

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 25/10/2002

Print Media Headlines

Oslobodjenje: BiH has 24 hours to avoid sanctions; Jacques Paul Klein – Mujahedeens are not a threat to BiH

Dnevni Avaz: Federation Pension Fund to revise its lists; Orao affair – Vlacic, Orasanin and Price dismissed; S BiH – Possibly, we'll have complete blockade of authority

Vecernji List: Hostage drama: Moscow on Chechen explosive

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview: Barisa Colak, acting HDZ President: Engineering will not help we shall form authority by ourselves

Dnevni List: After seven years: Finally waste dump for whole city

Nezavisne Novine: RS authorities begin with dismissals of ones responsible for "Orao" affair: US considers imposition of sanctions against BiH; Chechens hold 600 people in a theatre: A drama in Moscow continues

Glas Srpski: A drama in a Moscow theatre – Chechen terrorists hold more than 600 hostages: The game of life and death; Moscow: Negotiations begun late in the afternoon

BH Dani: How was Bosnia destroyed

Slobodna Bosna: High Representative Paddy Ashdown; Low Representative Fahrudin Radoncic

Blic: Three removal because of weapon transfers;; Ashdown: BiH still needs foreign assistance

Vecernje Novosti: Ministers conduct investigation about Yugoimport; Former Generals trade;

Nacional: Covic created "Iraq affair"; Santrac: Orao doesn't have a contract with Yugoimport; Cekovic: I refused American controls;

Orao affair

The **BiH Presidency** asked on Thursday **RS President**, Mirko Sarovic, **RS NA Speaker**, Dragan Kalinic, and the **RS Prime Minister**, Mladen Ivanic, to undertake all necessary measures in the next 24 hours to punish those responsible for the violation of the embargo and the UN and [UN] Security Council resolutions on the export of military equipment and arms to Iraq. As a statement issued after an extraordinary session of the Presidency says, these measures have to be undertaken regardless of the level of responsibility. *"The BiH Presidency warns the BiH public that the circumstances [created] after serious diplomatic warnings by the US government and an investigation carried out by the [SFOR] could lead to serious consequences, unless all legal measures are urgently taken to punish those responsible for violating the embargo and the UN Security Council Resolutions 661, 687 and 1409, related to Iraq,"* the statement said. *"Given that there is a real possibility of a certain type of sanctions being imposed on BiH in case this utterly serious issue is further ignored, the BiH Presidency demands,..., that urgent and undeferrable measures be taken,"* the statement said.

Moreover, the **BiH Council of Ministers** concluded at its session on Thursday that the RS authorities should complete the investigation into Oraq aviation institute, inform the public about it and take measures against those who brought BiH in situation to be concerned about the possible sanctions.

The government and the relevant institutions of the RS have taken all concrete activities to punish all institutions which violated the UN embargo by exporting equipment and arms to Iraq, RS President **Mirko Sarovic** said yesterday. *"Apart from Oraq, the government will take action to control financial transactions of other special purpose production companies which potentially could take part in arms trade,"* Sarovic said after an extraordinary session of the RS government. According to him, the Oraq Aviation Institute case involved indirect violation of arms embargo on Iraq, via companies in the FRY, but it was not established whether Oraq took a direct part in the violation of the embargo.

The **RS government** was informed at an emergency session held in Banja Luka yesterday that the appropriate bodies **had dismissed** the director of the Bijeljina-based Orao company, **Milan Prica**, and the head of the Airforce and Air Defence Directorate, **Col Milan Vlacic** of the General Staff, who was responsible and in the line of command of the Orao institute. Following the demand by the Defence Ministry, the government also dismissed the director of the Direction for Military Equipment and Arms Trade, **Spasoje Orasanin**.

Meanwhile, the **RS Defence Ministry** confirmed that the preliminary investigation conducted by this ministry and the General Staff of the RS Army in the Orao concluded that there was evidence of violation of the embargo on export of parts of equipment produced by this company to "a country under UN sanctions". The statement by the Serb Republic Defence Ministry said that the export of parts of equipment was done through the firm Jugoimport-SDPR and other firms, which Orao has links with in Yugoslavia.

