OHR BiH Media Round-up, 27/12/2002

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
M. Topalovic suspect	M. Topalovic murderer	M. Topalovic arrested	Banja Luka protests
No ban on Slovenian milk	HR, Terzic in Kostajnica	Strike in Banja Luka	Orao case
North Korea	No ban on Slovenian milk	Metal industry workers	CoM session
	Banja Luka strike	CoM session	ICTY on 157 cases

Oslobodjenje	Topalovic admitted killing Andjelic; Law on War – the protection of workers will depend on the VAT introduction;
Dnevni Avaz	Mamer Topalovic arrested; OHR requested an investigation against Behmen;
Dnevni List	Muamer Topalovic, member of “Dzem’ijjetul Furqana”, murderer
Vecernji List	Bloody Christmas in village of Kostajnica: murderer from Konjic arrested
Slobodna Dalmacija	Muamer Topalovic admitted murder of Croat returnees
Glas Srpski	Kusljic on the loose; Pipeline through RS; Topalovic murders Andjelic family;

Nezavisne Novine	Workers tell ministers they will throw them out of chairs; Muamer Topalovic admits he killed three members of Andjelic family;
Blic	Trade Unions threaten new government; 9,300 soldiers in Federation jobless, RS Army will have 3,500 employees; Russians interested in building oil pipeline; Passports are being issued in three shifts

Kostajnica murders	

Muamer Topalovic arrested	Avaz pg. 1 and 2, Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 4/5, Vecernji List pg. 1, 2 and 3, Jutarnji List pg. 5 ‘Condemnation’ – Goran Bilic, Minister of Interior in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNK), yesterday told a press conference in Mostar that there was a grounded suspicion that the triple murder in Kostajnica was committed by 26-year-old Muamer Topalovic. Bilic further stated that Topalovic alone committed the murder, but there were indications that several other persons incited the murders. Topalovic is a member of the ‘Dzemijetu-l-furkan’ humanitarian organisation in Konjic, which is sponsored by the High Saudi Committee. Topalovic is also a member of the Islamic Active Youth. Bilic said that Topalovic admitted the crime and said he committed it out of ideological-religious motives. He is currently being kept in a police station in Mostar.Asked to comment on differences in statements between him and the Federation Minister of Interior, Ramo Maslesa, (NB: the latter allegedly doubted the case had ethnic motives), Minister Bilic said that, according to Maslesa’s statements, it appeared that this case was to be diverted from the proper course. Bilic stated that the organisation ‘Dzemijet’ trained Topalovic to commit such crime. The organisation is labelled as the religious-cultural society for the training of youth, but their training is reduced to studying of Kur’an, and the sale of religious textbooks and brochures. Therefore, Bilic announced an investigation of the organisation too. The news also reported in the RS media. Glas Srpski, pg. 8 ‘Topalovic murders Andjelic family’ and Nezavisne Novine, pg. 1 and 2 ‘Topalovic admits crime’, Vecernje Novosti pg. 10 ‘Bloody Xmas Eve’.

Officials visit Kostajnica	The dailies further reported that HR Paddy Ashdown, CoM Chair Adnan Terzic, SBiH President Safet Halilovic and HNK Governor Dragan Vrankic yesterday visited Andjelic family in Kostajnica. “The swift police action in this case should encourage the trust of BiH people in the local authorities. The IC will ensure any sort of help if necessary. We are obliged to ensure that this kind of acts do not go unpunished,” said HR Ashdown. He later visited Marinko Andjelic in hospital. “We are here to express our deepest sympathy, but also to congratulate our police for finding and arresting the murderer in a short period of time, “ said CoM Chair Terzic. Halilovic emphasised that the entire BiH, but also the IC, had to stand behind each person and that each person in the state had the right to free life without fear.

