OHR BiH Media Round-up, 25/6/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Three thousands soldiers to receive severance payments by the end of June

Dnevni Avaz: Collapse of the Alliance; Ashdown removed Terzic

Jutarnje Novine: IOM offers services to demobilized soldiers – Severance payments are just form of assistance, credits represents a permanent solution

Dnevni List: Crisis in the BiH Federation Defense Ministry – Is the Croat component of the Federation Army being abolished; Debts to the Federation Pension-Disability Insurance Fund – Thousands of workers without paid contributions

Nezavisne Novine: The biggest fire in the US history – 8,000 people evacuated from Arizona; Sejfudin Tokic: SDS has promised apprehension of war criminals

Glas Srpski: Illegal use of property: Federation stirs up the waters; Sarajevo: seven thousand indictees; Peace-keepers pack their suitcases

Nacional: The Hague: Milosevic is attacked by "koksaki" virus; Carla Del Ponte against releasing of Ojdanic and Sainovic

Vecernje Novosti: Pavkovic dismissed

Blic: Florence Hartman: 16,000 suspects for the war crimes in the Balkans; Paddy Ashdown: Presidents of the municipal assemblies obstruct the return of refugees

Defense Ministry, Alliance for Change related disputes

"All dismissed soldiers will receive severance payments by the end of the month, as was planned before," the BiH federation

Defense Minister, Mijo Anic, told Oslobodjenje (front-page, continues on p 3) following his meeting with the Prime Minister Alija Behmen in Sarajevo on Monday. The severance payments should be delivered to the 3,000 soldiers, but Minister Anic did not say how the Federation Government would ensure the necessary funds amounting to 30 million KM. However, in an article on the issue, Dnevni Avaz (p 9) quotes BiH Federation Deputy Finance Minister Sefika Hafizovic as saying that the talks on the resolution of the problem will continue on Tuesday. She said that she hope all the dismissed soldiers would receive severance payments by July 1 as specified in the contracts.

According to Oslobodjenje (pages 4-5, Antonio Prlenda), the BiH Federation Deputy Defense Minister, Ferid Buljubasic, has requested the BiH Federation President Safet Halilovic to immediately send financial police in the Defense Ministry in order to investigate into the legality of the work of the Croat component of the BiH Federation Army.

Dnevni List (front and page 2)carries an article about an alleged crisis in the Federation Ministry of Defence because the Bosniak side is apparently requesting the Federation and State authorities to abolish the two-component set-up of the Federation Army. DL stresses: "*After the removal of Nikola Grabovac, a media campaign is being organised against Mijo Anic, the Federation Minister of Defence, which would end up in his removal. These efforts are linked to the abolishment of the Croat component of the Federation Army which is, according to Bosniak officials, the last parallelism in the Federation. If the abolishment of the components does not go through, Bosniak officials will shift the responsibility to the High Representative*". The daily also carries a letter that **Mijo Anic** sent to **Beriz Belkic,** the Chair of BiH Presidency, in which Anic says that the Law on Defence stipulates the two-component set-up of the Federation Army and that he personally advocates for the two-component set-up within the Federation

Army given the sensitive and complex times and because there is still a single-nation army in the RS. Anic reiterates his previous stance in the matter that if the two other sides agreed to abolishment of their components, there would be no reasons for the Croats to do the same. Anic goes on to say that since the signing of the DPA, a silent revision with a help of the IC is being allowed, which in turn enables implementation of interests of one side only whilst the other side is under constant pressure. *"What would happen if a single army was created in the Federation? Would that meet NATO requirements? There are other unbridgeable parallelisms and that the RS Army. How come that the official Sarajevo and the High Representative do not mind national insignia of the RS, where nothing can be identified with the Croat and Bosniak people who also live in the RS? (…) Why isn't the biggest parallelism in BiH, the RS, abolished? According to all revisions of the DPA, everything goes towards creation of two entities with two peoples. Will then the IC mind the incompatible parallelism?,* says Anic, reads Dnevni List.

(Dnevni Avaz – p 11 also carried Anic's reaction to Belkic's statement)

Collapse of the Alliance for Change?

Stjepan Kljujic, the Chairman of the Alliance for Change Coordination, did not receive answers from the key members of the Alliance on the future of the coalition on Monday, which was the second deadline he had set. However, although they did not respond to Kljujic, the Party for BiH and SDP leaders say their participation in the Alliance has not been brought into question in any way (Dnevni Avaz, front-page, p 3, Oslobodjenje p 8).

At the proposal of BiH Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, the BiH Federation President Safet Halilovic decided on Monday to appoint Franjo Franjic as the new Federation Finance Minister, and Omer Djug as the new Entity Minister of

Social Welfare, Refugees and Displaced Persons. (Oslobodjenje – p 4, Dnevni Avaz – p 4, Jutarnje Novine – p 3, mentioned on the front-page)

Dnevni Avaz (p 4) carried a press release issued by the Bosnian Patriotic Party (BPS) in regard of the appointment of the new BiH Federation Minister of Social Welfare, Refugees and Displaced Persons. *"Due to false public statements by the Alliance for Change (note that BPS is also member of the Alliance) that the Federation Minister of Social Welfare, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Sefer Halilovic (BPS leader indicted for war crimes by the Hague Tribunal), was dismissed, and because of a fact he was prevented from continuing his successfully begun work, for which there were no legal obstacles, BPS will ask for protection of its rights before the European Human Right Court in Strasbourg,"* the release read.

