Dragan Mikerevic: Srpska will not disappear
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Opposition's block

<p>Four opposition parties sign joint Platform</p>	<p>CRHB, Oslobođenje cover splash, pgs 4&5 'Opposition block for early elections', Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'SNSD, SPRS, NHI and SDP signed Platform on cooperation', Dnevni List front, pg 3 'Block for early elections formed', Vecernji List front 'Four parties want elections', pg 17 'New opposition block in BiH formed', Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 3 'SDP, SNSD, SPRS and NHI signed platform for co-operation', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Co- operation verified', Blic pg 12 'Platform of four opposition parties' – Leaders of the four largest opposition parties in BiH signed an agreement on cooperation announcing that they will insist on early parliamentary elections to be held next year. The agreement was signed in Sarajevo on Sunday by Zlatko Lagumdžija of the Social Democratic Party [SDP], Milorad Dodik of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats [SNSD], Kresimir Zubak of the New Croat Initiative [NHI] and Petar Djokic of the RS Socialist Party [SPRS]. SNSD leader Dodik said the four parties shared the same view that BiH was facing a political, economic and moral crisis, and the current authorities were incapable of solving the accumulated problems. The NHI chief Zubak said a change of those in power was necessary, as the ruling nationalist parties would not be able to carry out reforms in the 16 defined areas, which the European Commission required for the start of negotiations with Sarajevo on the country's pre- accession talks. SDP president Lagumdžija described the agreement as an important step towards the normalisation of political life in Bosnia. The four opposition politicians said they would insist on the organization of early parliamentary elections in autumn 2004 when local elections were scheduled.</p>
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**[Reactions
by parties]**

BHTV 1 – Milorad Dodik stated: 'Current parties have devalued... Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also neglected accountability of the international community for a whole process.' NHI underlined they advocated for idea of equal partnership with international community and such course should be followed in the future. Petar Djokic: 'We need to continue with reforms and we are satisfied with agreed perspectives between the parties.' Zlatko Lagumdžija stressed: 'This is an alliance that will fight organised crime and hopelessness... If current parties stay in power till 2006 economic growth will be harmed, so it is needed to call for early elections, because ruling parties won't do anything to make necessary changes.'

RTRS – Milorad Dodik, leader of SNSD stated that parties do respect the fact that BH cannot make it without the help of the international community, but still that they will continue to seek an equal position with the international factors. He also stated that governing structure could not do anything without the High Representative Paddy Ashdown being present.

FTV – Main program goal of the coalition will be to move BiH from catastrophic socio-economic situation. Kresimir Zubak said: 'We will continue to work as independent parties but with intention to create real political interest and with less intervention by IC.' Petar Djokic: 'BiH has no future with current parties and politicians in power, because their only interest is to have power without broad interest to help people to have better life.' Milorad Dodik: 'Economic issues will be without any doubt in our focus and we will seek revision of privatisation process which was in many cases done with speculative goals and very criminal.'

<p>Mirko Sagolj's comment on the Platform</p>	<p>BHTV 1 – Respected Sarajevo journalist Mirko Sagolj commented the signature of the agreement of opposition parties to be the first step towards consolidation of left political centre: 'If other parties with similar programs join this alliance then we may find a way for multiethnic and multicultural inclusion in Europe... Demands for early election are premature, because it needs some time for new ideas to become stronger and prove national parties can not rule'.</p>
<p>SDU against SDP's 'Bolshevism'</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 4 'Neither nationalists nor Bolsheviks', Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Lagumdžija's Bolshevik concept cannot be a ground for future of BiH' – The Vice-president of BiH Social Democratic Union (SDU), Sejfidin Tokic stated on Sunday that BiH cannot base its perspectives for exiting the economic crisis and accessing of Euro-Atlantic structures on political alliances of the ruling SDA, SDS and HDZ, or the return of SDP, SPRS and other similar parties. Tokic stressed that the citizens of BiH have already paid dearly on experiences of authority that is based on nationalist or Bolshevik concepts. 'Workers, the unemployed, demobilised soldiers and pensioners are tired of political battles between blocks, nationalist parties and former communist parties for power', said Tokic. This is why SDU will further build its political activity on full co-operation with unions and associations of these socially endangered groups, by rejecting both national and Bolshevism ideas, and supporting a new central path of BiH that will respect all national and religious diversities, and strengthening of country's unity and functionality.</p>