Reactions	Cardinal Puljic, the Vrhbosna Archbishop, called on all Catholics to remain patient and calm. He stated they expected from the local and international reps to reveal the truth and follow the law. UNMIBH stated they expected a professional investigation to be conducted in the case. Alun Roberts, UNMIBH Spokesperson, said UNMIBH was condemning the crime and added that the IPTF was in close contact with the local police. Croat Democratic Union (HNK) emphasised that 'they could not escape the impression that the only motive could be the hatred towards Croats, Catholics and returnees'. SDP President Zlatko Lagumdzija stated if there was any politics to the crime then it was not the names of victims and killer. President of the Association of Croat refugees in Konjic municipality, Drago Simunovic Maglja, stated that the crime was a message to all Croats in Konjic. SDU BiH said they were shocked with the crime. VL carries reactions by some prominent Croatian politicians. Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Zlatko Tomcic, did not want to give any comments pending the ongoing investigation. Zdravko Tomac, Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, said that crimes such as the one in Kostajnica, were attempts to avert people from returning to their homes and that such practice undermined survival of BiH. He again criticised policy of the IC in BiH saying it acknowledged results of ethnic cleansing. Jadranka Kosor, a senior official of the Croatian HDZ, was shocked 'with the murder of innocent Croats'. Kosor expects a reaction by the Croatian government pursuant to the Croatian Constitution which reads that Croatia has to take care of the Croat(ian) people abroad.

About Topalovic	Both dailies also reported that in January this year Topalovic returned to BiH after serving a prison sentence in Sremska Mitrovica in FRY (three years). His name was first promoted in the public in an article by 'Slobodna Bosna' magazine in an interview the magazine conducted with him beginning of this year. Topalovic said during the interview that in 1998 he was on his way to FRY to assassinate the FRY President at the time, Slobodan Milosevic. His reasons were that Milosevic for him was the worst criminal in the planet who caused a lot of evil and injustice to Bosniak people. However, his plan fell to pieces immediately after he crossed the border with Serbia, as he was turned in by a cab driver whom Topalovic did not give money for a cab fare. Both dailies carried pictures of the 'Slobodna Bosna' front-page January issue, which carried the interview with Topalovic. He was actually on the cover page and the title was 'I tried to kill Milosevic'.
Commentary in Oslobodjenje	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'In the Spotlight' column written today by Zija Dizdarevic entitled 'The messages of crime'. "International peace mission, local authorities, religious institutions, NGOs, media – did little to renew tolerance, dialogue and trust. The war motives, consequences of aggression and genocide still dominate the collective ethnic consciousness."

Editorial in Nezavisne Novine	Editorial by Nihada Jablic 'Idiot' – Jablic writes that the murder of the Croat family from Konjic is not only a tragedy of the Andjelic family whose three members were murdered by Muamer Topalovic, but also a serious blow to the entire BiH. She says that the fragile trust that has been set up has been ruined. She says that fear and suspicion will be prevailing feelings in relations between Croats and Bosniaks. "The message that this murder sends is that we live in a country in which, seven years after the war, an idiot fully armed can come to your house and knock at your door", says Ms. Jablic. She also says that this terrorist rampage came in the same time with the victory of nationalist SDA-SDS-HDZ coalition. "One has to admit that explosions and murders happened even before the triumph of Ashdown's 'reform-orientated parties', but that happened when the return process was called a pilot project. Now however, we have entered the era of Euro-Atlantic integration that we shall join very soon with the help of the nationalist parties. Of course, this will happen if you believe what Paddy Ashdown says", concludes Ms. Jablic.

Political Affairs

In**vestigation against Behmen**	Avaz pg. 3 'OHR requested investigation against PM Behmen from Prosecutor Jurcevic' – OHR sent an official note to the Federation Prosecutor Marinko Jurcevic requesting an investigation to be conducted on possible corruption and fraud under the sponsorship of the current FBiH PM Alija Behmen. With the request, Prosecutor Jurcevic was also forwarded for a review all documents in order for him to undertake necessary steps within his authorities. The letter reads that in case he needs any sort of help, Jurcevic should not hesitate to contact the OHR. Although the Prosecutor refused to comment on the case, the daily claimed that the case dated from October this year when 13, 572,000-KM were paid out from the Federation PIO for outstanding pensions in order to influence the voters just before the elections. Marko Matic, the Provisional Director of the FBiH Fund, signed the financial report from October this year, which is why an investigation would include him too.
SDA Presidency	Avaz pg. 4 'Mirsad Kebo candidate for the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees' – the SDA Presidency should hold a meeting today to appoint candidates for the new CoM. According to the daily's information, Mirsad Kebo will be the new Minister for Human Rights and Refugees. He is former Governor of Sarajevo Canton and the current SDA Vice-President. Haris Basic, who was also initially on the list for the Refugee Minister, could be nominated for the Deputy Minister of Traffic and Communication.