An investigation into the AM Sped case began before the Sarajevo Cantonal Court on Monday by hearing of Hasib Salkic, the Deputy Director of the BiH Federation Customs Administration. (Oslobodjenje – p 3, Dnevni Avaz – p 9)

Ashdown removes Donji Vakuf Mayor

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Monday issued a Decision removing **Kemal Terzic** from his position as Mayor of Donji Vakuf. The Decision, which takes immediate effect, bars Mr Terzic from holding any official, elective or appointive public office and from running in elections or for office within political parties. The High Representative issued this Decision because Mr Terzic has consistently worked to prevent the return of refugees to their homes in the Donji Vakuf municipality. (**Oslobodjenje** – p 3 with photo of Ashdown, **Dnevni Avaz** – p 3 with photo of Ashdown, mentioned on the front-page, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4 with photo of Ashdown, **Nezavisne Novine –** p 8, **Dnevni List** – p 4, **Blic** – p11)

"The High Representative just implemented an idea of Christine Zandvliet, the Head of the OHR office in Travnik, who unbelievably hates everything that is Moslem's," the removed Donji Vakuf Mayor, Kemal Terzic, told Dnevni Avaz (p 2) commenting on Paddy Ashdown's decision.

Dnevni List and Dnevni Avaz read that the second part of the yesterday's press conference was used by the HR to dismiss speculations that he supports any political party or individual: "*I do not support anyone and those who say that are lying*", stated the HR Ashdown.

Asked by journalists why he had not decoded to remove also the RS leaders Sarovic, Cavic and Ivanic over illegal allocation of plots, Ashdown said he was not aware of any facts linking the mentioned politicians with this allocation. (Dnevni Avaz)

"Information that the RS authorities have allocated 80,000 plots for construction of houses mainly to the persons of Serb nationality, who do not want to return to their pre-war homes in the Federation, represents the strongest strike on the process of return in this country," Almina Pilav wrote in the Dnevni Avaz Commentary of the Day.

Hays addresses Business Forum in Mostar

The Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**, on Monday called upon business associations and government officials to cooperate toward a concrete and public action plan to support entrepreneurs, create jobs and promote investment. Speaking to journalists after a forum in which representatives of local business associations discussed the barriers they face with government officials of all levels of BiH, including BiH Minister for Economic Relations and Foreign Trade **Azra Hadziahmetovic**, Federation Minister of Trade **Andrija Jurkevic**, FIPA General Director **Mirza Hajric**, and Cantonal and Municipal officials, Ambassador Hays said:

"There is plenty of potential for growth in BiH, which is rich in human talent and natural resources. The problem is that the government is not acting as a proper partner to unleash that potential."

(Oslobodjenje – p 10, Dnevni Avaz – p 4, Jutarnje Novine – p 4, Dnevni List – p 4)

Problems of unpaid contributions to Federation Pension and Disability Fund and student's standard

Dnevni List (front and page 3) carries a continuation to their article from yesterday about unpaid contributions to the Federation Pension and Disability Fund, this time listing the estimated debts of each canton and debts of some companies and institutions in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and municipalities of Mostar, Neum, Rama-Prozor, Stolac and Capljina. It is worth noting that according to DL, the HNC allegedly owes 22.065.503 KMs (13,4 by the "Bosniak" part and 8,6 by "Croat" part of the canton) to the Fund.

In an interview with **Ljiljan**, the president of the Student Association in Sarajevo, **Refik Ozegovic**, warned that city's students will organize mass demonstrations in Sarajevo in September if the Cantonal Ministry of Education and the Sarajevo University rector fail to agree to meet requests of the Student Association. Ozegovic explained that Student Services employ more outsiders than actual students, Sarajevo Student Center has not paid electricity for months and is facing the potential electricity shut off. "*We have even asked the High Representative to become more engaged in restructuring of higher education, for it is obvious that some issues in the post-war period cannot be resolved on the level of cantons*."

Political parties – elections related activities

Oslobodjenje (p 2), **Dnevni Avaz** (p 3) and **Jutarnje Novine** (p 7) report that, at a press conference in Tuzla on Monday, the SDA Vice-president, **Elmir Jahic**, reiterated the party was considering to initiate the change of the RS' name saying that the entity should be named: Republika Srpska, Bosnjacka and Hrvatska.

