

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 2/5/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30)
Earthquake in Turkey	Earthquake in Turkey	Earthquake in Turkey	World news
International Labour Day	Arrest of war criminals	Arresting war criminals	SARS
Bobetko's funeral	Bush on Iraq	Single army issue	Labour Day in the RS
SARS in Slovenia?	Celebration of May 1	ZDK Veterans Ministry	Problems in Bijeljina

Oslobodjenje	Mafia wants to eliminate people who are honest workers; FBiH Parliament – Croats requested protection of national interests; Earthquake in Turkey – 320 student under debris; Celebration of May 1
Dnevni Avaz	No tax paid cars given away to war invalids; Bond and Rebac – the customs crime has to be stopped; Hadzipasic – we will work with the Union; Carla Del Ponte arriving on May 19; Personnel clearance in the diplomatic web; Thousands of people under debris
Dnevni List	Financial Police in companies Mostar Fair and Soko Group; American Ambassador in BiH Clifford Bond – Mafia strikes back; Mostar cantonal Court – Ivisa Karlovic was not acting in accordance with the Law on Banks
Vecernji List	Financial Police in Soko; Karadzic does not tailor RS policy

Slobodna Dalmacija	Financial Police searched company owned by brother of Minister Gadzic; Full bus of Canadians examined because of SARS
BH DANI	‘Being non-Muslim in Sarajevo way – dialogue with stones’
Slobodna Bosna	‘The last chance for BiH – next year extraordinary elections to be held, if nationalists win the world is giving up and BiH will be ruined’

Political Affairs	
Presidency vs. CoM	<p>Avaz pg. 2 ‘The Presidency makes decision on international agreements’ – the BiH Presidency warned the CoM that in the future they would not tolerate the signing of inter-state agreements without a prior approval of the BiH Presidency. Bosniak Presidency member, Sulejman Tihic, made the statement following the last session of the BiH Presidency. As an illustration of such practice by the CoM, Tihic gave an example of the recent signing of an agreement with the Japanese government regarding the re-programming of BiH debt. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 ‘The Presidency warned the CoM’ – also carried the above statement by Tihic.</p>

RS Council of Peoples	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'The final word will be by the RS Constitutional Court' – the daily claims it is becoming apparent that the RS Constitutional Court will have the final word on the legality of the election of the new RS Council of Peoples (CoP) leadership. Apparently, after the new leadership was elected on Tuesday five members of the Serb caucus and four of the Bosniak caucus left the constituting session saying they did not want to participate 'unconstitutional election'. Ramiz Salkic, a delegate at the RS CoP, stated that Remzija Kadic (SBiH), who was elected the new President, did not even have the necessary support of the Bosniak caucus. Salkic added they would use all legal elements and start a procedure with the RS Constitutional Court, which, unfortunately, still has not been established. Also, a letter has been sent to the OHR requesting the explanation as to whether the decisions made at the last CoP session are constituent, and special remarks have been included on the work of Banja Luka OHR rep, Vadim Gorelov, who apparently was highly supportive of the election engineering.</p>
Interview with Kristo	<p>Avaz pg. 5 'I doubt the agency will be established and the vetting of state officials completed in 90 days' – an interview with FBiH Justice Minister Borjana Kristo. Asked whether it would be possible to establish the new Civil Service in FBiH in 90 days as well as conduct the vetting of all service members, Kristo expressed a doubt that such thing was possible. She gave an example of the Agency for State Service, which, according to Kristo, has not done anything even though it had been operating since the beginning of the year. As for the harmonization of the FBiH criminal laws with the same laws at the state level, she replied that the FBiH government completed its part of the job and forwarded the laws for the parliamentary procedure.</p>

Pastuovic	<p>Avaz pg. 10 'The vetting started in OHR' – OHR Spokesperson in Banja Luka, Sonja Pastuovic, stated the OHR was considering Branko Krsmanovic for the new RS Finance Minister. She added the vetting procedure might take about 10 days.</p>
FBiH Parliament	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 6 – During Wednesday's session of the FBiH HoP, 15 Croat delegates opposed the abolishment of the FBiH Chamber of Commerce in Mostar. They used their constitutional right to label the matter as a vital national interest of the Croat people in the Federation. The vital national procedure however could not be completed since the Serb caucus still had not been established. Therefore the discussion on the issue has been postponed for the next session on May 6.</p> <p>An insert 'The revision of state officials on hold' – at the session on May 6 HoP reps will also discuss the draft Law on Civil service, which has been forwarded by the Federation government. The daily points out that the new draft again does not meet all OHR requests. Dnevni List pg. 5</p> <p>'Preparation of social program for taking care of redundant workers' – the session of the Federation Parliament's House of Peoples was suspended after the chamber adopted the Law on Bankruptcy and Law on Liquidation Procedure. The daily reports that the HoP, beside the two laws, also passed a conclusion tasking the Federation government to make an analysis of what to expect after the two laws have been implemented and prepare a social program for taking care of workers that will be affected by the laws.</p>