SBiH's list of candidates	Avaz pg. 4 'Halilovic, Hafizovic and Kumalic candidates for state level', SRNA – the SBiH Presidency will submit today to the CoM Chair Terzic their list of candidates. Gavrilo Grahovac, the party Vice-President, told the daily last night that Safet Halilovic will be nominated for the Minister of Civil Affairs, while Sefika Hafizovic and Jusuf Kumalic for ministers of finances and treasury.
Halilovic's statement	Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 'Safet Halilovic says things will be more clear after talks with PDP' – Safet Halilovic, SBiH President, did not dismiss the possibility of SBiH participating in the RS government. He stated that his party would try to remain consistent as far as the government formation at all levels was concerned. He also added that everything would be clear after their party Presidency met with PDP reps. Mikerevic confirmed he would hold talks with SBiH on Monday, but refused to say which ministries were going to be offered to the SBiH.
HDZ completing their list	Avaz pg. 4 'HDZ BiH today will submit to Terzic a list if names of their candidates' – Niko Lozancic, HDZ Vice-President, yesterday told Avaz that the closest candidates for the ministerial posts at the state level were Barisa Colak (security ministry), Mila Gadzic (foreign trade) and Ljerka Maric (finances).
PDP candidate	Avaz pg. 4 'Snjezana Savic Minister of Justice?' – circles close to the PDP leaked the news that one of the most serious candidates for the BiH Minister of Justice was Snjezana Savic.

Mikerevic on SDA	Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 ‘Mikerevic says SDA will not get ministries of finance and interior’ – RS PM Designate Dragan Mikerevic said that the SDA would not get ministries of interior and finance. “The SDA can ask for two most important ministries in the RS government, but they will not get it. We will see whether the SDA will get ministries for urbanism and refugees and DPs. I think it is not realistic that the SDA gets four ministries”, said Mikerevic. Mikerevic also said that the PDP was interested in ministries of finance, interior, traffic and communication and agriculture. The paper reports that the first round of consultations between political parties and Mikerevic is over, but that it is still unknown which parties will participate in the RS government. The paper further informs that Mikerevic still has not agreed on anything with the SDS in terms of a number of positions that should go to the SDS and PDP. As for the SNSD, Mikerevic said he believed the SNSD would be included in the government despite the fact that the PDP could not get the SNSD on board for parliamentary majority.

RS NA	Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 'Appointment of Croat Deputy RS NA Speaker – Tomljanovic or Memon next to Kalinic' – the NHI nominated Tomislav for a Croat Deputy RS NA Speaker. Tomljanovic said he expected the RS NA to support him at the next RS NA session. He said that his appointment on that position would not imply that the NHI was in a coalition with the SDS, SDA and PDP. The paper states that the SNSD has two Croat candidates for the same position, but they will not be nominated. SNSD representatives said that the main reason for this was that SNSD was an opposition party, which did not want to form coalition with nationalists.

