

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 25/12/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Avdic, Lazovic, Komsic and Tokic established new social-democracy; Lagumdzija's option won party majority; Nazi symbols under Bijeli Brijeg; Srebrenica – theft of Bosniak property

Dnevni Avaz: New party stronger than incomplete SDP; Football match almost interrupted; Powerful gangs in Balkan have to be stopped

Nezavisne Novine: Zlatko Lagumdzija remains SDP leader; Jack Straw, British Foreign Secretary: Crime is a threat to stability in Balkans

Glas Srpski: Savo Strbac and Milorad Pupovac comment on verdict in Lora case: Farce – You bet!

Blic: Orao made business through banks in RS and Yugoslavia; Dodik and Ivanic in coalition?; Robertson: Cooperation with the Hague condition for Partnership for Peace; Mikerevic: We are against enlargement of the CoM

Slobodna Dalmacija: Elite Croat officers – anti-state elements

Dnevni List: Open letter to His Excellency Paddy Ashdown: HR remains silent; Doris Pack: Croats in BiH need international protection; Slovenian lobby in BiH stronger than Council of Ministers

Vecernji List: Interview with Michael Humphreys, new Head of EC in BiH; Special forces save players and supporters

BiH Issues – SDP, BiH National Day, CoM, 'Orao'

The local media devoted most space over the weekend and on Monday to an extraordinary, two-day SDP Congress, which ended Sunday afternoon. The most important decisions of the Congress were as follows – Lagumdzija's report on the election activities and results were adopted, new guidelines were determined for the SDP's work and **Zlatko Lagumdzija** was re-elected as the party President. The SDP delegates appointed

Alija Behmen for the Bosniak party Vice-President, and **Zeljko Komsic** for the Croat party Vice-President and **Mladen Grahovac** for the Serb party Vice-President. Furthermore, the delegates elected new party SG and the party presidency members (names printed in Avaz). As a result of Lagumdzija being re-elected for the party President, **Ivo Komsic, Sejfudin Tokic, Miro Lazovic, Almir Dzuvo, Sead Avdic, Muazem Gerin, Goran Crnogorac** and **Avdo Kezman** stepped out of the SDP and decided to establish the New Social Democracy. They will prepare in 15 days and plan to hold the party congress three months later. *"I think that the SDP moved away from the principles of democratic system and the party work,"* said Dzuvo. Komsic stated that the future of the new party depends on how the program of the social democracy was implemented by those advocating the ideas. *Oslobodjenje* quoted Lagumdzija as saying that he was not interested in what was taking places 'behind the scenes of the SDP Congress'. He referred to his close associates from the SDP who left the party as 'his former associates and friends'. The dailies also reported that the SDP founder, **Nijaz Durakovic**, held a speech and left the Congress, which meant that he was no longer party member. A separate article in Avaz (pg. 3) informing that Lagumdzija's and Sead Dzaferbegovic's bodyguards attacked Avaz's reporter, **Faruk Cardzic**. He was verbally abused and Lagumdzija's bodyguard threatened to 'throw him out of the window'. Avaz announced that they would inform all appropriate BiH institutions as well as the IC members of the incident. (**Avaz** pg. 1, 2 and 3, **Oslobodjenje** pg. 1 and 4, **Ljiljan** magazine 'A dramatic night in Dnevni Avaz building – Lagumdzija wanted to arrest Radoncic in order to win the Congress', **Vecernji List** pg. 3 'Lagumdzija has won again', **Dnevni List** pg. 1 and 5 'Lagumdzija is SDP President again', **Jutarnji List** pg. 4 'Lagumdzija is SDP President again', **Slobodna Dalmacija** pg. 12 and last page 'Lagumdzija elected SDP President again' and **Vjesnik** pg. 10 'At Congress of disunity Lagumdzija remained SDP President')

