

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 28/10/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Clifford Bond “makes” new state government; International officials on Orao affair – Responsibility of RS will be determined following the completion of investigation

Dnevni Avaz: Paddy Ashdown on Orao affair – No one will be spared from responsibility

Dnevni List: BiH judiciary under greater public focus: Who do prosecutors and judges protect?

Vecernji List: International representatives confirm existence of evidence on sale of arms to Iraq: RS facing abolishment over sale of arms to Iraq

Glas Srpski: US requests BiH authorities to close down some Islamic NGOs in BiH – Orao goes publicly, terrorism goes secretly; Sarajevo: A returnee attacked; Ashdown: Removal of Sarovic only a speculation

Nezavisne Novine: Ashdown – Full investigation saves BiH from sanctions

Vecernje Novosti: They developed Iraqi missiles

FRY Nacional: Svilanovic requests the police to arrest all Hague’s defendants

Blic: Ashdown and Ward: Only true investigation will prevent sanctions; USA warns BiH: To close all suspicious Islamic organisations

Orao affair

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Sunday outlined the steps that the RS and BiH authorities must take following revelations that the Bijeljina based “ORAO” aviation company was trading arms with Iraq, breaching both the Dayton Peace Agreement and UN Security Council Resolutions. At the Press Conference in Sarajevo, the High Representative called for swift and appropriate action, primarily in the investigation to ensure that all those responsible face the consequences and

secondly in pushing through the reforms that are now essential and inevitable. *"In the short term there must be a full and public enquiry. This will need to involve the State authorities as the State ultimately has responsibility for ensuring BiH respects UN resolutions"* said the High Representative adding that those politically responsible for bringing BiH to the brink of international condemnation and pariah status must face the consequences," he emphasized. In the medium and long term the High Representative called for full co-operation from the RS in putting in place systems which will ensure that similar breaches of international law will not happen again. The Press Conference was also attended by the COMSFOR, the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, the Deputy UNMiBH SRSG and the representative of the Danish EU Presidency. This high level participation indicates the utmost seriousness of the "ORAO" affair (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, pages 4-5, **Dnevni Avaz**, front page, p 2, **Glas Srpski**, front page, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 3, **Vecernje Novosti**, p 5, **Blic**, p 10).

Vecernji List (front and page 50, *"International representatives confirm existence of evidence on sale of arms to Iraq: RS facing abolishment over sale of arms to Iraq"*, by Eldina Medunjanin"), **Dnevni List** (front and page 5, *"Further investigation determine possible sanctions against BiH"*), **Jutarnji List** (front and page 2, *"Ashdown: BiH facing sanctions over sale of arms to Iraq"*) and **Vjesnik** (page 10, *"Ashdown requests sharp measures over 'Orao affair'"*) also carry respective reports on the press conference.

Moreover, **BBC**, **Guardian** and **AFP** reported on the presser and extensively quoted Ashdown.

Eldina Medunjanin writes in **Vecernji List** that media in the RS speculate that the existence of RS has been put in jeopardy over the illegal sale of weapons to Iraq.

Following the Sunday's press conference in Sarajevo, the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, additionally informed **Dnevni Avaz** and Washington Post reporters on certain aspects of the Orao affair and possible further steps to resolve the issue.

Ashdown announced fundamental reforms that will ensure BiH will never again come to such a situation (Dnevni Avaz, p 2).

Representatives of the **US embassies** in Yugoslavia and BiH, representatives of the **BiH Standing Committee for Military Matters** and of the **RS and FRY Defence Ministries** held a meeting in Zvornik on Friday night. The representatives of the Defence Ministries presented the currently available results of the investigation into the illegal export of military equipment and weapons maintenance in the Orao Aviation Institute and Jugoimport for Iraqi needs. The US representatives believe that the investigation should be speeded up and that tougher measures should be taken to punish those involved in the illegal activities. **Stjepan Pocrnja**, a secretary of the Standing Military Committee, said the representatives of the US government expect more senior figures to be taken to account for this than it has been the case so far, in view of the fact that only directors of the companies at the centre of the affair had been replaced. (FRY **Nacional** p 4, **ONASA**)

According to Dnevni Avaz's story (p 2, Sead Numanovic), the diplomatic circles have expressed much interest in a report made by the Belgrade Department of the International Crisis Group (ICG), which speculates about the possible involvement of the two companies from the BiH Federation, dealing with the production and sale of arms and military equipment, in the Orao affair. The report states that the equipment exported to Iraq contains certain pieces produced in the BiH Federation.

