OHR BiH Media Round-up, 26/12/2004

NTV Hayat (18,55 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
Anti-Serb graffiti in SA	Christmas celebration	RS parties agreement	Entity Armies abolishment
RS parties agreement	RS parties agreement	Stojicic on RS government	RS parties agreement
Stojicic on crisis in CoM	Luxemburg on BIH	Crisis at CoM	New RS Gov. by New Year
Pope' Christmas message	Leakey on ICTY indictees	Christmas celebration	Anti-Serb graffiti in SA

Oslobodjenje	RS does not want to Europe without its institutions
Dnevni Avaz	Karadzic and Mladic toppling Ashdown and Terzic
Blic	No agreement on new RS Government
Vecernje novosti	Following Ashdown's threats: Dayton protecting RS
Nacional	No agreement on new Government

Political developments/cooperation with ICTY

Serb political parties in BiH unite efforts to defy centralization – excerpts from the agreement	**SRNA – Dragan Cavic, Milorad Dodik, Mladen Ivanic , Milanko Mihajlica, Petar Djokic** and **Marko Pavic** – leaders of the SDS, SNSD, PDP, SRS, SPRS and DNS respectively – met in Banja Luka on Saturday and signed the Agreement on Principles of Coordinated Political Activity. According to the agreement, the political factors will respond to all initiatives aimed at amending the constitution by holding top-level talks geared towards reaching consensus. *"The political factors will oppose attempts to violate the equality of the entities and the constituent nations of BiH, and will act politically in a clear and united manner to prevent violations of the constitutional order of BiH and the RS, caused by unilaterally imposed decisions and through favouritism for a nation or an entity,"* the agreement said. The political factors have agreed to set up political-expert working groups which will discuss the constitutional and legal implications of further processes in BiH for the status of the RS. The working groups will be set up as advisory bodies of the office of the RS president and will have three months to draft proposals aimed at defining the future status of the RS, within the context of the ongoing processes, potential proposals by the international community and other political factors, and demands stemming from the EU association process. The political factors will immediately – through the Serb member of the BiH Presidency, deputies in the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH and the Constitutional Court of BiH – tackle the issue of equality of peoples as defined by the Constitution of BiH and the institutions of the Federation of BiH, the agreement said. The document calls for an urgent plan aimed at dislocating certain joint BiH institutions in major BiH centres, to stimulate the polycentric development of BiH and to prevent the centralization of funds and power in one centre, thus promoting the equality of the peoples and entities. As far as cooperation with the Hague tribunal is concerned, the political factors have committed themselves to resolving the issue by getting the competent institutions of the RS and BiH to fully implement international obligations, the agreement said. The political factors are in agreement to extend full support to the work of the relevant bodies, primarily the Interior Ministry in its efforts to meet its obligations to the Tribunal, while asking the joint bodies of BiH – primarily OSA (Intelligence-Security Agency), SIPA (State Information and Protection Agency) and the SBS (State Border Service) – for full cooperation and provision of valid information to the RS Interior Ministry to facilitate its search for war crimes suspects. The agreement also underlined that no-one should bring into question the existence of the Interior Ministry and the RS police, as part of a single system in BiH with clearly defined competences and structure. *"We do not support attempts to abolish the RS Interior Ministry and believe that the reform of the police can be implemented to the extent of enabling the application of international standards within the framework of the BiH Constitution, which defines the RS Interior Ministry as a suborganizational unit within the system of security structures of the institutions of BiH,"* the accord said. The political factors believe that the implemented defence reform has already met the international standards which enable membership of Partnership for Peace, and in due time of the NATO alliance, and that the entity defence ministries have their own constitutional and functional roles to play. *"We believe that we should be moving in the direction of the complete professionalization of the armed forces or demilitarization in BiH,"* the signed document said. The political factors assessed that the times of solutions imposed by the High Representative are gone and that the international community should stimulate domestic political structures to draw up and agree reforms, and call for a partnership with the representatives of the international community in BiH, an end to threats and unjustified sanctions and respect for different opinions. *"The imposition of solutions and the order-issuing attitude by the High Representative and certain international officials can only benefit ill-intentioned political factors in BiH,"* the agreement said. The signatories of the document assessed that the chief generator of the crisis in BiH was *"the anti-Dayton political concept most vocally advocated in public by the SDA, whose aim is to abolish the entities and impose total centralization in BiH, as well as threaten the equality of the peoples and citizens of BiH".* In the part of the agreement pertaining to the crisis in the Council of Ministers and the constitution of the new composition of the RS government, the signatories agreed to unite efforts to find a way out of the crisis in the Council of Ministers, as well as to back the act of constituting the new composition of the RS government through the full composition of their floor groups, regardless of whether or not they will be in the parliamentary majority in the future. The signatories of the accord have called on all other political parties and NGOs in the RS and BiH to support this agreement. **EuroBlic** cover and pg 2 'No agreement on new Government' by Rajna Radosavljevic – Statements; **EuroBlic** pg 2 inset 'To defend RS' also carried excerpts from the agreement. **Vecernje Novosti** cover 'Dayton protecting RS' and pg 5 'Dayton to protect Republika Srpska' by Sl. Pesevic reported on signing of the agreement.

