OHR BiH Media Round-up, 30/4/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19:00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19:30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19:30)
Bobetko died	Indictees to be tried in BiH	Bobetko died	HR addresses RS NA
HR on state intelligence	Bobetko died	CoM on security plan	RS NA session
Fighting SARS	HR on intelligence services	BiH's commercial debt	RS Council of People
Reminder of holocaust	Mandic's extradition		100 days of RS govt.

Oslobodjenje	State and federation TV announcing a strike on May 8; Swedish embassy – Plavsic won't be released in four years; Bobetko – death faster than The Hague
Dnevni Avaz	Give immunity to Americans; May 1 victory of the BiH Union; Lozancic – Federation police is not in the service of citizens;
Dnevni List	Ivica Rajic before Trial Chamber that decides on his extradition – Stupni Dol was more military fortress than civilian settlement; Conflict in the BiH Presidency at sight – re-distribution of diplomatic missions and consular posts disputable
Vecernji List	They will say goodbye to Bobetko with a 'Thank You' song; Seselj charged with Djindjic's murder
Slobodna Dalmacija	Smugglers hammered customs officers; Mostar – small stage of Croat people's Theater opened: first Croat theater in BiH'

Glas Srpski	45 criminal reports filed for the murder of Serbian PM, Zoran Djindjic – Seselj along with Cume; The Ministry of Refugees and DP's – building the return process
Nezavisne Novine	HR to BiH addressed the RS NA – time to establish the BiH intelligence agency; The BiH CoM undertakes first steps in the fight against crime – announcement on confiscation of illegally obtained property; Investigation into murder of Zoran Djindjic – Serbian police filed 45 criminal reports; Pope's visit to BiH – arrival of 100,000 pilgrims expected; Zagreb – Janko Bobetko died; Dusan Mihajlovic – murder of Skrbo ordered from BiH
Blic	Ashdown – BiH must not be a shelter for criminals; Dragan Mikerevic – property obtained in illegal way will be taken away

Political Affairs

US – BiH agreement	Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – regarding an agreement that BiH is to sign with the US for the exemption of the US citizens from the International Crime Court (ICC). According to Sulejman Tihic, Bosniak presidency member, 'it is in the best interest of the Bih citizens to sign the agreement'. Adds the agreements does not entail full immunity for US citizens. "In a draft agreement, which is still being prepared, it is stated that we can not extradite an American to the ICC without the approval of the US. Therefore, theoretically, it is possible for the US government to agree to send a citizen of their country, working in BiH, to the ICC." Tihic also thinks that the fact the immunity would only apply while US was involved in the implementation of the DPA meant prolonging of the US presence in BiH. Also, on pg. 2 of Avaz entitled 'We are sticking to the EU recommendations' – a statement by BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic, on the matter. At yesterday's press conf he stated the Bih's position was to exempt only those US citizens working in peacekeeping mission in BiH. Emphasized that BiH was sticking to suggestions by the EU, according to which BiH can sign the agreement only under strict conditions. Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Exemption for officials of peacekeeping operations' – Ivanic stated that BiH was in a difficult position since she had to undertake measures to please the EU yet retain good relations with the US. Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 'Ivanic announces talks with the US', Glas Srpski pg. 2 'Exemption of Americans' – Mladen Ivanic, BiH Foreign Minister, yesterday stated that the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated a procedure for negotiations with the US. Blic pg. 3 – "BiH is ready to negotiate with the United States on the exemption of the US citizens, who participate in peacekeeping operations in BiH, from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court in the Hague," Ivanic said.
Ploce port	Oslobodjenje pg. 4 an insert with the above mentioned article on Ivanic's statement entitled 'Confusion over Ploce' – Ivanic stated with regret that there would be no progress on the matter of the Ploce port, meaning the signing of an international agreement, by the end of the year. "There is a confusion on the part of BiH when it comes to the Ploce port and I personally think that we could have had a clearer position on the matter," said Ivanic. Vecernji List pg. 2 'Problem of Ploce remains next year too' – Ivanic said he was convinced there would be no bigger development when it comes to solving the issue of the Ploce Port this year.

