

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 29/12/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Ashdown's statement	15 thousands killed in Iran	HR responds to SDA	Elections in Serbia
Union BiH warning	Elections in Serbia	Oja denies all allegations	International terrorists
Secondary Schools strike	HR reacts to SDA position	Iran – 15 thousands killed	Al-Qaeda in BiH
BiH HoR to meet Monday	New SARS patient	Elections in Serbia	Better standard in RS

Oslobodjenje	HR Ashdown threatens to Tihic, SDA – Political parties must not interfere into work of courts
Dnevni Avaz	BiH Delegation visit to Saudi Arabia – Doors are being opened for Saudi businessmen
Dnevni List	“Ashdown: Europe will have to say NO to our country”; “Interview with HNC prime Minister Miroslav Coric: “Cantonal budget for 2004 will not be developing one”
Vecernji List	“Economists are afraid that BiH might go bankrupt”; “Privatization in BiH: It is hard for Croat companies to privatize some companies”
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines
Glas Srpske	Serb Orthodox Church in Sarajevo Canton: Mean messages and intentions

Nezavisne Novine	BiH Prosecutor's Office investigating suspicious deliveries to Sven Frederiksen and five of his associates: EUPM assaulted with letters containing powder; SDA judges and prosecutors; Tihomir Gligoric: Decision in ITA centres today
Blic	RS Government at verification again; Donald Hays: International representatives too are corrupted; Camp inmates sue the Federation of BiH; Dragan Kalinic: New budget promises better standard

	Appointments in judiciary, police
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Ashdown reacts
to the SDA
position re
appointments in
judiciary,
police

Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, BHTV, FTV, RTRS, Oslobođenje front page, pg. 3
'Political parties must not interfere into work of courts', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2
'Independence of judiciary, police is a pre-condition for integration into Europe', Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4,
'Political influence upon police and judiciary destroys European dream', Dnevni List page 3,
"Independence of 3 vital institutions important for BiH integration to Europe", Vecernji List page 2,
"Parties do not influence Police any longer", by E. Medunjanin, FENA – High Representative Paddy Ashdown reacted Sunday to certain views expressed at the SDA Convention in Sarajevo Saturday, which concern the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils and Mostar. *"During the early days of my stay in BiH I clearly said that the independence of three vital institutions is important for the integration of BiH into Europe and among those institutions the most important ones are the police and the judiciary. If political parties are unable to understand that they can no longer influence the judiciary and police that we can immediately give up on the European dream"*, Ashdown said.
"As the EU and the PIC have already clearly said the solution to the issue of Mostar needs to be based on the principle of a common administration and a guaranteed distribution of authority. Norbert Winterstein's report offers the best mechanism for that. I shall discuss the implementation of that report with representatives of political parties in January," he added.

<p>Dzaferovic: SDA to act in legal way in order for unconstitutional appointments to be annulled</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 ‘Responsible officials in HJPCs, EUPM have roughly violated BiH Constitution’ – SDA General Secretary Sefik Dzaferovic told the newspaper that the HJPCs and EUPM had roughly abused the BiH Constitution by inappropriate distribution of posts in police and judiciary. Dzaferovic reiterated that, in accordance to the First Convention’s conclusions, the party would use all legal means in order for the unconstitutional decisions to be annulled and responsible officers in HJPCs, EUPM removed.</p>
<p>Tihic says SIPA should be headed by a Bosniak</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 4 ‘I have nothing personally against Sredoje Novic, but Head (of SIPA) cannot be a person who has not been apprehending war criminals’, mentioned on the front page ‘SIPA should be headed by a Bosniak’ <u>E. Sarac</u> – The newspaper claims that these days there are discussion amongst the political leaders in BiH on possible heads of SIPA and OSA (intelligence-Security Service). <i>“I have nothing personally against Sredoje Novic, but I believe that such offices should not be held by persons who have not proved themselves in cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, who have not been apprehending war criminals on the basis of the ICTY indictments,”</i> said Bosniak member of the Presidency Sulejman Tihic commenting on the issue.</p>

