

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 31/12/2003

| HERCEG-BOSNA RADIO(18,00 hrs) | BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs) | FED TV (19,30 hrs) | RT RS (19,30) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Fed Gov't on Aluminium | Power for Aluminium | Pensions not discussed | Support for Government |
| Indep. Union of Aluminium | Late pensions delayed | Federation 2004 budget | Osmanovic' open letter |
| Strike of civil servants | Support for RS gov't | Strike of civil servants | Pensioners with Mikerevic |
| EUPM on suspicious mail | 30 killed in China | RTV subscription | Pensions to be paid in RS |

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Oslobodjenje | A half of backlog pension to be paid after New Year holidays |
| Dnevni Avaz | Covic's New year message: We need a common attitude for success |
| Dnevni List | "Covic: To do job that was being done for 6 years in 6 months!"; "New Year's message of Paddy Ashdwon: Do not miss chance for Europe" |
| Vecernji List | "Aluminij's life extended for 30 days"; "Durguti on list of terrorists" |
| Slobodna Dalmacija | "Croatian Elektroprivreda does not allow transit of electricity from BiH to Slovenia"; "New Year's message of Paddy Ashdown: Instead of European BiH – pocket size Bosnia" |
| Glas Srpske | GS has cartoon with political officials of Republika Srpska and HiRep in the middle on its cover |
| Nezavisne Novine | Clifford Bond: Diplomat of reforms; Bosko Ceko: We will not be indulgent towards Santa Claus either |
| Blic | Dragan Cavic: Without the Dayton, BiH is just a soap bubble |

Political issues: New Year's messages, interviews

Covic's New Year's message, interview

BHTV, Dnevni Avaz front page, pg. 3 'We need a common attitude for success', FENA – BiH Presidency Chair Dragan Covic issued a New Year's message to BiH citizens on Tuesday. "Another year of peace is behind us. It was marked by the return of refugees and displaced persons, the international affirmation of our country and reforms that are opening the door to European structures for us. However, we must not forget numerous problems, primarily the bad social status and living standard of the majority of citizens. We need to believe and hope that we shall make another important step next year in moving closer to the EU and NATO, accelerating the privatisation process, starting the flow of foreign investments and improving the social status of us all. This is the only future for us. We need unity in order to succeed and in order to achieve unity we also need to build a higher level of social awareness between all of us. Our wish for next year is that all citizens of this country live better and with dignity and that all people, both young and old, start enjoying life. Next year could be turning point for our country with our firm determination to no longer excessively look in the past, but rather in the future," said Covic.

Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'We will have only a long-term benefit from Europe', FENA – "Numerous positive events and processes have marked year 2003 in BiH. This particularly refers to the reformatory processes in the domains of defence, security services and fulfilling of conditions for the beginning of negotiations with the European Union. I regard as very significant the reforms in the customs and tax systems. This package of measures was evidently completed. What we did not manage to do, but is in the final phase and I believe should be completed in the first three months of the next year, refers to transformation of the security services," said Covic in an interview for FENA. Dnevni List (front and page 7, "Covic: To do job that was being done for 6 years in 6 months?"; by D. Jazvic) also carries the interview.

**Paddy Ashdown's
New Year's
message**

Oslobodjenje pg. 6, mentioned on the front page 'Only with reforms BiH has a chance', Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 'Do not let the past to be our enemy once again' – "2003 marked a turning point for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2004, we risk turning back to the past again. Most international observers, and many in BiH itself, didn't believe we could come so far in 2003. But as a result of the reforms this year, we now enter the year ahead daring to hope that BiH can finally look to a real future within Europe and NATO. So, the question for next year is: will 2004 be the year we build on that opportunity, or the year we lose it? And the answer to that question lies, not with the International Community, but with BiH's politicians and what they do next," said High Representative Paddy Ashdown at the beginning of his New Year's message to BiH citizens.

Vecernji List (p 4, "Do not miss chance for Europe"), Slobodna Dalmacija (front & p 20, "Mini Bosnia instead of European BiH", by Zlatko Tulic) and Dnevni List (front & p ages 4&5, "Do not miss chance for Europe") also carry that, in his New Year's message to citizens of BiH, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown marks the year of 2003 as a turning point for BiH's future and that the answer to the question as to whether BiH will continue reforms and take the opportunity to have a future in Europe and NATO or return to the past is not in the hands of the OHR and the International Community but of BiH politicians. Ashdown adds that establishment of unified Intelligence and Security Service, unified High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC), establishment of strengthened police body on the state level (SIPA) and formation of unified city administration founded on guaranteed sharing of authority in Mostar are the key first tasks in the year 2004.