Leaders of the six strongest Serb political parties in BiH on the agreement	**RTRS –** Six strongest parliament parties in RS signed an agreement on principles of coordinated political acting. SDS, SNSD, PDP, SP RS, SRS and DNS clearly determined themselves towards constitutional position of RS, cooperation with ICTY, reform of police and defence reform, relation towards international community and crisis in executive RS and BIH Government. The parties will not allow disturbances regarding equality of entities and constituent people in BIH. With joint actions the parties will disable violation of BIH and RS Constitution. All other parties and NGO's received an invitation to support the agreement. **Dragan Cavic** SDS Chairman says that the parties have found political principles that will determine their position towards CoM and RS Government. Representatives of all 6 parties agree on one: they will all support the appointment of new RS Government regardless of the fact whether they will participate in it or become opposition. RTRS reporter says that it seem clear that the new PM will be a non party individual. There are 2 concepts on the table regarding appointment of the new Government; one came from SDS the other from SNSD. *"From the beginning SNSD is for the concept where for RS and even SDS would be the best to recuperate from executive government. Government should be appointed where SDS would be a part of opposition and would support the appointments as well as SNSD would support the appointment of some other Government in order to contribute to stabilisation of situation"*, says **Milorad Dodik** SNSD Chairman. *"I have announced the positions of my main board. SDS doesn't not feel that it can support the Government where there are no SDS representatives. SDS will support the act of establishing the Government if it doesn't participate in it rather if it becomes opposition"*, says Cavic. Despite the fact that they do not agree on the appointment of the new Government they do agree that they will stop violation of BIH and RS Constitution. *"Current crisis in BIH is not a result of individual activities. It is a result of a feeling that RS institutions are in danger. Our desire is to defend these institutions in the most democratic way"*, says **Mladen Ivanic** PDP Chairman. Another matter that everyone agrees on is cooperation with ICTY. **Marko Pavic** DNS Chairman says that parties are for reforms but for those that will enable survival of RS agreed in Dayton Agreement. *"We do not accept the European path if it involves abolishment of RS institutions",* says Dodik. Agreement clearly states that the main guilty party for crisis in BIH is SDA and therefore there will be no partnership with that party. **Petar Dokic** Chairman of SP RS says that SDA is a key generator of all misunderstandings and problems. **Milanko MIhajlica** SRS Chairman feels that apart from SDA, parties like SDP and SBIH are also to blame for the crisis. **TV Hayat, BHT, FTV, Oslobodjenje** cover page, pgs-4-5 'RS does not want to Europe without its institutions', **Dnevni Avaz** pg 2 'An attempt to defend RS institutions' also covered the issue in a similar way carrying statements by main actors.
SDA's Dzaferovic: Not SDA but the non-cooperation with The Hague is the problem	**Oslobodjenje** pg 4 'Not SDA but the non-cooperation with The Hague is the problem' – SDA Vice-president Sefik Dzaferovic on Saturday rejected accusation by leaders of six RS political parties that SDA was to be held responsible for the crisis in the country. He said parties from RS were just trying to escape from the real problem which was a lack of cooperation with ICTY.
SDP leader Lagumdzija: Ruling politicians do not want reforms and that is why they are production ethnic tensions	**Oslobodjenje** pg 4 'Ruling politicians do not want reforms and that is why they are production ethnic tensions' – SDP BiH President **Zlatko Lagumdzija** on Saturday said that the agreement of political parties in RS would stop reforms regardless of a fact this would deepen economic and social crisis. Lagumdzija does not expect the current political crisis to be resolved soon.
Party for BiH's Halilovic: RS takes advantage of symbolic Ashdown's measures	**Oslobodjenje** pg 5 'RS takes advantage of symbolic Ashdown's measures' – Chairman of the Party for BiH Presidency Safet Halilovic on Saturday said that the political parties in RS were taking advantage of symbolic (too soft) Ashdown's measures to block the functioning of the state and raise the issue of the RS future. The Serb political parties however are forgetting that they cannot make decision on behalf of the other two constituent peoples.
RSNA Speaker hopes news RS Government will be established by New Year	**RTRS, TV Hayat, FTV –** RS National Assembly Speaker **Dusan Stojicic** expects that the new Government will be appointed by the end of 2004. Stojicic stated that the work of RS NA has been tolerant so far in a complicated situation. He adds that the next year will be difficult but the trend of slow economy revival will be continued. Stojicic denied the claims that SDS members are hesitating with resignations. He reminded that **Slobodan Kovac** has ignored the invitation from the party to resign as BIH Minister of Justice.