Oja on SDA's criticism

FTV – In an interview for Federation TV head of HJPCs **Jan Eric Oja** denied all accusations made during last weeks. Most of accusations on discrimination of Bosniaks were coming from SDA. Oja: *"Numerous times I was repeating we were not discriminating anybody and relevant statistics proves it. But those who were supposed to listen they misinterpret everything."* Oja also answered on questions asked by non-appointed judges from the Zenica court: *"If they come and check applications they will learn what was reason for such decision and they also know what happened during these interviews. Number of judges in Zenica reduced from 22 to 17 and in addition many of applicants are about retirement age. In other cases some other candidates had better qualifications."* Three prosecutors from Mostar complained they were not appointed because they had earlier launched some affairs, but Oja said: *"There were no any undermining of candidates and if they come with such accusation they need to be more specific."*

<p>BiH HoR Speaker supports OHR's position re appointments in judiciary, police</p>	<p>BHTV – Commenting SDA request for replacements in HJPCs and EUPM Chairman of the BiH House of Representatives Nikola Spiric said: <i>"It is not good when nationalists try to interfere into judiciary and police, because these two institutions need to be independent. If they manage to achieve their goals then there will be complete control of these institutions. I do support OHR's view on independence of these institutions. If there were some irregularities in work of HJPC, then it is not question for party convention. There are some other ways to address these issues, and one should not organise convention for the purpose. SDA should first analyse what they did for our citizens before they start to question work of professionals."</i></p>
<p>A letter of support to HJPC in NN</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pg. 8, 'SDA judges and prosecutors' – NN carry a letter in which the author is supportive of HJPC and Jan Eric Oja and also critical of SDA campaign regarding selection of judges and prosecutors. The name and address of the author are known to the editorial board of Nezavisne.</p>

<p>NN editorial on SDA position re Bosniak's representation in judiciary, police</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine editorial by <u>Mirza Cubro</u>, <u>pg. 7</u>, 'Call in the past' – The author is critical of SDA most recent statements, regarding the representation of Bosniaks in judiciary and police structures of BiH. According to him, it is even hard to believe that any president of any party in a democratic society could have even thought of interfering into the process of selection of judges and prosecutors.</p> <p>The author concludes the article by saying that the first SDA Convention proved how hypocritical the leaders of this party may be.</p>
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	<p>Political developments</p>
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**Terzic emphasises
good relations at
meeting with
Saudi king**

BHTV, Oslobođenje pg. 3 'Gratitude to King Fahd for assistance to BiH', **Dnevni Avaz** front page 'Doors are being opened for Saudi businessmen', pg. 3 'BiH has always been in heart of Saudi people', **Nezavisne Novine**, pg. 3, 'Terzic met with King Fahd', **FENA** – Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers **Adnan Terzic**, Minister for Finance and Treasury **Ljerka Maric**, Minister for Human Rights and Refugees **Mirsad Kebo**, Deputy Foreign Minister **Lidija Topic**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations **Momir Tosic**, and BiH ambassador to Saudi Arabia **Mehmed Hadzic** on Sunday met **King Fahd Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Sa'ud**. During the meeting, Terzic expressed his gratitude for all the assistance extended by the king, the government and the people of Saudi Arabia to BiH and pointed to the good relations between the two countries.

The Saudi king welcomed the BiH delegation and said that he supported all activities of the BiH government in overcoming the consequences of the war and hailed BiH in its efforts to integrate into Europe. A number of bilateral agreements were signed during the BiH's delegation visit to Saudi Arabia.