The RS Supreme Defense Council is expected to hold a session in Banja Luka on Monday and discuss the responsibility for the Orao affair. However, according to Dnevni Avaz (p 2), it is still uncertain whether the session will be attended by the RS Defense Minister in resignation, Slobodan Bilic, who has together with the RS Army Chief of Staff, General Novica Simic, gone on business trip to Burma. This raises a question what are these two officials doing in the country also under

UN sanctions due to its military regime? (Blic, p 10)

Nezavisne Novine, p 3, reports that there is a possibility Bilic and Simic are dismissed at the session over the affair.

SNSD official Rajko Vasic said that current RS authorities, especially RS President Sarovic and RS Prime Minister Ivanic, are responsible for the Orao affair. Also, BiH **House of Peoples Chairman Nikola Spiric** thinks that Sarovic and Ivanic are responsible for the affair.

PDP official Branko Dokic said that only the individuals who reached an agreement with Iraq should be held accountable for the Orao affair.

DNS vice-chairman Jovan Mitrovic said that economic sanctions against RS are realistic option. According to him, the responsibility for the Orao affair solely rests with RS Prime Minister Ivanic and RS President Mirko Sarovic.

SPRS chairman Petar Djokic thinks that the RS Defence Minister Slobodan Bilic and RS Army Staff should be held accountable for this affair.

(Nezavisne Novine, p 5)

RS President Mirko Sarovic has announced that RS Minister of Defence **Slobodan Bilic** will resigned over ORAO affair. According to Sarovic, political responsibilities of individuals will be discussed at the RS Supreme Defence Council session. As Nacional learns from a source, several Bilic's associates will be removed as well. The same source says that there will be great personnel changes in the RS Army Headquarters – it is possible that Cvetko Savic, RS Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Rear, Dragomir Keserovic, RS Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Security, Gen. Momir Zec, RS Army Deputy Chief of Staff and head of the RS Ministry of Defence Commission that investigated ORAO affair, and even Novica Simic, the RS RMY Chief of Staff, will be dismissed. (FRY

Nacional, p 10, **ONASA**)

Representatives of the biggest RS parties think that imposition of sanctions to the RS at the moment is not real, because the RS has showed the readiness to face with the problems and to punish responsible for ORAO affair. **Djojo Arsenovic** of the SDS said the RS is ready to face with ORAO affair. He said it was too early to predict whether sanctions will be imposed to RS and BiH, because the RS would cooperate in accordance with adopted norms of behaviour. "Besides, everything, including the fact that the UN resolution was breached, is relative. That is in a phase of lighting up and an additional investigation is needed in order to have a final solution to this problem", Arsenovic said.

Igor Crndak of the PDP said the sanctions were not a real option, because the RS and its Government had showed readiness to face with the affair and to conduct a fast and thorough investigation.

Branko Neskovic of the SNSD said ORAO affair was one of many affairs that showed "that responsible individuals have been acting irresponsibly". *"I hope that problems will be overcome and the most responsible will bear consequences, and that RS and BiH citizens will not be punished,"* Neskovic said. According to him, sanctions should not be imposed. (**Blic** p 7)

Glas Srpski quotes on its front page the BiH Presidency Spokesman, **Boris Kujundzic**, as saying that along with the evidence on Orao involvement in illegal arms trade to Iraq, the US sent a warning, in written, that BiH has to close down all the Islamic organisations linked with terrorism. Kujundzic said that this is a confidential material, which the US Embassy to BiH forwarded to the BiH Foreign Ministry, which also includes the list of the organisations such as "Active Islamic Youth", "Al-Haramain", "Al-Furkan" and "The High Saudi Committee for Refugees". The paper quotes the BiH House of