Mikerevic says RS cannot be abolished, crisis under control	**Serbian TV** – In an interview to RTS (Radio- Television of Serbia) broadcast on Saturday, outgoing RS Prime Minister **Dragan Mikerevic** said that the Serb representatives will persevere in their efforts to preserve the RS. High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** had overstepped his authority and endangered the institutions and consequently the RS as well, Mikerevic said. *"We are under terrible pressure. We are accused of enabling war criminals, that is, war crimes suspects, to stay on our territory, the SerbRepublic. They claim that Mr Mladic stayed at some of our facilities, but nobody is showing us any evidence,"* Mikerevic emphasized. The latest decision by the High Representative has no future, Mikerevic pointed out, and added that Ashdown's unyielding attitude is only causing the crisis to deepen. *"No future can be built on such actions,"* said Mikerevic. Asked whether the international community might abolish the RS because of non-cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, Mikerevic said that was not possible. *"I do not think the RS can be abolished. I simply do not believe it can be. I think there are too many people who are ready to further sacrifice themselves for the RS, and I think that individual sacrifices are not significant at all. What I did was only a signal that there is a threshold here below which the Serb people – and I would say primarily the representatives of the Serb people – cannot go,"* said Mikerevic. Concluding his interview to Serbian Television, Mikerevic said that the RS had never been stronger, and that Serb politicians in BiH were in full control of the crisis.
Serbian deputy premier says Ashdown wants to seal Bosnian Serbs' fate	**SRNA** – Serbian Deputy Prime Minister **Miroljub Labus** believes that the survival of the RS has nothing to do with cooperation with the Hague, and that constraints on the independence of the RS would jeopardize the entire Serbian nation's future in Europe. *"Ashdown has tried to go back on his promise to abolish the RS, but has linked its survival to the arrest of Hague suspects. Imagine if someone tried to blame the international administrators of Afghanistan for the fact that Osama Bin Laden is still at large,"* Labus said in his comment for Saturday's edition of the Belgrade daily Politika. He believes that Ashdown's objective is very obvious, and that, as the future status of Kosovo-Metohija is to be decided in 2005, he is trying to alter the balance of forces in the Balkans beforehand and seal the fate of the RS. *"It is in our interest to protect the RS and to enter the EU together with the RS. There we have 1.5m of our compatriots, who sacrificed themselves for four years in order to live together with us,"* Labus said. He said that the November agreement on the setting up of a single police force was in contravention of the Dayton accord, and that nobody had asked Belgrade anything about that. *"When we go to Brussels the first thing they ask us is what have we done to establish full cooperation with The Hague, while they do not appear to register our opinion,"* Labus said. He added that if the state was not capable of talking the war crimes suspects into turning themselves in voluntarily, then the law should be applied.
French Foreign Ministry supports Ashdown	**Dnevni Avaz** pg 2 'Support to Paddy Ashdown's measures' – France supports decisions/measures taken by EUSR **Paddy Ashdown** aimed at removing obstacles to cooperation with ICTY, according to a press release issued by the French Foreign Ministry. The Ministry called on all political forces in BiH to work on the establishment of the full cooperation with the Hague Tribunal.