"We are in the process of identifying the specifications of the tools, spare parts and equipment which were exported to these firms, as well as the involvement of persons in these tasks in the country where the parts were exported to," the statement said.

Oslobodjenje reports (p. 4) that the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, said during his address before the UN Security Council in New York that he will not hesitate to use his powers to penalise officials responsible for the illegal sale of weapons.

All media report that the Montenegrin transport ship **Boka Star** was intercepted two days ago in **Rijeka port in** Croatia, after suspicion that it carried weapons to be sold to Iraq. Preliminary investigation revealed that the transport was organised by the Yugoslav company Yugoimport and is most likely connected with the Orao aviation institute in

Bijeljina.

In an editorial in **Dnevni Avaz**, Almasa Bajric argues that the enter Orao affair and the possibility of BiH facing UN/US sanctions because of RS company which violated the UN embargo on export weapons to Iraq clearly demonstrates that BiH needs a Ministry of Defence at the state level.

(Orao case covered nearly in full by all but electronic media: **Oslobodjenje** front page, **Dnevni Avaz** p. 2, **Slobodna Dalmacija** p. 7, **Dnevni List** front page, **Vjesnik** p. 5 and **Jutranji List** front, **Nezavisne Novine**, p. 3, **Glas Srpski**, p. 3, **Blic**, **FRY Nacional**, **Vecernje Novosti**, one of the leading items in **BHTV 1**, **FTV**, **RTRS** prime time news)

Coalition-making/Elections

PDP presidency member Mladen Zaric said on Thursday that his party would rather enter a parliamentary coalition with the **SDS** than with the **SNSD**. Speaking at a news briefing, he said that the PDP was offered a coalition deal from both parties, but that a coalition with the SDS was a *"more acceptable solution at the moment"*. *"The PDP will surely be in the parliamentary majority and we will ask that Mladen Ivanic is the prime minister-designate, but not at all costs,"* Zaric said.

In a statement for **Dnevni Avaz** (front page), the leader of the Party for BiH, **Safet Halilovic**, said that it will be very difficult for constitute authorities, especially in the Federation, where one could expect to have a full blockade of the system because of SDP and SNSD which refuse to co-operate with nationalist parties and which will most likely produce Serb vice president in this entity.

In an interview with **Slobodna Dalmacija** (front), the acting President of HDZ BiH, **Barisa Colak**, said that the HDZ is extremely dissatisfied with the distribution of compensatory mandates. *"BiH Election Commission should have abided by the 3% threshold stipulated in article 9.6 paragraph 2 which*

strictly says that political parties, coalitions, independent candidates and lists have to pass the threshold.” In that context Colak says that the Election Commission should have applied the law and not interpreted it. Regarding the appeal with the BiH Court, Colak announces that if the Appeal Department of the BiH Court does not acknowledge the Coalition’s requests, “we would have a right to go to the Human Rights Chamber and institutions of the Council of Europe”.

Regarding the ongoing talks between parties in BiH, Colak says that that the Coalition talked to SDA on two occasions and that at the last meeting in Sarajevo, the two sides adopted a document obliging themselves to partnership at all levels, namely at cantonal, Federation and State levels.

In an article in **Slobodna Bosna** (“Silajdzic does not want in coalition with SDS, Dodik and Ivanic do not want with Silajdzic”), Asim Metiljevic writes that the so-called BiH government of unity had actually been projected by the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, a few months before the elections. The solution has been officially proposed after the elections by the Party for BiH officials including **Haris Silajdzic**, who is being mentioned as potential new BiH prime minister designate. Metiljevic reiterated that Ashdown had succeeded to get the support for Silajdzic from **Alija Izetbegovic**, but that Silajdzic himself was afraid of another failure. Concerning the establishment of the authorities in the BiH Federation, the author emphasizes that the talks on the issue between the SDA and HDZ have fallen into a crisis at the very beginning. *“The negotiators have faced an irresolvable problem, which is how to elect a president and two vice-presidents who must be from all three constituent peoples. The problem is actually about how to elect a Serb vice-president since the Constitution foresees that he/she can be elected only by the Serb caucus and with absolute majority. And, having in mind that all Serb representatives are from*

SDP, SDA and HDZ must negotiate with the party. In addition, according to the Constitution, the Federation prime minister designate is being nominated by consensus among the entity President and Vice-presidents," Metiljevic wrote.