Entitled 'Non-working day only in the Federation' (**Avaz** pg.9) and 'Mirko Sarovic will not attend reception' (**Oslobodjenje** pg. 3), the dailies reported on the marking of the BiH National Day – 25 November. Sulejman Tihic, Bosniak Presidency

member, stated that 25 November was legally the BiH National Day and the Presidency will not be working. Furthermore, he said that they plan a reception in the Presidency to mark the occasion, which will be attended by himself and Covic, while the Serb Presidency member Sarovic was not able to attend the reception. Avaz pointed out that the National Day was going to be marked, once again, only in the Federation because it was a working day in the RS. Both dailies carried a comment on the same issue. According to **Avaz's** Husein Orahovac (pg. 3), 'it is discouraging that the ceremony marking the National Day will not be attended by a Serb Presidency member because the same behavior was displayed in the past by Krajisnik and Radisic'. *"The relationship of the Serb politicians towards the National Day is much more harmful for them than BiH. If nothing else then because of the fact that politicians who ignore their home country can not count with the possibility of being taken seriously at the international political scene."* The commentaries to the same issues were featured in **Dnevni List** (page 2, by Mirjana Skoko) and **Vecernji List** (page 2, by Dejan Jazvic).

Weekend papers (**Nezavisne Novine** pg. 1 and 6, **Avaz** pg. 2 'Thirteen ministries and non-rotating president suggested', **Vecernji List** pg. 1 and 2 'OHR proposes State Government with 13 Ministries' reported on a Friday meeting between Senior Deputy HR Schroembgens and all political BiH representatives who entered the HoR. According to a new Draft Law on CoM, the Council should have 13 ministries (listed in Avaz), but fails to specify whether the name of the institution should be changed. **Nezavisne Novine** (also pg. 6) further reported that representatives of the SBiH and PDPD held separate meetings with the BiH presidency members and discussed the reconstruction of the CoM and the forming of the new government. SBiH advocated the renaming of the CoM into the BiH government, while the PDP opposed the suggestion. The SBiH also suggested the banning of the rotation principle, while the PDP was of the view the issue could be further discussed.

Vecernji List (pg. 5) carried an interview with **Michael Humphreys**, the Head of the EC in BiH, who said that the EC fully supported the OHR initiative to establish the Council of Minister without a rotating chairman.

'Orao' affair (**Oslobodjenje** pg. 1,4 and 5 'BiH out of Partnership for Peace because of Orao', **Nezavisne Novine** pg. 3 'Iraq pays \$100 million to Orao', **Glas Srpski** pg. 3 'Illegal arms sale stopped') was again prominently covered in the above papers. **Oslobodjenje** reports that the RS government's report on the "Orao" affair has not been given a 'passing mark' by the IC reps. The RS media on the other hand carried excerpts from Sunday Times editorial on the subject, which claimed that the illegal network in the RS would be dismantled. It also mentions HR Ashdown who labeled the illegal network as 'the network of generals', and promised that every form of illegal arms trade would be destroyed. **Vecernje Novosti** (pg. 6 'Trade to Iraq') and **Blic** (pg. 1 and 7) reported that the RS Supreme Council held a session after which they issued a statement about 'Orao'. It reads that 'Orao' Institute realized foreign payments through Nova Bank, Razvojna Bank, Banjalucka Bank and Kristal Bank from the RS and YU Garant Bank and ZRZ VJ Belgrade from Yugoslavia. The statement was distributed to the BiH Presidency, US embassy, COMSFOR, OHR, OSCE and EU. **Blic** also reported that 'Orao' Institute staff protested on Friday. They condemned the fact that none of the RS government officials demonstrated any intention yet to help the Institute continue its work. **Guardian** ('Eastern Europe arms Saddam' by Ian Traynor in Zagreb and Nicholas Wood in Belgrade) reported on Monday that Yugoslavia is the hub for **east European arms smugglers** and military experts who have been supplying Saddam Hussein with crucial equipment and know-how to help him frustrate a US air campaign against Iraq. *"The trade has been going on for some time, and has even increased since the toppling of Slobodan Milosevic, a Saddam ally, in 2000. An investigation by the International Crisis Group think tank into the arms-for-Iraq scam concludes that Jugoimport, the*

Belgrade-based Yugoslav state arms export agency accused by the US last month, also brokered arms to Iraq from Bosnia, Ukraine, Russia, and possibly Macedonia and Belarus,” the article read.