**VL interview with
Barisa Colak**

Vecernji List (page 5, "BiH must be joint state", by Z. Kresic) carries an interview with BiH Minister of Security **Barisa Colak**. Colak believes that the results during this year could have been better and added that first of all he refers to the agreement on the distribution of authority signed with SDA. Asked about the Aluminij issue Colak says that it is sad that the biggest exporter and an economic giant has been brought to a very difficult situation. He added: *"Unfortunately, so far, the Government has not shown enough readiness for development of economy and foreign investments."* Asked to comment on the statement given by SDA President **Sulejman Tihic** who said that BiH should be Bosnian and joint, Colak says that he has nothing against the idea that BiH should be a joint state, however, the one should bear in mind that this state should be based on equality of all 3 peoples and equal rights of each citizen in BiH. Asked to comment on the SDA stand when the Mostar re-structuring issue is in question, Colak says: *"All absurdity of our political reality, that SDA stands for, can be seen in Mostar. You cannot stand for one principle in the Federation of BiH and demand something else at the level of the local self-government unit."*

DL on 2003 in BiH	<p>Looking back at the year 2003 in BiH, Dnevni List (front & p 8, “Europe will have to say NO to our country”, by <u>M. Batarelo</u>) carries High Representative Paddy Ashdown as reiterating the significance of the next 6 months for the BiH future in the EU and NATO. The High Representative is quoted as saying that, unless BiH achieves sufficient progress by the first half of 2004, Europe will have to say “NO” to BiH and the EC will not be in position to recommend continuation of the Agreement on Stabilisation and Association. According to the High Representative, <i>“some painful steps which have been delayed for too long now will have to be taken”</i>.</p>
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**DL: Ahmed Zilic
on European
Parliamentarians'
initiative to
change Dayton**

Dnevni List (p 8, "Dayton represents "chains" for BiH on the road to EU", by Fena) quotes **Ahmed Zilic**, legal expert with the Council of Europe, as saying that European Parliamentarians' initiative for building on Dayton is a signal that the International Community is preparing specific steps in that sense. Pointing to possibility to change the BiH Constitution in order to harmonise BiH constitutional and legal system it with European standards, Zilic says it is to be expected that the International Community, which plays a key role in BiH, initiates concrete steps. He adds the Dayton institutions as they are now represent "chains" for BiH on the road to the EU. Zilic expressed reserve about possibility for BiH to arrive at the necessary consensus on the issue by itself.

**DL interview with
HNC Prime
Minister Miroslav
Coric**

Dnevni List (front and page 7, "Cantonal budget for 2004 will not be developing one", by M. Relota) carries an interview with Prime Minister of the Herzegovina-Neretva **Canton Miroslav Coric**. Asked whether the draft budget for 2004 can be called a developing one, Coric says that they have to estimate what will be the final limit of the budget and only then they will be able to say whether the budget will be the developing one or not. Asked about the blockade of work by Bosniak Ministers in the HNC Government, Coric says that HDZ and SDA leaders have not had a single meeting since this blockade started although the President of the HDZ Cantonal Board **Josip Merdzo** insisted on it. Coric added that in its current number the HNC Government has legal legitimacy. Coric also hopes that common sense of Bosniak Ministers will prevail and that ,they will join the work of the Government to the benefit of all citizens of the HNC.