Euro-Atlantic integrations

**DA interview
with Ashdown
on BiH
activities
towards EU**

Dnevni Avaz cover 'We have to work better and much faster', pg 4 'We have to work better and faster, otherwise European future of BiH will be ruined' – In an exclusive interview to DA, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown says that it was not his job to believe or not to the politicians, but to insist for the reforms to be implemented. 'I want to be clear: a year ago, I was one of those who doubted that we can come to this phase of European integrations. But, we did. Now, the hard and difficult war was before us and we have to be fast and cross it in order to get into the position to start negotiating stabilisation and accession to EU' – said Ashdown adding that he expected from BH authorities in the next several months to change the speed of activities, especially in fulfilment of 16 conditions stipulated by the European Commission. In addition, Ashdown stresses that some attitudes will have to be changed if BiH was to continue progressing towards Europe: 'Nobody asks from opposition not to criticise the authorities. That would be stupid demand. Common people of this country demand European dream to realize, and that can happen only if politicians put their differences aside and work together on the crucial problems. That happened ...[elsewhere]... why it could not happen here either?' The High Representative stressed BiH authorities now have to work on detailed plan for the implementation of above given conditions. Ashdown also talked about specific issues: restructuring of the police forces in BiH which is something that he believes BiH politicians should decide on; the indirect taxation system, whose amendment to the Law was in his opinion contrary to practical functionality of the system; SIPA, an agency which will be the first test for BiH feasibility study; and Mostar, in whose case Ashdown said he 'was not sure one-nationality referendums were a solution' but stressed that there was no place for fear that one people will control the administration. Finally, Ashdown he did not want to speculate whether he will impose the solution to Mostar if the Commission fails to meet the 15 December deadline.

<p>Terzic on Ashdown and mtg with 14 political parties</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 7 'Paddy Ashdown is afraid of losing his estafette of reformer' – The Chairperson of BiH Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, says that the implementation of conditions set by EC does not solely depend on the BiH COM, but also on the BiH Presidency and BiH Parliament. Commenting the meeting the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, organised with the parliamentary parties, Terzic said that this meeting was held too early: 'I think that Ashdown rushed into holding such a meeting, owing to his fear that somebody else may take him the estafette of reform implementation.' He also said that the role of HiRep during possible negotiations on BiH admission into EU should also be discussed and clarified.</p>
<p>VL on HR's call for joint action of authority and opposition</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg 4 'Opposition does not want to enter alliance for Europe' by <u>Eldina Medunjanin</u> – VL notes that the opposition parties, despite swearing on their European orientation, are afraid of sharing responsibility for possible BiH failure on its European path. Talking about the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown's, plan to gather all political parties and work on the same goal, just like Hungary and Czech Republic did, VL notes that the ruling parties were thrilled with the proposal whilst the opposition parties, convinced that the reforms will not be implemented, opted not to participate in a possible failure. This was openly admitted by the leader of the SDP, Zlatko Lagumdžija, who said it was obvious that the current authority and IC want to shift a share of the "expected" failure on the opposition.</p>
<p>Ivanic on BiH admission to PfP</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'BiH as NATO member by June 2004', Blic pg 12 'Ivanic: Tribunal is holding back the Partnership' – Mladen Ivanic, BiH Foreign Minister, assessed that following adoption of the Law on Defence, BiH might become a member of the NATO programme PfP in the first six months of the coming year. He explained that the defence reform provides pre-requisites necessary for BiH admission into PfP. He also noted that the issue on co-operation with the Hague Tribunal would also have impact on BiH admission into PfP.</p>

<p>Oslobodjenje editorial on the BiH's admission to EU</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Door-step' editorial by Ibrahim Prohic – Author wonders when will BiH join the European Union and whether BiH authorities are efficient enough to 'make the difference between wishes and possibilities?' Editorial reads that even EU regards this as rather ambitious plan, while author believes that in order to achieve this BiH needs to change both the authorities and mentality. 'We cannot [join EU] only with nationalism, xenophobia, ... ideas unused to compromise and communication, with hatred and readiness for conflict, without orientation for war and cooperation, without orientation for our own potential, with passive mentality [expectations that someone else will solve our problems'. – reads the article concluding: 'In short, we have to become different persons, completely different. BiH will cross the doorstep of the Europe only when it crosses its own.'</p>
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Other political issues