OHR related issues

Weekend edition of **Glas srpski** (p.3 ‘Working groups for changes) reported on a meeting that PDHR **Donald Hays** had with representatives of the new BiH authorities on Friday. PDHR Hays called for new BiH authorities to make sure that real changes start taking place. He further informed the representatives of BiH authorities about three working groups, which had been recently set up, and their main tasks were: the CoM restructuring, customs and VAT. He said that in the past 12 months, the IC representatives conducted a thorough analysis and concluded that the VAT at the entity level is doomed to failure. He said that this was unanimous stand of the IC. After the meeting, **Dragan Mikerevic** (PDP) said that the PDP was against the increase of number of ministries in the CoM, but was not against the elimination of the rotation principle. He said that the IC representatives are moving away from the essence of the problem, and paying more attention to the increase of the number of ministries.

Slobodna Dalmacija (pg. 1 and 12, by Zlatko Tulic ‘Hit list’) claims to be in possession of a letter that the Federation Defense Minister, **Mijo Anic**, sent to BiH HR **Paddy Ashdown** with a list of names of 46 senior officers (names printed in the article) and officials of the Croat component of the FbiH Army who were loyal to the ‘Croat self-rule’. Anic requested from OHR to proclaim the listed officials ineligible. *“It is quite clear that the issue is serious and that it should be treated as a danger. It is about more frequent and aggressive, and almost unbearable pressures and threats by former senior officials of the Federation MoD and officers of the Croat component of the Federation Army sent to the current employees of the Federation MoD and Army. They openly threat that they would return to their former offices and that they would ‘chase out’ on the street everyone who remained working for*

the MoD and Army and have revenge on everyone who betrayed the so-called Croat self-rule (...) It would be good that you, as the High Representative, send a clear message that those who worked against the Croat component of the Federation Army and the BiH State do not have a place in the Federation MoD and Federation Army (...)", reads the alleged letter.

Dnevni List (pg 8) carried an open letter that **Dr. Stiepo Andrijic**, a removed Chair of the FBH Steering Board of the Privatization Agency (removed on May 19, 2000 by former HR **Wolfgang Petritsch**), sent to HR **Paddy Ashdown**. Andrijic stated that the decision to remove him stripped him off his fundamental human rights – i.e. the right to vote – and therefore requested that HR reviewed the decision. *"Since you are the only competent for abolishment of the Decision or to set the duration of the punishment, I sent this request to you,"* reads Andrijic's letter. Andrijic noted that HR Ashdown promised to declare himself on the issue during a show on Croat Radio Herceg Bosna and since he has not done, Andrijic felt that it was his duty to inform the public.

Ljiljan magazine 'Through HR to third entity' by Enes Ratkusic. It deals with the abolishment of the special regime cantons and the idea of Mostar becoming the Federation capital. The first move towards the realization of the idea was made by **HR Paddy Ashdown** who abolished the Herzegovina-Neretva and Central Bosnia cantons, that is the special regime cantons. The article carries the whole chronology of this issue, describing the reasons due to which the special regime Cantons were established. The old idea that Mostar becomes the Federation capital – the concept suits the HDZ and **Hamdija Jahic**, the Mayor of Mostar has already stated that he is against this proposal.

London Conference, Petritsch, EUPM

Both dailies reported that the EU was organizing a conference on fight against crime in London today. (**Avaz** pg. 4 and

Oslobodjenje pg. 5) OHR Spokesperson, **Mario Brkic**, stated that around 300 delegates would attend the conference. He further said that **HR Ashdown** would address the conference and emphasize the importance of the judiciary reform as agreed with BiH political representatives and the Peace Implementation Council. Avaz alone carried two separate articles on the issues (pg. 4) – one written for the daily by the British Foreign Minister and British Interior Ministry, **Jack Straw** and **David Blunkett** and the other by the EU HR for Foreign and Security Policy, **Javier Solana**. Straw and Blanket wrote that the London conference was not only about obligations that had to be undertaken, but also about their implementation. The EU and other international partners will support these obligations. *"We, in the EU and international community, realize that it is in the best interest of our region too to help you fight crime."* **Nezavisne Novine** (pg. 1 and 3 entitled 'Crime is a threat to stability in Balkan) carried an interview with Straw. The article by Solana read that organized crime in Balkans had to be defeated. *"This is the most serious threat to the political and economical stability of the region, which is negatively reflecting on the entire Europe,"* wrote Solana.