HR Ashdown at the RS NA	Avaz pg. 3 'Scandals and affairs slowed down BiH's trip to Europe' – HR Paddy Ashdown yesterday addressed the RS NA. He stated it was necessary to start speedy reform of BiH intelligence services. Indicated all dangers unless such reform was conducted. He stated that regardless of the fact that the 410 brigade of the RS Army was disbanded, more had to be done. Emphasized that BiH, especially the RS, had to support fight against crime. HR Ashdown finally said that war criminals, and those helping them, had to be arrested. On the same page of Avaz another article dealing with the issue entitled 'Days of the international help are gone' – HR Ashdown, following the address, responded to question of RS NA reps. Answering a question by Dragomir Vasic (no mention of what an actual question was), Ashdown stated that there would be no more money from the IC. As for a question by Milorad Dodik regarding the lack of action against organized crime in both Federation and the RS, Ashdown stated that he was encouraged by measures undertaken by entity police ministers on preventing Serbian criminals entering BiH. Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'Central intelligence service necessary', 'Soon the names of indictees' supporters' – HR met yesterday with RS PM Dragan Mikerevic. HR refused to reveal the names and a number of people who will be listed as unwanted and banned from entering EU countries. Vecernji List pg. 2 'Time has come for establishing a single intelligence agency', Dnevni List pg. 11 'Central BiH intelligence agency is being established' and Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 18 'War criminals and criminals are the same' – "If we do not put the services under central control they will be free to interfere and connect with criminal underground, and this will cause tragic events such as murder of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic," said Ashdown. Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 & 3 'Time to establish the BiH intelligence agency', Glas Srpski pg. 2 'Reforms attract investments' – HR also said that the BiH authorities confirmed that military industry facilities would be reformed and placed under civil control in order to become a members of the PfP by January 2004. According to GS, 1st July should see the entity customs administrations unified, while the VAT should be operational as of 1st January 2005. Blic pg. 2 & 3 'BiH must fight the crime' – "We have got an agreement on principles of the revenue system, and the Indirect Tax Policy Commission is making a good progress towards agreement principles. I expect the unifying of the customs administrations to begin by July 1, the work of the Commission to finish by the end of July, and VAT to be in place with a target date of the beginning of 2005. This reform is crucial for our future and key to our acceptance into Europe. We cannot afford delay or obstructions if we are to have any hope of a favourable response to the EU feasibility study. The July 1 and July 31 deadlines are tough, but they must be met," High Representative Paddy Ashdown told RS National Assembly's MPs on Tuesday.
Mikerevic	Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Branko Krsmanovic for finance minister' – RS PM Dragan Mikerevic on Tuesday announced that on April 25 he requested OHR's approval for appointing Branko Krsmanovic new RS Finance Minister. Blic pg. 3, Vecernje Novosti pg. 9 – Mikerevic's abnnouncement regarding Krsmanovic's nomination.

Split within the Presidency?	Dnevni List pg. 7 'Distribution of diplomatic-consular posts disputable' – BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic, confirmed that the BiH Presidency had started internal talks on the distribution of diplomatic-consular posts based on the ethnic key, and stressed that his Ministry did not take part in the talks. "It will be discussed by the Presidency, but judging by the atmosphere among the members I am not sure there will be a high level of consent on the matter," said Ivanic.
SD editorial	Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 19 'More European part of Bih will enter Europe first' – the author recalls that prior to Ashdown's arrival he was mentioned as a person who would realize a new Dayton. Formally, however, it has not happened. The editorial says that the HR is doing it alone, informally, through the establishing of a joint army, the joint curriculum, a complete revision of the political status of Mostar etc. In the light of this claim, the author reminds that the HR has stated that Dayton was the foundation, but not the roof. According to Ivankovic, BiH is non-functional under the Dayton regime, however, it made possible for Croats to confirm their dominance in economy and this dominance would exist even when the HR pushed through his rather deformed plan on the 'unified, European' Mostar. The editorial concludes that those who say that the only feasible solution for BiH is the one reached by the agreement of all three entities are most probably right. "Then BiH will no longer need tutors from abroad, and tenants will be able to make a project of the roof by themselves. However, the question remains whether they will ever want to leave and stop worry about BiH?"