<p>Commentary in Oslobodjenje</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Fat lawyers of robbery' by <u>Hamza Baksic</u> – the author starts back in November 1984 and lists a number of examples on criminal actions that have been taking place in BiH. As for the present day, Baksic mentions the HR's address at the RS NA and concludes that only the OHR can shake-up the criminal system. "The local parts of the political system will participate – as much as they can. If they wanted to do something they would not wait till the last minute."</p>
<p>Interview with Paravac</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg. 1 and 7 – an interview with Chairman of the BiH Presidency Borislav Paravac. Asked whether he was satisfied with the relations with the IC Paravac said the following. "The OHR's role is a bit more stressed, however, it is being mainly justified by the fact that domestic authorities are inert and they are not able to reach an agreement. I am dissatisfied because of our inertia. We have to establish partnership with the IC." Asked whether it would be possible to implement reforms that HR Paddy Ashdown proposed after the resignation of former Chairman of the BiH Presidency Mirko Sarovic, Paravac said that he believed that Sarovic's resignation and the reforms initiated by the HR were not connected." I welcome every initiative for reforms and they will be successful if we manage to reach a consensus for their application." Asked to comment assessments that Radovan Karadzic pulls all main political strings in the RS, Paravac said that 'this was not true.' "I am one of the SDS vice presidents and that influence does not exist. These are manipulations that only make work of the RS institutions difficult."</p>

<p>Colak on security situation</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 2 'Unique security-intelligence service in BiH by end of year' – BiH Security Minister, Barisa Colak, says that the security situation in BiH has not worsen since the assassination of the late Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, adding that the security situation in BiH in general is dissatisfactory. In an interview to Radio Livno, Colak said the current intelligence-security service in BiH would have to undergo a transformation in sense of getting more professional and being subjected to a parliamentary control. "By end of the year, there will certainly be some sort of transformation, possibly joining, in other words merging of these services and installing of a security-intelligence service at the BiH level," said Colak.</p>
<p>Coric on HNK govt.</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 12 'Bosniak ministers in government to blame that the HNK government has not been formed after five months' – the 20th session of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNK) government was interrupted during the discussion of the first point of the agenda. The session was to render the issue of the 2003 draft budget for the HNK. The daily carries a statement by Prime Minister designate, Miroslav Coric, as saying that the key problems behind the failure to form the HNK government are amendments that have been proposed by caucuses in the HNK Assembly which are not, according to Coric, harmonized with the (HNK) Constitution and amendments enacted by the High Representative. In that context, Coric says that Bosniak ministers in the HNK government refused to discuss the 2003 draft budget and declared themselves regarding the amendments adding that the Board for Constitution of the HNK said 90% of the amendments were in violation of amendments to the HNK Constitution proclaimed by the High Representative.</p>

<p>Bond on exemption of the US citizens</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 7 'US and BiH on non-extradition of Americans to the ICC' – carries US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, as saying the US have sent the BiH Foreign Ministry a draft proposal of the agreement on non-extradition of the US citizens to the ICC. "Now we wait for a response from the BiH Foreign Ministry," said Bond stressing the 'real' talks between BiH and US have not started yet.</p>
<p>RS NA session</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 9 'Lifetime prison in RS abolished' – Speaker of the RS NA, Dragan Kalinic, interrupted and postponed the 5th, regular session of the RS NA setting a new date for May 8. Among other laws and conclusions, the RS NA adopted changes and amendments to the Law on RS Banking Agency and Law on Banks in RS imposed by the High Representative. The MPs also adopted drafts of criminal code and the Law on Criminal Procedure.</p> <p>The new criminal code abolishes the lifetime imprisonment and replaces it with the long-term prison sentence of 25-40 years. DL also reports that there should be a special session of the RS NA on May 13 to discuss a document called 'The fundamentals of economic policy for this year' that was prepared by the RS government.</p>

**SB on the
current
government**

Slobodna Bosna pg. 1, 5, 6 and 7 by Asim Metiljevic – on the disastrous situation within the coalition parties as well as within each party. The article reads that only six months after the parliamentary election, BiH has stepped into the hallway of parliamentary crisis that threatens with the total blockade of the political decision-making stopping of even symbolic reformist projects'. The article claims that the proof that the parliamentary crisis has arrived to BiH was last week's election of Spiric for Deputy BiH HoR Speaker. The election was followed by quarrels between party heads who proved they were not in agreement and had no political responsibility. The SDA attacked Muratovic for abstaining for the vote, Kunic from PDP found himself under the fire of his party for supporting Spiric and Halilovic from SBiH (also voted for Spiric) explained they were in coalition with the SDA, but had no obligation towards SDA's partners (meaning the SDS). As for inter-party problems, the magazine points out obvious tension between Tihic and Terzic. Also, according to the author, Federation PM Hadzipasic has also been distancing himself from Tihic. Article claims the same problems are taking place in the SBiH (no examples though) and RS parties who fail to agree on the most benign issues such as the laws stemming from Bulldozer Commission initiatives. As for HR Ashdown, the magazine says that instead of decreasing his authorities he has done the opposite. As for Ashdown's recent statement on the completion of the 'first stage of reforms' the magazine says that no one is clear what the phase included, when it began and when it ended. An insert 'Chose nationalists again and you will be ruined' – a senior diplomatic source told the magazine that only extraordinary elections next year might be a chance for BiH. If, according to the source, people elect nationalists again the IC will leave and BiH will be ruined.