RS Council of Peoples	Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 'RS NA Council of Peoples to be formed in first two weeks of January – SDA wants position of CoP Chairman' – quotes SDA Deputy in the RS NA, Dzevad Gusic, as saying that the SDA will request a position of RS CoP chairman. Gusic said he was sure the RS NA would support an SDA candidate for that position, refusing to give his name. "The SDA will requests 5 positions in the RS Council of Peoples (CoP), and also that the SBiH and SDP distribute another three positions between themselves", said Gusic. SDP Vice Chairman Slobodan Popovic disagrees with Gusic. He thinks that the BiH Election Commission should decide how many seats each party would get. "It is not up to the SDA to say how many seats will be distributed", said Popovic. SBiH leader Safet Halilovic said that the SBiH still has not decided who to nominate for the CoP. The paper reports that, when it comes to Others, so far the following four candidates have been nominated: Miroslav Mikes (SPRS), Sasa Cudic (SPRS), Franc Sosnja (SNSD) and Srebrenka Golic (SNSD). The paper states that the CoP should be formed by the end of January. The paper quotes RS NA Secretary General Mirko Stevanovic as saying that other CoP deputies will probably be elected before the next RS NA session, and that each caucus should give names of their candidates for the CoP. Stevanovic said that Bosniaks and Croats still have not proposed their deputies.

NYT on Fiuljanin case	Avaz pg. 11 'International organisations for protection of human rights deny detention' – an excerpt from an article in New York Times on the Fiuljanin case. The article reads that activists of the human rights organisations accused members of SFOR for breaching the international law by keeping Fiuljanin in detention. "Fiuljanin is kept in an unknown location and has not yet been sentenced with any sort of crime based to any legal basis or authority." The paper goes on to say that SFOR thinks their mandate allows them to detain anyone, without offering any proof, who could represent a threat to security. Helen Habraken, on behalf of the Amnesty International, said there was nothing in the written form which would give SFOR right to behave in such way. The paper also wrote that the IC reps stood in protection of SFOR, but a large number of them thought the SFOR's way of work was not appropriate.

‘Orao’ affair	Glas Srpski pg.3 ‘RS Supreme Defence Council adopts report on Orao’, Nezavisne Novine pg. 5 ‘Report on Orao forwarded to SFOR’, Avaz pg. 10 ‘The Presidency will receive Orao report by January 3’, Oslobodjenje pg. 3 ‘The final report on Orao’ – the RS Supreme Defence Council, chaired by RS President Dragan Cavic, yesterday adopted the final report on results of the investigation that had been carried out in the ‘Orao’ Aviation Institute in Bijeljina. A press release, issued by the RS President’s Cabinet, states that the report will be forwarded to the BiH Presidency and SFOR Commander William Ward by January 3rd 2003. The RS Supreme Defence Council also discussed the appointment of RS Army chief of staff, his deputy and information pertaining to the work of the Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM).

Ivanic-Griscenko meeting	Blic pg. 7, Nacional pg. 11, Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 'Moscow requested from Ivanic to solve the problem of BiH's debt to Russia' – RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and Ambassador of the Russian Federation to BiH Alexander Griscenko held talks in Banja Luka about political situation and co-operation of the RS and BiH with Russia. After the meeting, Ivanic said that a letter, addressed by the Russian President, emphasised that it was necessary to resolve the issue of about 100 million-KM of BiH's debt to Russia. He said that the Russian Federation was a significant partner of the RS and that it was necessary to take further action on improving the economic relations. Ivanic confirmed that the Russian government and investors were interested in building oil pipeline from Zvornik to Bosanski Novi (now Novi Grad). Ambassador Griscenko said that during Mladen Ivanic government's mandate great efforts were made on improving the relations between the Russian Federation, RS and BiH. He agreed that it was necessary to advance the co-operation of BiH and Russia and announced that their consulate in Banja Luka should be opened next year.

VL's top 10 events in 2002	Vecernji List pg. 6 and 7 by Robert Bubalo – carry top 10 events that have, in the daily's opinion, marked this year in BiH. The introduction reads that another disastrous year for BiH citizens has come to an end, and that apart from the success of 'Aluminij' of Mostar BiH can only be proud of success in the area of movies achieved by BiH directors. According to the list, weapons affairs are in the first place, followed by the return of national parties. The arrival of HR Paddy Ashdown is in the third place. The article says that Croats were glad that Wolfgang Petritsch, former HR, left, however, they were afraid of Ashdown because of the Tudjman's napkin that Ashdown gave to The Hague investigators. The article says that the first move that made Croats angry was the removal of Nikola Grabovac, former Federation Minister of Finances, after which the HR attempted to curry favor with Croats by paying visit to Western Herzegovina, which was received with sympathies to a certain extent. VL says that his refusal to participate in the creation of the new authority together with the US Ambassador Clifford Bond was received in the same way, while the reasons because of which he removed Munir Alibabic Munja, former head of FOSS, were still unknown. VL says that the HR's announcement that he will introduce a value added tax is judged as positive, and the article concludes that this is the first High Representative who has shown some understanding for fears of Croats. The other events listed on the chart are social unrest, Biljana Plavsic's pleading guilty, extradition of the Algerian Group, admission of BiH to the Council of Europe, violence at sports matches, release of persons charged with murder of Minister Jozo Leutar and sentencing of Fikret Abdic.