Peoples Chairman, **Nikola Spiric**, as saying that the Orao affair is being used to send a message to RS politicians to stop talking about the Al-Qaida presence in BiH. *"It is not good that problems in the BiH Federation make people in RS happy just like problems in the RS should not make people in the BiH Federation happy"*, said Spiric. (**Blic**, p 3, reports on US warning)

According to Dnevni Avaz (p 3), the BiH Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Minister, Azra Hadziahmetovic, might request at a meeting with PDHR Donald Hays, OSCE Head of the Mission to BiH Robert Beecroft and a SFOR representative scheduled for Tuesday in Sarajevo that all arms export deals made so far by the entity's Governments are revised.

In separate reports for **The Guardian** and **BBC**, Nicholas Wood alleges that Yugoslav defense companies, possibly in cooperation with the "Orao" aviation institute from Bijeljina, have been developing a cruise missile for Iraq for the past two years. Wood notes that allegations suggest that the Yugoslav defense industry is more deeply involved in supply and updating of the Iraqi army's arsenal than officials are publicly saying. The allegations were made in a "non-paper," or aide-memoire, accompanied by a stern letter to the country's top officials from the U.S. ambassador in Belgrade. The letter asked Yugoslavia to end its breach of the U.N. arms embargo on Iraq, according to a senior Yugoslav official who has knowledge of the U.S. document. The official said the document asserts that Yugoslav scientists have been working on the development of a turbojet engine for a medium- to long-range cruise missile called CM 1500. It also alleges that Yugoslav scientists have made repeated visits to Iraq since early 2001 to complete work on the project, and that the contracts were arranged by the state defense conglomerate, Yugoimport. The claims followed a State Department announcement this week that the same company had cooperated with a Bosnian aviation firm to help repair and sell spare

parts for MiG fighter planes destined for Iraq.

(**Glas Srpski**, p 3, FRY **Nacional**, p 4, **Vecernje Novosti**, p 5, **Blic**, p 10 — New Yugoslav-Iraqi Ties Alleged – U.S. Says Defense Firms Developing Cruise Missile for Baghdad, **The Washington Post**, **Sunday, October 27**, 2002; Page A18)

Nezavisne Novine (p 3) quotes Head of a SBS field office, **Fadil Jaganjac**, as saying that SBS member cut the **arms smuggling ring** at the Banja Luka Airport. According to him, the arms were to be delivered to Uganda. The paper reports that on September 21st, SBS members found automatic rifle R70A. *"The owners of the firm that was involved told us that they wanted to send a rifle to Uganda so that the potential buyer can see it and say the price"*, said Jaganjac. He also said that the SBS filed criminal reports against V.Z and V.D. and that the RS Prosecutor's Office is in charge with the case.

"The Orazo affair should be used for reaching strategic goals including the establishment of the civil control over the military sector, introduction of necessary central institutions (in other sectors as well) in order to achieve an integral and functional state arrangement as exists in democratic European countries, and re-affirmation of the principle of transparency. The action has to be fast in order to reach the concrete goals," Ibrahim Prohic wrote in the *Oslobodjenje* In Focus editorial.

Jutarnji List on page 2 reads that an investigation of the **"Boka Star"** (ship docked in Croatia suspected of carrying arms for Iraq) was completed on Saturday evening and that all 14 containers were searched. A spokesperson of the Croatian Ministry of Interior stated that the whole cargo weighing at some 200 tons was confiscated because it did not match the declarations in the containers. The spokesperson confirmed that many explosive material were found on the ship. According to preliminary results of the investigation, the confiscated barrels contain two types of gunpowder and bright-yellow

charges used for rocket-propelled missiles, foremost for anti-tank weapons. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Washington Post** by Daniel Williams)

Dnevni List (pages 6-7, conducted by Ivica Glibusic) carries interview with **Milan Lovric**, Head of BiH Co-ordination Team for Anti-Terrorist Activities, titled "BiH mujahadeens without control". Lovric did not want to comment on statement of Jacques Klein, head of UN Mission in BiH, when stated that *"the world is safer while mujahadeens that are in BiH remain there"*. Lovric stated that there is lack of co-operation among BiH institutions: *"Although more sincere co-operation is often promised among intelligence services of the RS and the Federation, and although it is necessary for Ministries of Interior to co-operate on permanent basis, it is obvious that we did not succeed in reaching the level of co-operation that would have better results. Such work requires better organisation"*. Regarding the **ORAO case**, Lovric stated: *"What is within one entity and within one interest is being relativized, and that is often understood as someone else's problem"*.