<p>Elections in Croatia</p>	<p>CRHB, BHTV 1, FTV, Slobodna Dalmacija front, pg 3 'HDZ's victory', Dnevni List front, back pg 'HDZ the elections winner', Vecernji List front, pg 5 'HDZ's list wins', – According to the first preliminary and unofficial results revealed by the State election commission of Croatia, the HDZ of Croatia is winning the parliamentary elections in Croatia.", by I. G.) – carries the same results, noting that around 65% of voters turned out. Sarajevo print media also covered elections in details.</p> <p>Vecernji List front 'Purge in HDZ BiH is being prepared', pg 3 'Roj's' and Pasalic's men will be expelled from HDZ' by Z. Kresic – VL announces a purge within HDZ BiH due to the fact that some of its members were actively supporting other parties during the pre-electoral time for the elections in Croatia. Anonymous source from the HDZ top leadership confirms that Presidency of the party will recommend sanctions for such members who displayed 'very impertinent and unfounded accusations on the account of the Party'. VL says that this could put them in the position of the High Representative Paddy Ashdown who in the past few years ravaged this party with its removals. Some of those who were taking place at the elections positioned at other lists are Marko Tokic (removed by the HR, former vice-president of HDZ) at the Pasalic's list and Zdravko Batinic and Ivo Andric Luzanski at the 'Roj's General's list'. Another candidate for sanctions might be current Minister of culture of West Herzegovina Canton (former vice-president of the party) Jozo Maric who very openly supported Pasalic's list claiming that this is the true HDZ list. Ivan Bagaric and Mijo Matanovic were candidates on the HDZ Croatia list, however, without an approval of HDZ BiH. 'The electoral campaign for the Croatian Parliament in which dissatisfied in HDZ BiH revealed itself, provided also space for dismissal of certain party committees and for new party elections' concludes VL.</p>
<p>SBiH, SDU and returnees to draft joint proposal for Mostar Statute</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'SDU and SBiH are ready proposal for Mostar' – Party for BiH [SBiH], SDU and the representative of the returnees associations in Mostar agreed on drafting joint proposal for Mostar Statute. This has been confirmed to Avaz by both parities: 'Block that we talk about still has not been legally defined, but in principle we agreed on idea on joint stand in entire project.' – stated SDU President Sejfidin Tokic. The agreement has been supported by Sahbaz Dzihanovic and Mirko Ivanisevic, members of the Mostar Commission. On the other hand, SDA representatives in Mostar Commission Fatima Leho said that the newest block did not have any importance: 'These parties have changed their minds on the work of the Commission several times up to date, and they have finally got closer to SDA's stand, as it has been proven that different approaches are not logical.'</p>

<p>Radom za Boljitak: We are not HDZ's satellite</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 4 'We are nobody's satellite', Dnevni List front, pg 9 'Boljitak is not HDZ's satellite' – Radom za Boljitak party (NSRZB) has issued the press release which denies media reports which show the NSRZB as an HDZ's satellite because the media allegedly often present the HDZ's positions on Mostar, mentioning that the NSRZB is supporting the HDZ's position. The party claims that it had a clear position on Mostar even two years ago, which is being endorsed by the HDZ in the last year or so.</p>
<p>DL on FBiH Gov't</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg 2 'Reconstruction or fall of Federation Government' <u>by Ivica Glibusic</u> – In its daily commentary, Glibusic analyses situation in the FBiH Government pointing out that the negotiations among parties did not yield results, that the crisis is increasing and that sessions are more blocked than taking place. The author expects replacements of certain members of Government very soon. (PM Ahmet Hadzipasic from SDA, ministers of defence, agriculture and finance – Miroslav Nikolic, Marinko Bozic and Dragan Vrankic from HDZ). He believes that this will ruin the party discipline which all could lead to inter-party elections in both parties. 'Having in mind that Federation Government is also depending on the interest of SBiH, it will be very difficult to reconstruct the Government, meaning that its failure is inevitable. It is only a matter of time when will this happen,' concludes Glibusic.</p>
<p>Ceric on Ashdown</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz cover splash 'Some are irritated with the freedom in Sarajevo', pg 5 'Bosniaks should remember of gentleness and moderateness of Alija Izetbegovic in everything' – In an interview to the daily on the occasion of Muslim Eid, mufti Mustafa effendi Ceric was asked by the journalist to why it appears that he lately restrains from criticising the representatives of the international community in BiH. Ceric answered: 'From how much I could follow the work of the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, I can say that something he pushes the wheel of Bosniak history stronger and faster than some Bosniaks. That is how it appears to me at least. I would like to say that the situation was the other way around. For instance, for the BiH politicians to overwhelmed the High Representatives with the ideas on the society reforms at all levels, and not to happen – as it is the case now – for the High Representative to push Bosnian politicians to follow him in what is undoubtedly for BiH – members to European Union.'</p>