OHR/International Community	

Slobodna Bosna on HR Ashdown	On pages 5 – 10 the magazine presented its editorial's opinion and opinion of local officials on the '(Double) International Personality of the Year' (as they entitled the column) – HR Paddy Ashdown. The main title of the article is 'The iron gate in front of OHR is not the only thing that Ashdown undermined'. The other title is printed in smaller letters above the main one. It reads that the general assessments is that Ashdown is the only person next to Karadzic who managed, in such a short period of time, to change the physiognomy of BiH, as HR did in BiH in the past six months. The allegations from the later title are not mentioned in the text, meaning that comparison with Karadzic is probably just an opinion of the daily's editor in chief. The article analyses some of HR's good and bad moves. According to SB, HR often appears to be unprincipled person who is too tolerant towards the disintegrative processes in BiH. Some of the good moves that the magazine lists are – addressing of BiH citizens immediate upon assuming the post, Law on CoM. VAT introduction and single customs. The bad moves – saying that nationalists were representing a problem in BiH, removing Grabovac without proper explanation, removing Alibabic without solid explanation, soft reactions to controversial statements by Kostunica and Tomac, proposing Lagumdzija to leave BiH. In the final paragraph, the SB journalists claim that Ashdown has been repeating that all is up to the people of BiH. "Oh, Lord Ashdown, if you do not know what to do, do not undermine our country any further," ends the article.

Ashdown in DANI	This week's BH DANI in their 'Bosanski Barometar' column assessed HR Paddy Ashdown's testimony in The Hague with a single, black star – meaning a good move. The magazine says that one can think about Ashdown whatever one wants, but no one can doubt one thing: his morality. "Although it is not very often possible to link this category with professional politicians, Paddy Ashdown expressed it (the morality) at a place where it is most important: in The Hague Tribunal during the most important war crime trial, the trial of Slobodan Milosevic," the article reads. Moreover, according to the magazine, Ashdown has made a series of decisions trying to correct mistakes of his predecessor Wolfgang Petritsch. "Ashdown is expressing a serious intention to, within his powers, protect the citizens of BiH from frauds of the political elite," the magazine concluded.
Sullivan on Citizenship Law	Avaz pg. 4 'Ashdown will in the following days declare on the Citizenship Law', Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Ashdown's response in the next few days', Dnevni List pg 1 and 2, Vjesnik pg. 2 – OHR yesterday could not confirm whether HR Paddy Ashdown planed to proclaim the changes to the Citizenship Law, even though he received an official request by the HoR in regards to the issue. OHR Spokesperson, Kevin Sullivan, stated that OHR received the letter from the HoR asking HR to proclaim the changes to the Law. "HR will consider the request and respond to it in the next few days," said Sullivan.

UNMIBH on Biber's statement	Avaz pg. 2 'IPTF Commissioner continues to do his job' – Alun Roberts, UNMIBH Spokesperson, stated that the Mission was familiar with the recent request of the BiH Union President Edhem Biber about Frederiksen being pronounced persona non grata in BiH. "I do not want to comment that any further. Commissioner will continue performing his duty," said Robertson.