Both Banja Luka dailies report (**Glas Srpski,** page 3, **Nezavisne Novine,** page 5) that the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic,** and Vice President of RS, **Dragan Cavic,** assessed that the SDA initiative related to the change of the name of RS has no grounds in the Dayton Peace Agreement. The two RS officials stated for local Bijeljina TV Station that this was yet another Utopian idea, realization of which is absolutely impossible. Nezavisne Novine quote Ivanic as saying that the SDA initiative represents political promotion of the party. (**Blic** – p 3 also reported on the issue)

Both Banja Luka dailies carry short news items related to the activities of RS political parties, related to the upcoming October elections (**Glas Srpski,** page 2, **Nezavisne Novine,** page 5). The Serb National Alliance (SNS) decided to nominate **Branislav Lolic** for the BiH Parliament. The Election board of the SNSD (Party of Independent Social Democrats) for Doboj region concluded at a session held yesterday that ruling parties control the media thus placing opposition parties to inferior position, at the very beginning of the election campaign. The SDS Presidency (Glas Srpski, page 3) will meet today and during the course of the week, the main board of the party will meet and decide on the candidate lists.

The President of the RS Socialist Party, **Petar Djokic,** stated that his party will address official request to the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic,** to dismiss Ministers of Defense and Economic relations with foreign countries, **Slobodan Bilic** and **Fuad Turalic (Nezavisne Novine,** page 4, **Blic** p 10 and **Vecernje Novosti** p 13). Djokic said he expects Ivanic to answer this request by the end of this week. According to Djokic, the SPRS

wants the two Ministers to be dismissed as a matter of principle. He also called Bilic and Turalic to resign and resolve the situation. Ivanic did not want to comment on the request, he just said briefly: *"With all due respect, let me do my job."*

Statements by international officials on BiH, war crime suspects

"A lack of initiative, a lack of interest, resignation of people when it is about a catastrophic economic situation remind me on the 80s of the last century, on the socialist atmosphere. That is why I am leaving BiH as a pessimist," the outgoing Head of the European Commission's Delegation to BiH, Hansjoerg Kretschmer, said on Monday during his meeting with the BiH Federation President Safet Halilovic, according to a press release from Halilovic's office.

Blic (p 2) reports that **Florence Hartmann**, spokesperson of the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, says that according to some experts in the Balkans there are between 4,000 and 16,000 persons that may be indicted for war crimes. Asked to comment on Paddy Ashdown's statement that there are 7,200 such persons in the Balkans– this information he had gotten, as he said to Sarajevo's media, from the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte **–** Hartman said there are no precise data on that. She said the Hague supports the idea to establish a judicial council within the BiH Constitutional Court, which would try suspects for war crimes. *"It is clear that we have done nothing with current 100-200 cases that are in the process. A lot needs to be done. 'Big fishes' are tried in the Hague, some 'small fishes' at local courts, and we should not allow 'medium fishes' to go unpunished,"* Hartmann said.

In a lengthy interview with **Ljiljan**, the president of the LDS, **Rasim Kadic**, said that it is high time that the new High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, undertakes measures against those who protect the indicted war criminals, such as Radovan

Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. "*If this is the position of the International Community, I believe that Paddy Ashdown would have to show Banja Luka what Petritsch never did…It remains to be seen whether Ashdown will react to the recent statement by Del Ponte by taking radical steps, or he will allow the story about the arrest of indicted war criminals to be told only before the elections in BiH in order to raise popularity of the SDS….*"

The high official of the BiH Social Democrat Party (SDP), **Sejfudin Tokic,** stated in an interview to **Nezavisne Novine (**page 5) that he believes that **Radovan Karadzic** and **Ratko Mladic** will get to The Hague by September. Tokic also stated that the SDS policy is a policy of the past and it is only matter of time when such policy will collapse, as was the case with the politics of SDA and HDZ.

Nacional (p. 8) reports that Sarajevo's cantonal prosecutor, **Mustafa Bisic**, is in three-day visit to the Hague where he continues talks with **Carla Del Ponte** about possibilities to transfer some trials to domestic courts. On Del Ponte's request, he has with him a big dossier of the Sarajevo Prosecutor's Office work.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Monday issued a Decision removing Kemal Terzic from his position as Mayor of Donji Vakuf. (1.5)
- Investigation of "AM SPED" case starts before the Sarajevo Cantonal Court. (1.5)
- Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays said on Monday in Mostar the lack of suitable regulations and partnership relations towards investors is a huge problem for investing in BiH. (2)

FTV 1 (1930)

- FBiH President Safet Halilovic today appointed Franjo Franjic, an economist from Vitez, to FBIH deputy prime-minister and FBiH finance minister. Omer Djuk has been appointed FBIH minister of social politics, DP's and refugees. (4)
- The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Monday issued a Decision removing Kemal Terzic from his position as Mayor of Donji Vakuf. (3)
- M. Anic and F. Buljubasic hold consultative meeting with FBIH prime-minister A. Behmen. Prime-minister gave guarantees that the remaining 30 million KM will be paid for compensations to disbanded soldiers of FBIH Army. (.4)

RTRS (1930)

- The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, on Monday issued a Decision removing Kemal Terzic from his position as Mayor of Donji Vakuf. (2)
- BiH Minister of foreign affairs Z. Lagumdzija and the rest of BiH delegation is visiting China. Meeting with Chinese prime-minister will take place tomorrow in Bejing. (0.3)
- Third plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe started today in Strasburg. BiH delegation is attending the session as a full-fledged member for the first time. (0.3)