<p>PDP Presidency discusses work of RS Government</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'PDP analysing the work of the Republika Srpska Government ' – NN source says that PDP Presidency met in Banjaluka last night, when they discussed the work and performance of the Republika Srpska Government on the eve of political parties' meeting with the Republika Srpska President, Dragan Cavic. NN source also claims that all Presidency members received invitations for mandatory attending the session.</p> <p>Petar Kunic did not attend the session, because he has a session of House of Representatives to attend today, owing to which reason he was not in Banjaluka last night.</p>
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	<p>Economic/social affairs</p>
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<p>Indirect Taxation Law</p>	<p>Croat Radio Herceg Bosna – The House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH should discuss at its session on Monday, the current situation in BiH with special emphasis on the protection of domestic production. On the Agenda there will be also a report on the joint commission of both houses on reaching the agreement on the same text of the Indirect Taxation Law in BiH, if Commission finishes the agreement by then. That report is also supposed to be discussed by the House of People of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH also on Monday.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 6, ‘Decision in ITA centres today’ – In a brief interview to NN, Tihomir Gligoric, member of Commission for harmonisation of two texts of ITA Law, said that the Commission should today reach decision regarding future centres of ITA. He also said that SDA stands on explicit stance that one of four centres must be in Tuzla. According to him, <i>“SDA claims we can have negotiations for five years, but this demand must be implemented”</i>.</p> <p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 ‘Harmonised indirect taxation law expected’ also carried a Gligoric’s statement on the issue.</p>
<p>BiH Trade Unions Leader hopes 2004 will bring more jobs</p>	<p>Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, Dnevni Avaz pg. 4 ‘If law on bankruptcy is adopted mass protests possible’, FENA – Next year will be very difficult for workers and the BiH trade unions if the existing draft law amending the law on bankruptcy is adopted, BiH Trade Unions Association President Edhem Biber told FENA. Biber thinks that should this have happened tens of thousands of workers will lose their jobs and they will also be prevented from achieving pensions because their contributions will not be paid. <i>“However, I hope that legislation negative for workers will not be adopted in 2004 and that positive changes will be initiated that will result in new jobs. We in the Union are looking for democratic solutions of such problems, but if this law is adopted I am sure that not a single reason will remain to prevent people to come out on the streets and express their dissatisfaction”</i>, Biber said.</p>

<p>VL on Croats being prevented to privatise companies in BiH</p>	<p>Vecernji List (front page & "Privatisation in BiH: Croat(ian) companies can hardly get to enterprises" and p 3, "Croat(ian) companies can hardly get to enterprises", by <u>Zoran Kresic</u>) carries that Croat(ian) companies face huge administrative problems if they want to buy and privatise companies in Bosniak-majority areas in FBiH. As an illustration, VL says that FBiH Privatisation Agency and competent FBiH Ministries are trying to prevent Lijanovici, Stanic and Konstruktor Co. from Split to buy successful companies in Sarajevo and eastern part of Mostar (Stanic gave a bid to buy Meat Industry in Sarajevo/MIS; Lijanovici want to privatise Velmos Mostar and Konstruktor wants to by Hidrogradnja). VL says that the Privatisation Agency has informed Lijanovici and Stanic that they cannot become majority owners of companies they are interested in since they have not paid taxes to the state although payment of taxes is not stipulated as one of elements that can influence privatisation. The paper thus concludes this rule was fabricated to discriminate Croat(ian) companies. On the same issue, Dnevni List (page 5, " 'Hayat's' pulling down of Herzegovinian companies – story for CRA", by <u>I. Glibusic</u>) carries that according to extreme Bosniak politicians the main problem for the difficult economic situation in the FBiH are 'cheap' electricity delivery to 'Aluminij' and issuing of the third GSM license to Eronet. The author goes on to say: <i>"Such stands hint that the goal is to pull down two, so-called the most powerful companies."</i> The author says that in case that these two companies are pulled down Croats will be lost in terms of economy, Herzegovina will become the poorest area in the country and the exodus of Croats will continue. The author also comments on the Hayat's Central News aired on Saturday and their report on the Aluminij issue and the author says: <i>"Calling on people to come out on the streets from the mouth of a journalists that faithfully convey words of their political mentors can cause unbridgeable consequences for BiH."</i></p>
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RS Finance Minister Krsmanovic on MP's salaries	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 3, 'MP's in Republika Srpska should not worry for their salaries' – Branko Krsmanovic, Republika Srpska Finance Minister, stated that the professional delegates at Republika Srpska National Assembly should not worry for their salaries, because their payment has been guaranteed for the next ten months. He said that if any problem related to this arose, the payment would be provided through re-location of resources or budget rebalance.
Kalinic says RS financial centre of BiH	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'Banjaluka is financial centre of BiH' – In an interview to SRNA news agency, the RS Parliament Speaker, Dragan Kalinic, stated that the standard of Republika Srpska citizens will improve during the course of next year, owing to the fact that budget for 2004 and economic policy document for next year were adopted and passed by Republika Srpska National Assembly. He also said that the adoption of the ITA Law, with ITA Seat in Banjaluka, would make Banjaluka a financial centre of BiH.
Volas criticised again	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 5, 'Volas thinks he is Ashdown of Syndicate', Blic p 12 'Volas as Ashdown' – The members of the Executive Board of the Syndicate of Tools Factory Trebinje, at their meeting on Friday, addressed an open letter to Cedo Volas, President of Republika Srpska Syndicate Union, and President of the Municipal Syndicate of Trebinje, Ilija Ridjesic. In the letter, they stressed that: <i>"You have failed to do anything regarding privatisation, Law on labour, social programme and other acts related to protection of workers."</i> Milenko Danilovic, member of the Congress of Syndicate of Metal Workers and Miners, said that Volas pretends to be a syndicate Paddy Ashdown in his attempt to introduce a protectorate into Syndicate of Republika Srpska.