Doris Pak, President of delegation for southeast Europe in the European Parliament, stated during her address of the '10 years of BiH' conference in Vienna, that the IC made a lot of mistakes in BiH. She especially criticized the IC for 'pushing into a nationalist corner all nationalist oriented parties of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, and gave support to other groups solely'. According to Pak, this was counterproductive. Former HR to BiH, **Wolfgang Petritsch**, spoke of poor results by the BiH SDP at the last BiH elections. He stated that after the reforms in BiH, the nationalist parties were no longer as dangerous as they used to be. (**Avaz** pg. 8)

George Parker in **Financial Times** on Sunday entitled 'Brussels brief – Bosnia overshadows budget talks'. *"The EU has agreed to take over the police mission in Bosnia from the United Nations on January 1, but has still not agreed the extra E17.5m needed to fund it. Although the sums involved are*

small, a great deal of credibility and pride are at stake. For the EU generally, everyone agrees that it must do more on the world stage and the Bosnia police mission – although modest – is the first real test of whether the union is serious. On the other hand, MEPs are reluctant to sign off the extra funds because they feel they have insufficient scrutiny of spending in the field of common security and defense. Some sort of deal is expected where Bosnia gets the 500 EU policemen and the parliament gets more say over how the money is spent, but the squabble hardly paints the union in a good light with the rest of the world,” reads the article.

RS political scene

The front page in weekend edition of **Nezavisne Novine** was on the SNSD and the PDP opening talks on the new RS government (**Glas Srpski** pg. 2 ‘No results from a meeting in Vienna’, **Avaz** pg. 4 ‘Dodik confirmed he met with Ivanic in Vienna’, **Oslobodjenje** pg.6 ‘Ivanic and Dodik did not agree on coalition’). The paper reported that **Milorad Dodik** and **Mladen Ivanic** met on Friday night in Vienna to discuss the formation of government at both entity and state level. The paper quoted **Nebojsa Radmanovic** (top SNSD official) as saying that the SNSD offered PDP to let SNSD choose an RS PM designate first, and in return the PDP will choose the most important positions in BiH common institutions first. As for the BiH common institutions, Radmanovic also said that the PDP would choose first and SNSD will choose second. He also said that Dodik and Ivanic agreed that leaderships of the two parties would meet to discuss this issue in the next few days and that the final agreement should be reached before the RS NA inaugural session, which is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 28 November. **Glas Srpski** quoted SPRS Chairman Petar Djokic as saying that SPRS representatives and Milorad Dodik agreed on some principles regarding the formation of a new RS government. He said that SPRS would not form a coalition with SDA, SDS and HDZ. The same daily also quoted SDS Spokesperson, Dusan Stojicic, as saying that the SDS was convinced it would manage to ensure the parliamentary majority with the PDP thus preventing the political crisis. He said that SDS is not

surprised with the Vienna meeting, which has been organized by a low-level employee of an embassy. The Federation dailies also reported that an official from the US embassy in Sarajevo initiated the meeting. *"Basically, that was the last attempt of forming a marionette government in the RS"*, said Stojicic.

Headlines in Print Media

Hrvatski Radio Herceg Bosna

- Doris Pack said International community made mistakes in BiH
- Zlatko Lagumdžija is SDP leader again
- More than 200 dead in religious clashes in Nigeria
- Football Fall Season of BiH is over

Federation Radio

- Despite critics, Zlatko Lagumdžija re-elected President of the SDP BiH
- Spiritual-Culture manifestation 'Spiritual Call of the Monotheistic Three-Voice' took place in Banja Luka
- Extraordinary parliament elections in Austria
- Switzerland holds referendum on sharpening the law on asylum

FTV 1

- Zlatko Lagumdžija keeps presidential position in SDP
- Austrian hold general parliamentary elections
- Swiss to decide on sharpening the asylum law at the referendum
- Great Britain: Firemen in strike, fires took five lives

RTRS

- Serbian presidential candidate Vojislav Seselj accuses Nebojsa Covic and Momcilo Mandic for crime
- Lagumdžija re-elected for the SDP BiH President. Avdic, Komsic, Lazovic and Tokic to establish a new party
- Chechen rebels' commander Basaev threatens with new terrorist operations in Russia
- Schissel leads at Austrian parliamentary elections