Post-election coalitions/inauguration of the new authorities

According to the Oslobodjenje front-page story ("Clifford Bond "makes" new state government"), the leaders and senior officials of the political parties that had lost power "secretly" met late on Sunday at the residence of the US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond. Sources close to the newspaper say that the attendees at the meeting, holding of which had been initiated by NHI President Kresimir Zubak, included: Zlatko Lagumdžija, Alija Behmen (SDP), Mladen Ivanic (PDP), Milorad Dodik (SNSD), Mladen Ivankovic – Lijanovic (People's Party Working for Prosperity), Beriz Belkic and Safet Halilovic (Party for BiH). *"It was not about creation of any new alliance. It was about analyzing the election results and finding the answer on the question how to act following the elections,"* a participant at the meeting told

Oslobodjenje.

Dnevni List (page 3, by D.L.) carries a commentary on a recent meeting between **Alija Izetbegovic**, a honorary President of SDA, and **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative for BiH when the two, according to DL, arranged future principles of authority with **Haris Silajdzic** being given the main role. According to DL, Silajdzic did not accept what seemed to be a tempting offer because he has a bad experience with Izetbegovic when he left SDA some time ago. A source close to S BiH told DL that Silajdzic is playing a cautious game not only because the US Ambassador **Clifford Bond** opposes the scheme but mostly because he is afraid that Izetbegovic would again push him down the political abyss which would end his political career for good.

"If SDA really wants BiH to make progress, the best thing it can do is to dismiss itself and finally leave the country's political scene together with its coalition partners from 1991," Esad Bajtal said at the regular session of the Circle 99 Independent Intellectuals Association in Sarajevo on Sunday (Oslobodjenje, p 7, mentioned on the front page, Nezavisne Novine, p 5).

In an interview with **Ljiljan**, Sulejman Tihic invites, once again, **Party for BiH** to join the SDA in forming authority at the state, cantonal and entity levels. *"We have made a public offer to S BiH and we hope that they will accept it, because we believe that such a coalition would be in the interest of BiH and our people,"* said Tihic, noting that Bosniak people will never forgive **Haris Silajdzic**, the founder of S BiH, if he chooses to ally himself with the SDP or some new revived Alliance. Speaking about his priorities as the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Tihic said that he will initiate a more comprehensive economic reform – *"reforms proposed by Ashdown are not as extensive as they should be"* – as well as the legal process of abolishing the name of the Republika Srpska – *"which is completely unconstitutional"* and ensure that BiH

becomes a full fledged member of the Organization of Islamic Conference. Commenting on High Representative's decision to freeze all appointments in state and entity institutions, organizations and agencies, Tihic reiterated that the SDA believes that this was not very good or sustainable idea. *"In all democratic countries, it is a custom that new authorities make significant personnel changes when they come into power. We, as the party which won most votes at the elections, cannot accept responsibility if we have such limitations...It is not enough that we appoint 10 ministers, while 2,000 other officials in high positions are from SDP."* Tihic, however, said that the SDA fully supports all other initiatives and decisions of the High Representative, first and foremost, his decision on reorganization of entity administration, reform of the Council of Ministers and measures for testing the willingness of new authorities to implement reforms.

An inaugural session of the newly-elected BiH Presidency will take place in Sarajevo on Monday. The session will be attended by the outgoing members of the Presidency, the Speakers of the both chambers of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, members of the BiH Council of Ministers and BiH Constitutional Court as well as representatives of other state and entity's bodies. Invited to attend the session are also the former Presidency members, top representatives of international community and foreign embassies and the members of the BiH Inter-religious Council (Dnevni Avaz, p 3, Oslobodjenje, p 6).