	Incidents
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<p>Letters containing a powder sent to EUPM</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 3, 'EUPM attacked with letters containing powder' – Marinko Jurcevic, BiH Chief Prosecutor, yesterday confirmed to NN that the Prosecutor's Office of Office fears that EUPM Commissioner, Sven Frederiksen, was attacked with the unknown substance resembling anthrax. He got this substance in a letter, which was delivered to his address at EUPM building in Sarajevo on 26 December.</p> <p>The letters were also addressed to five associates of Frederiksen and Japanese Embassy in BiH in Sarajevo. However, these letters were not opened and were sent for lab tests.</p>
<p>Serb Orthodox Church in Sarajevo broken into</p>	<p>Glas Srpske, cover page story, 'Mean messages and intentions' – The Church of the Holy Transfiguration in the Sarajevo settlement of Pofalici was broken into this weekend. Three icons and around KM 450 of contributions were stolen. This is the fourth time this Church was broken into this year. GS reports that at the end of every year, Serb Orthodox Church faces with breakings and assaults against its property.</p>

	<p>Other issues</p>
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<p>DL on possible, new leader of BiH Islamic Community</p>	<p>Dnevni List (page 3, “Mustafa Cerić and Enes Karić candidates for new Reis”, <u>not signed</u>) carries that a new leader (Reisu-l-Ulema) of the BiH Islamic Community is to be elected soon. DL says that it has been speculated that the current leader Mustafa Efendi Cerić might be elected to this position again, however, it is questionable whether he will be proposed to this position since political analysts envisage that Cerić will continue his career as a politician and not as the ordinary one but as the political leader of Bosniaks. DL says that in case that Cerić puts forward his candidacy Enes Karić, a dean at the Faculty of Islamic Science in Sarajevo, might be his counter-candidate. DL says: “<i>Reis Cerić or somebody else is less important than the fact that a new (old) Reis will be loyal to a group of people gathered in the right fraction of SDA.</i>”</p>
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<p>Implementation of CRA decision on ethnic prefix in public media</p>	<p>Vecernji List (p 5, "Media with Croat name disappeared", by <u>Ilko Barbaric</u>) and Slobodna Dalmacija (p 17, "No more Croat TV or radio", by <u>Darko Juka</u>) report that Croat RTV Mostar and Croat Radio Herzeg-Bosna had to remove the national prefix from their official names on Christmas eve: former Croat RTV Mostar is now called HTV Mostar, i.e. Herzegovinian TV. General Director of this outlet, Vlatko Menix, confirmed for VL this was done under CRA ultimatum that, unless this is done, the CRA would with SFOR assistance shut repeaters down. Menix has added that this outlet and Radio Herzeg-Bosna were resisting the pressure until the end but that, unfortunately, other outlets with Croat prefix rushed to change their names. Menix adds that HTV Mostar has written for this reason for 3 times to the outlet founders, 3 Mostar Municipalities with Croat majority, but received no reply from them. The paper adds that both outlets have lodged appeals to CRA over violation of fundamental rights and freedoms stipulated by the BiH Constitution. SD adds that Croat Radio Mostar now airs its programme and jingles as "Radio Postaja Mostar".</p>
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