Economic Affairs

Bond – Rebac

Avaz pg. 1 and 4 – US Ambassador in BiH, Clifford Bond, on Wednesday visited the joint BiH – Croat customs terminal at Doljani border. He supported efforts of the Federation Customs Office in implementing relevant laws. Afterwards, Bond met with FBiH Customs Office Director, Zelimir Rebac. Bond stated they would offer full political support to the current leadership of the Customs Office, and provide some help to ensure the efficient work of the Office. Oslobodjenje pg. 1, 4 and 5 – Rebac told Bond that the latest information the Customs Office had proved enormous customs evasions. Rebac expressed his concern that his Office might not have enough strength and motivation to fight alone against organized crime. “There are indications that mafia is already striking back and they have been supported by certain media,” stated Rebac. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 7 – the two talked about activities on preventing organized crime. Rebac is quoted as saying that he was aware that there were evasions and corruption in state bodies, including the Customs Administration, even before he joined it, but said he was amazed to see the dimensions of the problem when he assumed his current post. Rebac also informed Ambassador Bond about the establishment of a special 20-strong and armed unit that is going to be presented to the public.

Hadzipasic on privatisation revision	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 4 – Federation PM Ahmet Hadzipasic confirmed the FBiH government received a draft Law on Revision of Privatisation as devised by the BiH Independent Union. He stated the government and Union would work together on the problem. “Obviously some correction to the draft will have to be made before it’s sent for the parliamentary procedure. Therefore, the government and Union will still discuss the conducted privatisation, and of course the position of the IC is also necessary. I think we can find a joint, maybe even better solution from the offered one,” said Hadzipasic.</p>
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<p>Financial Police in Mostar companies</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 7, Vecernji List pg. 1 and 2 and Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – three days ago the FBiH Financial Police demanded documents from the Mostar ‘Fair’ company, which was founded a few years ago under the patronage of the current member of the BiH Presidency Dragan Covic. Apart from Covic, President of Mostar City Council, Ante Vidacak, and HDZ Mostar official, Ivan Mandic, are also among the owners of this company. DL says that since the documents were not accessible, the Financial Police sealed the offices of Mostar ‘Fair’ and ‘Soko Group’ companies. VL says that they are especially interested in documents from the period when Covic was running the Mostar ‘Fair’ company. The current Manager of the Mostar ‘Fair’ and a brother of Federation Minister of Trade, Mila Gadzic, Dragan Gadzic says that mistreatment has been lasting for days. “The work of the Mostar ‘Fair’ is very transparent and I take over full responsibility for all the things that were taking place last year. However, I cannot say anything for this year.”</p>
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<p>Irregularities in Mostar City budget</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg. 7 'A third of a million KM to SUBNOR' – the Federation Audit Office revealed numerous irregularities in the work of the Mostar City Administration and spending of funds from the city budget. The audit referred to 2001 when the city leaders were Safet Orucevic and Neven Tomic. It was carried out in October last year and it was handed over to Mostar Mayor and President of the Mostar City Council on January 29, 2003. VL came into possession of the report and according to it the system of the internal control of planning, accounting and distribution of the budget funds did not exist at all in the City Administration. Also, SUBNOR (the Association of Soldiers from the Second World War) received more money than religious communities, the associations of citizens, schools and universities put together.</p>
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<p>DL on Federation Customs</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 6 ‘Poll-tax in BiH’ by <u>Pejo Gasparevic</u> – says one of the key issues in BiH is whether the BiH institutions will have enough political brain to eradicate corruption and organized crime. In that context, Gasparevic says the announcements coming from the Federation Customs Administration aimed at bringing financial order are good news for people who want justice and in the same time bad news for institutions of authority. The author’s conclusion is that a possible collapse of the anti-Mafia plan and possible removals of principals of the Federation Customs Administration would diminish BiH chances to crawl out from troubles and that pushing the crimes ‘under the rug’ would just multiply illegalities in the future.</p>
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<p>International Community Affairs</p>	
<p>Del Ponte’s visit</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – Chief Hague Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, will arrive for an official two-day visit to Sarajevo on May 19 this year. During her visit, she will meet with local and international officials to discuss issues relating the work of The tribunal and cooperation of the local authorities with the Prosecution.</p>

<p>Military Affairs</p>

Commission for defence laws	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'American leader' – even though it was unofficially announced that the International Commission for Reform of BiH Defence System would be established this week, no such thing has happened. According to daily's sources, the Commission, which HR insisted on, will most probably start with its work in about 10 days. It is very possible an American will head the Commission because the US is investing the most in the process.</p>
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