"The best test for the new Presidency members will unfortunately be the Orao affair. Its resolution will show how honestly the three members of the body have entered a project entitled: "Building of the State of BiH," and how much they are prepared to face a common problem of BiH and its citizens," Edina Sarac wrote in the Dnevni Avaz Commentary of the Day.

In a joint statement for the press, Sead Avdic, the SDP Vice-president, and Miro Lazovic, the party's General Secretary, on

Sunday denied media reports that, at the latest session of the SDP Presidency, they had been against the nomination of Haris Siljadzic for the future Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Dnevni Avaz, p 4, Oslobodjenje, p 3, Nezavisne Novine, p 5).

SRNA news agency learns from a PDP source that, after finishing informal negotiations with SDS and some other political parties, PDP secured parliamentary majority in the RS NA. The news agency quotes PDP Spokesman **Igor Crnadak** as saying that, in accordance with this agreement, PDP would get a position of RS prime minister and the largest number of ministerial posts in the new RS government. *"I think that from the PDP's point of view, this is better solution than the one offered by SNSD according to which PDP was supposed to get the prime ministerial post and a small number of ministerial posts"*, said Crnadak.

High Representative, his decisions-related articles

"After a decade of engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations mission is leaving at the end of this year. While the United Nations agencies will remain, the organization's responsibilities for policing will be taken over by the European Union.

History will look back on our engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the first faltering step toward a doctrine of international community. Bosnia will be seen as a new model for international intervention – one designed not to pursue narrow national interests but to prevent conflict, to promote human rights and to rebuild war-torn societies. We are already applying the lessons of Bosnia in Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan. Perhaps they will be applied in Iraq as well," wrote the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, at the beginning of the opening editorial published in Monday's **New York Times**.

Vecernji List (page 5, by Dejan Jazvic) learns from sources close to state administration in Sarajevo that **Munir Alibabic**

Munja was removed from position of Head of Federation Information and Security Service (FOSS) because he obstructed investigations on war crimes led by Croat liaison with ICTY **Goran Mihaljevic**. The daily says that only few days before the High Representative removed him, Alibabic addressed a threatening letter to Mihaljevic in which he asked that all requests related to investigations on war crimes should be sent by hierarchy of FOSS. VL says that that would actually mean a break of closed line of operations, that the Chief Prosecutor of ICTY **Carla del Ponte** is insisting upon, which means that only small number of people should be informed about investigations. Mihaljevic informed the Prosecution of ICTY, says the daily, and two days after that Alibabic was removed from duty. The daily also says that cellular phones were taken from Croat agents who are directly involved in collecting evidences and preparation of witnesses, and usage of official vehicles for them was significantly reduced.

Vecernji List (page 3, by G.K.) carries an article titled "*Ashdown offers choice – democracy or isolation*", in which the author says that former High Representative **Wolfgang Petritsch** was trying to transfer some of OHR's powers to local institutions in Sarajevo and requesting from domestic institutions to get closer to the EU standards. VL goes on to say that **Paddy Ashdown** is using much more powers that are defined by the Dayton Peace Accord and instead of talking domestic institutions into accepting the European standards, Ashdown has offered them a choice: "*Either accept European standards or remain isolated*". The article says that PDHR **Donald Hays** warned future officials that they must respect state administration employees and not radically change them.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Sunday, 1900)

- Responsibility for the Orao scandal lays on the RS authorities – entire BiH to take consequences

- Session of the RS Supreme Defense Council on Orazov case to take place tomorrow
- 118 hostages died during the rescue operation in the Moscow theatre

FTV 1 (1930)

- Responsibility for the Orazov scandal lays on the RS authorities
- Constituency session of the BiH Presidency to take place tomorrow
- Official of the Kosovo Democratic Council has been killed
- Increased number of victims among hostages of Chechens in Moscow

RTRS (1930)

- Comprehensive investigation of the Orazov scandal to determine eventual sanctions against BiH
- 118 persons killed in the operation of Russian Special Forces