*In an lengthy article published in **The Chicago Tribune**, Tom Hundley argues that the October 5 voter returned BiH to the past and will simply solidify the belief that the project of ethnic cleansing is almost irreversible. "The verdict was unanimous. Bosnia's Serbs, Croats and Muslims all rejected the moderate politicians who have been working toward the unified, multiethnic state envisioned by the 1995 Dayton peace agreement.*

*Instead, they voted overwhelmingly for the hard-line ethnic politicians who signalled their respective constituencies that they would go along with the Dayton rules just enough to keep the international aid pumps primed, but not so much that a genuine pluralistic society could take root here again. ... **Paddy Ashdown**, whose official title is High Representative for Bosnia-Herzegovina, called the election results 'a cry for help,' but political leaders and analysts from the region are asking what further proof the international community needs to understand that the Dayton formulas do not work." Hundly writes that the Dayton agreement stopped Bosnia's war, but it has not been able to rebuild a real peace. "As a nation, BiH exists only in the minds of the European and American bureaucrats who run the place as a kind of international protectorate. For local inhabitants, it's a convenient fiction they sometimes play along with, sometimes not."*

[Chicago Tribune: Bosnia-Herzegovina still stubbornly separate Voters dismiss moderates' calls for reintegration](#)

IC Activities/commentaries

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Thursday completed a two-day visit to the United States. On Wednesday, he addressed the UN Security Council, along with the UN Secretary

General's Special Representative to BiH, Jacques Paul Klein, and on Thursday he met with senior US administration officials from the Pentagon, the State Department and the Treasury. (Most media carry the OHR PR in full – **Dnevni Avaz** p. 3, **Oslobodjenje** p. 7, **Nezavisne Novine** p.7 and **Glas Srpski** p.3, **Blic** p 2)

Dnevni Avaz (p. 3) reports that High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** and founder of the Party for BiH **Haris Silajdzic** commented yesterday for BBC World Service on the current political situation in BiH. In his statement, Ashdown noted that BiH has marked a great progress in the past six years. However, Silajdzic could not agree with this fully, saying that there are still hundreds of thousands of people who have not returned to their homes. *"Apart from domestic politicians, a part of responsibility rests with the International Community which simply took an easy road. While its officials talked about the multi-ethnic and democratic Bosnia, it was preserving the status quo,"* said Silajdzic, adding that he indeed commends the measures thus far introduced by the High Representative. He also called Ashdown to impose all the laws that are necessary, *"regardless of potentially controversial reactions."*

In an editorial in **Oslobodjenje**, Zija Dizdarevic, argues that, despite Ashdown's statement in New York that *"almost a million of refugees returned to their homes"*, it is impossible to determine even an approximate number of true returns in BiH. *"Ashdown's million is playing around with 105.000 people. These plays on numbers have obscured numerous personal and family tragedies..."*

In the opening editorial in this week's **Slobodna Bosna** ("How the IDIOT will destroy us in a reform-like way"), the magazine's Editor-in-Chief, Senad Avdic, writes that, during a three-hour meeting with the SDA Honorary President **Alija Izetbegovic** last week in Sarajevo, the High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** asked him to support *"his new, genius-like plan about **Haris Silajdzic's** political future."* According to the

plan, Silajdzic should be appointed a new BiH prime minister designate. Avdic writes that Izetbegovic agreed to support Silajdzic but demanded the removal of the FOSS Director Munir Munja Alibabic in return. All other public explanations about the Alibabic's removal are lies, according to Avdic. *"Alija Izetbegovic started the three-hour meeting with Ashdown with serious health problems, and a day later, he came to his SDA office in good mood and healthy like a little bird. He overcame all concerns in his life. He will not go to The Hague, his son Bakir will never go to the prison, the other Bakir (Alispahic) will never go back to prison, those 40 SDA bandits who entered the war without a phennig and came out from the war as multi-millionaires are not guilty for anything, the culprits are the information incriminating them and which leaked to the media,"* Avdic writes. He added that many mafia members, criminals and terrorists were happy about Ashdown's decision to remove Alibabic. However, *"none of them believed that Paddy Ashdown is such an idiot and that he wants so much to bury up this poor, non-existent country. And I told them more than four months ago: (it is about) a lying, arrogant, shallow idiot,"* Avdic concludes.