DL editorial on DPA	<p>Dnevni List pg 6 'We, the people...' editorial by <u>Jadranko Prlic</u></p> <p>– Editorial deals with the BiH statehood, the achievements of the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) and recent initiatives on the change of the BiH Constitution, reads that it is mainly not disputable nowadays that, apart from stopping the war, the basic goal of the DPA was sustainability of BiH as internationally recognized state. Speaking of BiH internal issues, Prlic comments that, bearing in mind the groups which initiate Constitution changes, it is not realistic to expect significant result since all attempts lack integrity in order to arrive to solutions acceptable to everyone. The article concludes that, however, the Constitution is being changed without negotiations – through simple building on the Dayton solutions.</p>
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Economist on the 'revival of hard line nationalism'

The Economist 'Ghosts from the past' 21 November – The Economist magazine writes that the revival of hard-line nationalism in the former Yugoslavia may hamper the Balkans' progress to lasting peace and prosperity, while the UN's war-crimes trials are only complicating matters. 'Nationalist parties (Croat, Serb and Muslim) scored big gains in the Bosnian elections late last year. In Serbia's inconclusive presidential election last Sunday, a former ally of Slobodan Milosevic came first. And this worrying trend is set to continue in Croatia's parliamentary elections on Sunday November 23rd, in which the party of the country's late strongman, Franjo Tudjman, may win enough seats to form a coalition government.' Economist further writes that this partly has been contributed to by the fact that ICTY indicted four generals [SCG] and still-popular general Ante Gotovina [Croatia], while both governments are reluctant to carry out extradition out of fear of losing public support. 'In the long term, completing the trials of those accused of war crimes should help the Balkans heal its wounds. But in the short term, they may be hindering progress towards normality by making it harder to win support for measures to ensure lasting peace and greater prosperity.' However, the magazine notes that there is a change of attitude with the nationalists parties in all three countries, whereas they do not prevent reform process anymore: 'This week, the EC said it hoped Bosnia would soon be ready for talks on one of the earliest steps, a 'stabilisation and association agreement'... Bosnia's prime minister, Adnan Terzic, has said that all the reforms demanded by the EU will be completed by the middle of next year. Bosnia's Serb and Croat nationalists say they no longer seek to break up the country and unite their bits of it with Serbia and Croatia respectively.' Nevertheless 'the nationalists' return is still likely to delay Bosnia's transformation into a stable and united country rather than, as now, a loose collection of parts-a Serb republic, a Muslim-Croat federation and the autonomous district of Brcko, which had been multi-ethnic before the Bosnian war. It still looks like being some while, then, before the world powers that have policed Bosnia since the Dayton peace accords of 1995 can safely leave its people to run their own affairs... In all, the progress of the former Yugoslavs towards becoming normal Europeans has been halting, and is likely to remain so. However,... the prospect of a return to war, though not entirely banished, seems distant.' – concludes the magazine.

Security and legal issues

<p>Gligoric and Spiric on defence reforms</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 6 'Large powers of the ministers', Blic pg 12 'Unconstitutional division' – The Chairman of the BiH House of Representatives, Nikola Spiric, claims that the article of the Draft Law on Indirect Taxation in BiH in relation to distribution of incomes was against the Constitution. According to assessments, Spiric said, 20-25% of incomes collected through indirect taxation system would be returned to the RS, while at the moment 59% of these incomes are included to the RS budget. SPRS councilor at the House of Representatives, Tihomir Gligoric, regarding the BiH Law on Defense assessed that 'the RS Army had definitely become a paramilitary formation'. 'I have proposed an amendment to the Article that regulates this issue in order to define that the RS Army has an equal position as the FBiH Army. Nevertheless, SDS and PDP councilors did not want to support this or the amendment that would foresee the establishment of a professional army and abolishment of serving military service', Gligoric said. [NOTE: Widely reported during the weekend]</p>
<p>Update on SFOR's raid of TS</p>	<p>Glas Srpske pg 3 'Soldiers with cameras' – GS has learnt at Banjaluka police that during the unannounced inspection at Telekom Srpske premises on 21 November, SFOR soldiers inspected the Telekom facilities at three locations and took pictures of some premises.</p>

<p>VL on intelligence matters</p>	<p>Vecernji List front 'Politicians and journalists wiretapped', pg 2 'Politicians and journalists wiretapped for blackmailing purposes' by <u>Zdenko Jurilj</u> – VL reports that the "leader of expert commission for reforms to the intelligence-security service in BiH and future director of newly established state intelligence service, Kalman Kocsis" has shown interest in the functioning, equipment and use of wiretapping devices of the entity intelligence services, which according to VL, coincides with recent SFOR operations on intelligence related issues. VL also learns from an anonymous source that a number of mobile phones of former and current Croat political, intelligence, business and military officials in Herzegovina are being tapped through an "SI 2000" device, which was donated by the United Kingdom and which is used by a few trained members of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Intelligence Service (FOSS). According to VL's source, the aim of the operation is to compromise and blackmail people that are influential in Herzegovina.</p>
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**DA, FT: ICTY
in difficult
financial
situation**

Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'The Hague Tribunal in difficult situation' – Daily carries the article published on Sunday by the Financial Times, which reads that more than 100 countries have made no payments this year for ICTY, the United Nations has warned, a situation which threatens to leave them with a shortfall of close to \$30m by the end of the year. Countries that had failed to pay included several from the former Yugoslavia: BiH, Slovenia, and Serbia and Montenegro. It also included countries close to Rwanda, such as Burundi, Uganda and Kenya. As of the end of last month, the UN said, the tribunals were owed almost \$100m, with Japan alone \$41m in arrears. The US and Brazil each owed \$12m, Russia \$11m and Spain \$5m. Ninety eight countries had made no payments for the tribunals the previous year. Catherine Bertini, the UN's management chief, warned that the tribunals were in a 'very fragile financial position'. She said the fact that 'so many countries have not paid raises the question 'why?' This I don't know. It's absolutely critical we have payments from the member states.' The tribunals' plight reflected difficulties in the UN's overall finances.

Economic and social issues

<p>Colak on 3rd GSM licence</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg 3 'Price of licence of third GSM licence at next session of Council of Ministers' by <u>J. P.</u> – Noting that the BiH Council of Ministers has breached all the deadlines pertaining to the issuance of 3rd GSM licence in BiH, DL carries the BiH Minister of Security, Barisa Colak, as saying that the issue of 3rd GSM licence will be discussed at the next session of BiH CoM. 'The Ministry of Traffic and Communications will at the next session of BiH CoM present proposal of price (of licence) which will be discussed about', says Minister Colak, believing that the Eronet will not be shut down.</p>
<p>Ivanic on pensions and salaries' increase</p>	<p>Glas Srpske pg 2 'Old debt as noose' – In an interview to GS, Mladen Ivanic, BiH Foreign Minister and PDP President, announced he has involved in ongoing negotiations between the Republika Srpska Government and IMF and OHR, regarding increase of salaries and pensions. He said that if Government proposals regarding settlement of internal debt (which was mainly accumulated by previous government compositions), Government would demand from all political parties to take stance on this. According to him, if no political consensus is reached, some officials are seriously considering the possibility of withdrawing from authority.</p>

<p>Collection of taxes in RS</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg 4 'Forcible collection of contributions'– RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, has ordered competent bodies to check companies which do not pay contributions and to deliver the list of debtors to the Tax Administration so that the measure of forcible collection can be applied. Mikerevic discussed the Action Plan of urgent measures with regard to collection of contributions and the Plan's implementation with the entity Minister of Labour, Mico Micic, with representatives of the Pension Fund and relevant bodies.</p> <p>Dnevni list pg 12 'Forcible collection of contributions for Pension Fund' – DL adds that Mikerevic was briefed by the RS Pension Fund representatives on the Proposed Draft Agreement on mutual rights and commitments in the implementation of the pension and disability insurance between the RS and FBiH Pension Funds.</p> <p>Glas Srpske pg 4 'The safe box is getting fuller' – Miodrag Djuric, Acting General Manager of Republika Srpska Tax Administration, told GS that in collaboration with other bodies in charge, the Tax Administration has collected the amount of BAM 698 million into the RS budget, which is for 7% (or 49%) more than last year (and year before the last). According to Djuric, Investigation and Control Sector has filed 12 criminal reports by 1 July this year against 14 persons suspected of having damaged the RS budget for BAM 12.3 million. He further stressed that big tax debtors from last year paid out their outstanding debt. In regard to this, he said that this proves that debt re-programming is a way how to pay out the debt in instalments.</p>
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Spiric on ITA	<p>Glas Srpske pg 3 'Safebox with many holes' – Nikola Spiric, Chairperson of the BiH House of Representatives, stated that at the moment when Dayton Agreement was signed, the entities were strong and the state of BiH was hardly in sight, whilst the situation at the present time is the other way around. On ITA law, Spiric said that around 20 to 25% would return to RS from taxes, while current 59% of budget resources are raised through indirect taxes. He complained against some other provisions of the Law, namely against one rule that first mandate of ITA Manager should be given to a foreigner, and that international community should arbitrate if no consensus is reached at ITA. [NOTE: Covered during the weekend]</p>
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