Mikerevic on 100 days of RS govt.	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Branko Krsmanovic nominated as RS Finance Minister', Glas Srpski pg. 3 'We avoided bad decisions' – for the occasion of the first 100 days of the RS government's work, RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, yesterday in Banja Luka, stated the following. "The affairs in the RS and developments in the neighbouring states have greatly effected the work of the RS government over the past 100 days." He concluded that some problems, inherited from previous governments were resolved in this time period. Mikerevic referred to legal projects (related to criminal law, criminal proceedings and protection of witness during proceedings) as the most important results achieved in the past 100 days. According to him, 'all these laws were forwarded for the parliamentary procedure'. "The RS NA will discuss today these Laws. They provide a sustainable economic development." The following was said for economic development. "Previous two governments discussed the Action Plan for the restructuring and privatisation of power utility in the RS. We have now managed to find, in our view, a satisfactory solution. This proposal has been forwarded for the parliament procedure." Blic pg. 3 'Laws against illegally obtained property announced', Vecernje Novosti pg. 9 'Military barracks to civilians' – RS Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic said on Tuesday that the Government's work during first 100 days was not ideal, but in general he was satisfied with the achieved results. Mikerevic said that the work of the RS Government was burdened with the 'Orao' affair, the spying affair and Doboj Bank, as well as with the situation in the region after the assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. According to Mikerevic, the most important contribution of the RS government is a set of laws in the field of economy, in accordance with recommendations of the Bulldozer Committee, as well as a set of laws in the field of judiciary. He also announced the reforms in the field of defence. Most military facilities in the cities will be used for education, culture and science. During the first hundred days of its work, the RS government created 20 proposals and 15 draft laws, and made 68 decisions and 78 solutions.
New president of Mostar City Council?	Dnevni List pg. 16 'Lovric new President of the Mostar City Council' – according to sources close to the HDZ Mostar City Board, Ante Vidacak will withdraw from the position of Mostar City Council President. Namely, according to legal regulations on the non-compatibility of functions that the OHR passed, persons who perform functions in the bodies of authority cannot be at the same time members of public companies' Steering Boards. According to DL, Vidacak was appointed member of Elektroprivreda of Croat Community of Herceg Bosna's Steering Board and he would leave the position of the Mostar City Council President. According to the same sources, most probably, Jadranko Lovric will replace Vidacak.

DL editorial on RS govt. and HR Ashdown	Dnevni List pg. 2 ‘The RS government did not pass the exam’ – labels yesterday’s sessions of the RS NA and RS government as the events of the day and goes on to say that the RS government, following the first 100 days in the office, did not pass the exam. Talking about HR Paddy Ashdown’s address before the RS NA, Relota says Ashdown calmed down Serb reps, SDS MPs in particular, stating that the existence of the RS is not questionable and that he would protect the rights of the entity described in the DPA. Relota’s conclusion is that ‘daddy’ again managed to calm down the disturbed kids who were threatened that their favorite toy would be taken away from them.

Fight against Crime

CoM session – security	Avaz pg. 8 'The confiscation of property acquired through criminal action announced' – the first part of a CoM session held last night. It was concluded as necessary to establish strategies to fight crime, terrorism and human trafficking at the BiH level. Therefore, the Com will propose several legal solutions with an aim of harmonizing BiH legislative with European standards. As concrete measures, the Com emphasized the confiscation of property acquired through organized crime, a ban on the property and blocking of accounts. Niko Grubesic, BiH Deputy Justice Minister, stated that BiH had to be treated as a single security space, which meant that security related events could not be interpreted in different ways. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 5 and Slobodna Dalmacija last page 'To establish the Security Ministry ASAP' – during yesterday's session the BiH Council of Ministers, reps adopted a plan of measures and activities for improving the security situation in BiH. The BiH Ministry of Security prepared the plan. Grubesic stated that it was concluded to establish the BiH Ministry of Security as soon as possible and to create material prerequisites for its functioning. Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 2 – the BiH CoM adopted the 'Proposal of measures and activities aimed at improving safety in BiH' document. Grubesic stated that the document stipulated the legal regulation of numerous measures aimed at improving fight against organised crime, prevention of human trafficking and anti-terrorist activities.

Oslobodjenje commentary	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 ‘Police or politics’ by Amra Kebo – comment on Bih fighting crime. She starts off by saying that even before Djnidjic’s murder there were warnings of Serbian criminals crossing over to BiH. The same place where, for eight year, Karadzic has been hiding with a help of a very well organized support web. Kebo goes on to say that even though certain measures were taken against Ka5radzic’s supporters, Bejlica and Mandic, more should have been done and it was not. The result of which is that the Serbian police and not the Federation or RS special forces arrested Mandic. Instead, observes Kebo, the RS police perform spectacular actions that have no effect. Meanwhile, an increasing number of indictees in returning to the RS. Kebo recalls warnings by President of the Foca Assembly, Lutvo Sukalo, who warned of the trend. The proof of this is a certain incident in Foca when soldiers and journalists were kicked out of the bar ‘Uno’, owned by Milorad Krnojelac (indicted for crime committed in 1992 and 1993). Kebo in conclusion says that BiH lacks a clear and determined political decision.