Slobodna Bosna writes that the British Professors **David Chandler**, *"an eminent British intellectual"*, has been warning in the past months about possible consequences of further developments in BiH after **Paddy Ashdown**, *"a minor, frustrated and ambitious English politician, had been appointed its colonial protector."* On five pages and under the title *"Frustrated Ashdown in BiH plays role of football player David Beckham"*, the magazine carried Chandler's articles on Ashdown published in Guardian and Spectator.

*"Many in Great Britain will remember **Paddy Ashdown**, the former leader of British liberals and current High Representative of the international community in BiH, as a politician with the longest mandate in the British Parliament. But, at the same time, great many more will remember the issue of The Sun from*

more than ten years ago, and the catchy headline on its front-page: 'Paddy Pantsdown,' which even Ashdown himself called 'horrid, but brilliant!' (Nerma Jelacic in **Slobodna Bosna** – "Ashdown has legally banned writings on his sex scandal").

"Petritsch's successor **Paddy Ashdown** is also facing nowadays an issue of the international protectorate in BiH (yes or no) in the context of the assessment he has already started applying protector's authorities. For now, he is rejecting such allegations calling journalists to believe his words and not his deeds. And the list of decisions he has made just a past few weeks indicates that the protectorate has been introduced already," Senad Pecanin wrote in this week's **BH Dani** opening editorial.

In the Bosnian Barometer, this week's **BH Dani** awarded the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, with three stars (excellent move) for his decision to impose ten crucial economic laws. However, the magazine gave one black dot (a bad move) to Ashdown, due to his rejection of the veto put by the Bosniak and Croat members of the RS Constitutional Commission on the draft RS Law on Ministries.

SRNA news agency reports that the SRSJ **Jacques Klein** said in New York that the presence of some 200-400 **Mujahedeen in BiH** did not represent a problem and danger for the country and that for the entire world it was safer if they stay in BiH. "Once, it was suggested that we deport them, but then it was concluded at the international level that it was safer for the whole world if we keep them in BiH, because we then know where they are," Klein told a news conference following his address to the UN Security Council. (also quoted this morning by **Oslobodjenje** on front page)

Regarding the yesterday's article in **Vecernji List** which said that the High Representative for BiH is going to stop the construction works in Croat refugees' settlements of **Bobanovo and Suskovo**, today's **Dnevni List** (page 3) quotes an anonymous

source close to OHR as saying that OHR is too busy with other important jobs and does not have time to deal with sealing off and abolishment of the refugees' settlements in the Stolac and Capljina areas. *"Our priority is not Bobanovo and Suskovo settlements and it is pure speculations that the OHR received requests for sealing off of these and other settlements"*, says the DL's source. Meanwhile, **Vecernji List** (front page) continues featuring the same item.

State-related Issues

At a session held yesterday, the **Council of Ministers** decided that new BiH traffic and driving licenses will be printed in BiH, while the special registration stickers will be produced abroad because it is technically more demanding. (**Dnevni Avaz, Oslobođenje, BHTV 1, FTV**)

Electronic Media Headlines

BHTV 1

- Armed Chechens holding around 700 persons as hostages in Culture Palace in Moscow
- BiH Presidency requests penalties for those responsible for breaching UN embargo
- Council of Ministers allocated resources for purchase of passport booklets
- Suspect supposedly linked with Washington sniper shooter arrested

FTV

- Drama in Moscow theatre continues
- RS Government during the extraordinary session removed officials involved in "Orao" case
- Council of Ministers found resources for purchase 200 000 passports
- USA police arrested suspects in the case of Washington sniper shooter

RTRS – no report