Luxemburg Foreign Minister on BiH's European future	**BHT –** Luxemburg will take over the EU presidency in January 2005. This fact is very important for BIH, since BIH expects to sign the agreement on start of negotiations for association with EU within first six months of 2005. Luxemburg announced that they wish to see Western Balkans in EU, but BIH, SCG and Croatia must achieve a full cooperation with ICTY and extradite all ICTY indictees first. **Jean Asselborn**, Luxemburg Minister of Foreign Affairs: *"I know that the Minister of Foreign Affairs **Mladen Ivanic** has resigned, which is especially linked to the Ratko Mladic case. The key problem lays with RS and the fact that ICTY is searching for Mladic for years. However, the latest moves are giving more clarity to the complete situation."* The new leaders of EU support the measures of High Representative and confirm the importance of cooperation with ICTY. Luxemburg officials didn't want to comment the authorities of HR Paddy Ashdown, but they confirmed that they would like to see HR representing only Brussels soon.
FTV on crisis in CoM	**FTV** – Despite of resignation of two Ministers, BIH Council of Ministers can continue its work. According to law and CoM regulations, sessions of CoM can be held with participations of only six Ministers, two from each ethnic group. The resigned Ministers are obligated to attend sessions of CoM, until their substitutes. CoM Chairman **Adnan Terzic** announced the next session on Thursday. BIH Minister of Foreign Affaris **Malden Ivanic** was the first one to resign. In his explanation, Ivanic stated that he would stay in the Ministry, but he wouldn't attend the sessions of CoM. BIH Minister of Transport and Communication **Branko Dokic** also submitted an "imprecisely formulated request" for resignation. Despite of request from SDS, Minister of Justice **Slobodan Kovac** stated that he would leave CoM only if all other Serb Ministers resign as well. Minister of Defence **Nikola Radovanovic** didn't make any statements regarding resignation so far. Despite of the legitimacy of sessions, it's necessary to confirm the parliament majority on state level. Majority parties from BIH Parliament Assembly will meet on Tuesday to discuss the crisis at BIH Council of Ministers. BIH Presidency will also meet on Tuesday to discuss this issue.
Dnevni Avaz op-ed: Karadzic and Mladic are toppling Ashdown and Terzic	**Dnevni Avaz** cover page, pg 3 'Karadzic and Mladic are toppling Ashdown and Terzic' Commentary of the Day by Almasa Hadzic – According to the author, the most wanted war crime indictees **Radovan Karadzic** and **Ratko Mladic**, who should have been in the ICTY prison, are practically wishing to topple BiH CoM Chairman **Adnan Terzic** and HR **Paddy Ashdown** from their holes instead.

Security/Incidents	
Anti-Serb graffiti sprayed on billboards in Sarajevo	**TV Hayat, BHT, RTRS** – Anti-Serb graffiti appeared on billboards in the vicinity of Sarajevo ‘s Bistrik district. One of the billboards features a message in approximately one-meter large red letters that says “Slit Serb throats – Kazani.” The canton police examined the site and said they would continue to investigate. The collected evidence was forwarded to the prosecutor. Kazani is a place above Bistrik. According to eyewitness accounts, during the war in BiH members of the BiH Army disposed of the bodies of murdered Serb citizens by throwing them into the Kazani pits.