Social Affairs	
OHR supported 'Alhos' workers	Avaz pg. 9 'OHR supported workers of Alhos' – the BiH Union of Textile Workers yesterday received a letter from the OHR Economic Department Chief, Patrice Drejski, who expressed OHR's full understanding of the situation of 'Alhos' workers. In the letter, OHR supported workers request for speeding up a court procedure for annulling the privatisation of their company. The letter reads that it is not in OHR's mandate to perform the role of the judiciary, and adds that a copy of the letter would be forwarded to the relevant judge.

Work Law	Oslobodjenje pg. 8 ‘The protection of workers will depend on VAT’, Avaz pg. 8 ‘The working rights and social protection same in the entire country’ – the state Law on Work and Employment, which should have been adopted in 1999, was only forwarded for the parliamentary procedure on Thursday. The Law would ensure local workers the same rights as workers in the EU have. The Law creators claim that the money for the implementation of the Law will be available after the introduction of VAT. Sead Avdic, Chairman of the SD-NHI-SPU caucus in the HoR, stated that the prognosis by HR Ashdown that VAT would be introduced only by 2005 were unacceptable. According to Avdic, the VAT should be introduced ASAP because this was the only way to protect BiH workers. He also stated that an alternative to the VAT introduction was the money allocation from privatisation for workers’ social security.

Banja Luka strike	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 3, Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Workers call on hot spring', Avaz pg. 8 'Five unions announces to RS government hot spring', Oslobodjenje pg. 8 'Workers announced stormy spring' – on a one-hour warning strike, which was held yesterday in Banja Luka and included several thousands workers and representatives of five unions in the RS. Apart from workers in education, health and judiciary, police and administration sectors, workers from several companies who have not received their salaries for over 20 months, and a number of pensioners also joined the protest. Chairwoman of the RS Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture, Ranka Misic, requested that government paid salaries in arrears and increased salaries by 20%. She said that trade unions would not give up on their demands and announced new protests for spring. On behalf of the protesters, she told government representatives that they would not stay in power if they did not meet the trade union demands. Glas Srpski reports that the Trade Union Chairwoman met with RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and RS President Cavic. Cavic said after the meeting that no one denied that the government owed the money to budget beneficiaries and that their payments were not sufficient enough, but that was because they needed more money than the government could afford. Cavic said that some people employed in the commercial sector had not received their salaries for 20 months and added that no one could promise salary increase by 20% or 50% because it was not realistic. Prime Minister Ivanic said that the current RS government did not owe any money to any of the RS beneficiaries. He said that the government did not manage to pay the debt they inherited from the previous government. This was also reported in FRY media – Blic pg. 7 'Trade Unions threaten future government', Nacional pg. 11 '2,500 budgetary subscribers protested', Vecernje Novosti pg. 13 'Dismissal of Minister requested'.

Economic Affairs

Miljevic on OHR reforms	Nezavisne Novine pg. 10 'RS Employers Association Chairman says imposition of reforms is wrong approach by OHR' – RS Employers Association Chairman Damir Miljevic said that the imposition of reforms in BiH was a wrong move by the IC. "The IC invested 6,3 billion dollars in various reform projects for the past six years, but the economic effects of these projects were zero. There is no use in imposing decision if you do not have substantial support. In that case, the imposition is only detrimental", said Miljevic. He said that the way in which reforms were being imposed reminded him of the Stalinist approach. "The OHR comes up with some idea in its own kitchen and then calls political parties to discuss that with them. They do it outside of regular institutions, instead of negotiating it with governments, entrepreneurs and trade unions," said Miljevic. As for the introduction of VAT, Miljevic sees it as a very positive step. He says, however, that no one tells anything about bad sides of the VAT system. "In order to maintain a fiscal pressure on the economy on the same level, the VAT rate in the RS should be around 10%, while in the Federation that rate should not go below 15%. Does it mean that we have to pay for Federation's totally irrational structure," asks Miljevic. As far as the joint customs is concerned, Miljevic said that there was no guarantee that smuggling and corruption would drop once the state level customs administration was introduced. Everything comes down to the fact that all customs administration employees will be wearing the same uniforms. Miljevic says that thing that concerns him is that no one mentions the biggest burden in BiH, that is the cantons. He said that cantonal administrations are too expensive for BiH.