Mikerevic	Dnevni List pg. 11 'We will confront organized crime' – reports that RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, stressed that the confiscation of property of persons who acquired it in illegal way is one of the RS government's priorities. Mikerevic did not rule out a possibility of establishing a special prosecutorial office and appointing a special prosecutor to resolutely fight the organized crime. "We will soon estimate what kind of act on procedures on confiscation of property from people who acquired it illegally we will adopt. I see the basis for the plan are conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council, as well as the RS Criminal Code, which is on the agenda of the RS NA," said Mikerevic.
Ashdown – Djeric	Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Support to police actions' – HR Paddy Ashdown expressed his full support to police actions in the fight against organised crime. The statement was made fowlloing a meeting with RS Minister of Interior Zoran Djeric. Djeric stated that the police operation, aimed at arresting a couple of persons suspected of money laundering, was ongoing. "HR's support to our activities means a lot and it also stimulates us to hold out on this dangerous and responsible path," said Djeric.

Judicial Affairs

Sullivan	Avaz pg. 2 ‘The rule of law strengthening in BiH’ – at yesterday’s press conf OHR Spokesperson, Kevin Sullivan, said the OHR welcomed the news of the first cases being taken by the BiH Prosecutor’s Office, and that they expected the cases to appear before the Court soon. “HR welcomes the first steps of the BiH court in undertaking concrete actions against those who are poisoning the BiH society and weakening its economic stability. These cases are concrete proof that the rule of law is strengthening in BiH and that BiH institution have means necessary for efficient fight against crime,” stated Sullivan. Oslobodjenje pg. 2 ‘The fight against crime commenced’ – OHR Spokesperson recalled that the BiH Prosecutor’s Office on Monday submitted charges according to the Article 195 of the BiH Criminal Law on illegal trade of drugs. nevni List pg. 6 ‘Computerization of land registry books in BiH’ – Sullivan said the OHR welcomed the news about the BiH Prosecution starting to deal with its first cases.

Economic Affairs

BiH Union – privatisation revision proposal	Avaz pg. 4 ‘Urgently correct injustice done to workers’ – the BiH Union yesterday presented the draft Law on Revision of Privatisation, which has already been forwarded to the Federation government with a request to put it up for an urgent discussion and forward it to the parliamentary procedure. According to BiH Union President, Edhem Biber, the Union received a support during a meeting with HR a month ago. He stated the Union did not think the revision had to be conducted in all companies, but those that have been privatised and irregularities can be documented. On the same page another article on the issue entitled ‘The most important thing is for the government to declare itself on the Union’s proposal’ – Muhamed Ibrahimovic, Federation HoR Chairman, stated that the most important thing was for the Fed govt. to declare its view on the draft devised by the Union and then the HoR can act in accordance with the parliamentary procedure. Oslobodjenje pg. 7 ‘Workers not allowed to read their rights from contracts’ – Biber stated that the draft was an attempt to correct the injustice done to workers.

FBiH Customs	Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 17 – despite an official confirmation that the overall tax revenues in the Federation have increased during 2002, according to an analysis, prepared by independent economic experts from the Federation, those information are false and the real truth is that there is a catastrophic decrease when it comes to customs revenues. SD goes on to say that the best results were in 2001, during the tenure of former Federation Finance Minister, Nikola Grabovac, when customs revenues were at 650,5 million KM, and when Grabovac was removed by the High Representative, the customs revenues in 2002 decreased by 164,4 million KM compared to 2001. Apparently, these independent economic experts hold Director of the Federation Customs Administration, Zelimir Rebac, responsible for the situation. In that context, SD says the false information on real results and charges against Dragan Covic and other are an attempt to hide the real situation and the daily asks whether the OHR is protecting Rebac.

Military Affairs

Joint army	Avaz pg. 2 'BiH Army should be established by the end of the year' – the daily found out from IC and BiH Presidency sources that BiH should get a single army in the course of this year. 'Several ideas up for a discussion. According to those and written proposals we receive from the IC, the intention is to agree principles of the single army by the end of June, and to start with the establishment by the end of the year," Rasim Delic, Military Advisor of a Bosniak presidency member, stated. Added that, amongst other things, they were considering the option of creating multiethnic commands and units at a higher level, while brigades would be mono-ethnic.

Media Affairs

HR Ashdown with Kopanja	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'No changes to the Law on RTRS' – at yesterday's meeting with Director of NN, Zeljko Kopanja, and members of the NN editorial board, HR Paddy Ashdown said that he was aware of pressures that politicians in the RS, who had been requesting changes to the Law on RTRS. HR sent a message to those officials saying there will be no amendments to the Law in question. Ashdown further reminded the NN editorial board of his priorities since the beginning of his mandate, which areas follows – preservation of public media independence, Central Bank integrity and judiciary independence. HR also said he was pleased with the way the paper treated the society issues and offered his full support.