Nezavisne Novine, pg. 7, 'A chance for Europe'; Glas Srpske, pg. 3, 'Closer to Europe' – NN carries HiRep's New Year's message in its entirety, while Glas Srpske carries only three paragraphs, first one saying that the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, expresses the view that BiH may be admitted into PfP. The second paragraph quotes HiRep saying that everything what we have done through reforms in 2003 could be destroyed in only a few weeks of obstructions in 2004.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Osmanovic's open letter to Humphries</p> | <p>RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 'Osmanovic accuses Humphries of ignoring constitutional amendments' – The Vice President of RS Adil Osmanovic sent on Tuesday an open letter to the head of EC in BiH Michael Humphries saying that Humphries's meeting with the Serb representatives on Monday was humiliating act towards the officials from other two nations. "If we want full implementation of the Constitutional amendments we can not have different measures towards different people. RS has two Vice presidents from other two Constituent people" – said Osmanovic. Frano Maroevic, EC Spokesman, commented on this letter saying that it is not possible to meet with all representatives during only one visit.</p> |
| <p>Halilovic says Party for BiH to work even harder on reforms</p> | <p>FTV, Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Highway to be stimulating for BiH industry', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'Party for BiH's goal is to strengthen state institutions', FENA – Party for BiH (SBiH) President Safet Halilovic announced at a press conference in Sarajevo on Tuesday an even more determined engagement of this party on implementing reforms in BiH with the objective of strengthening state institutions. He said that SBiH would propose certain solutions for improving the social position of BiH citizens and added that the construction of a highway in BiH would provide work for 29 branches of industry. Halilovic stressed that this party would continue working on the adoption of a state law on higher education and added that even the accession of BiH to the Bologna Process requires changes to be made in this field. SBiH will in the coming days raise before the Council of Ministers the issue of defining the status of basic cultural and scientific institutions in BiH, Halilovic said.</p> |

**Expectations of
BiH officials
in 2004**

Slobodna Dalmacija (p 20-26) carries an overview of expectations of BiH officials for the year 2004. Neven Tomic, former Mayor of Mostar, says that, after the year 2003 was wasted, the High Representative will pass the decision on Mostar that will have significant consequences to BiH as well as to the role of the International Community in BiH which on this issue tests consistency of its approach to building of BiH. He also expects significant steps to be taken in terms of re-organisation of BiH. Dragan Covic, member of the BiH Presidency, says there were more negative than positive things that marked the year 2003. As for next year, he says we must turn to our own selves and to work, appreciate what is our own but also what is our neighbours', preserve what is Croat so that BiH is also the country of the Croat people who can take pride in it. Miroslav Coric, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Prime Minister, says the year 2003 was the turning point for this Canton as the High Representative abolished its special regime status. Coric hopes for better filling of the budget in the next year. Ljubo Beslic, Mostar Deputy Mayor, hopes for improvements in the fields of economy and employment. As for the new Statute of Mostar, he believes it will not be adopted in the proposed form. "The Statute must be based on constitutional and legal principles and be true foundation for overall progress and making Mostar what we want it to be", he says.

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>NN lists for 2003</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 4 in NN NY supplement, 'Diplomat of reforms' – Nezavisne Novine made a list of ten persons of the year. Clifford Bond, US Ambassador to BiH, holds the 1st place and is referred to as "diplomat of the year". NN ground this on numerous reasons, including the fact that he has contributed to our state a lot on political but also humanitarian field. Also, he has been strongly supporting the ongoing reforms.</p> <p>The list also includes Boko Ceko (on 3rd place), Dragoiljub Davidovic (9th place) and Bakir Hadziomerovic (10th place) BHTV, RTRS, Nezavisne Novine, pg. 3, 'Republika Srpska Government obtained support of parliament majority'; Glas Srpske, pg. 3, 'First results, then support' – On Tuesday, the Republika Srpska President, Dragan Cavic, and parties that make parliament majority supported the work of the Republika Srpska Government led by Dragan Mikerevic. Cavic said that this support is not without reserve, noting that it would depend upon future results and performance of Government.</p> |
| <p>Cavic meeting with ruling political parties' representatives</p> | <p>Cavic also said that they supported the Republika Srpska Government, noting that failure to accomplish government targets demands certain personnel changes. Regarding this, Mikerevic has been obligated to deliver report by the end of February or mid March, where he is to present the plan on possible personnel changes within Government, which would result in full implementation of the planned budget of Republika Srpska.</p> <p>Mikerevic expressed satisfaction over undivided support he obtained from Government. He announced that all Ministries are to prepare reports on its work by the end of January.</p> <p>The RS Parliament Speaker, Dragan Kalinic , said that there is no alternative for the current Government composition for the time being.</p> <p>Mladen Ivanic, PDP President, said that the Republika Srpska Government has made some good steps, especially in second half of 2003.</p> <p>Apart from above officials, the meeting was also attended by representatives of the joint caucus of DPS and Pensioners Party respectively, Predrag Radic and Ruza Nikic, and President of Serb Radical Party, Milanko Mihajlica.</p> |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Blic interview with Dragan Cavic</p> | <p>Blic p 12 and 13 'BiH without the Dayton is a soap bubble' – A two-page interview with RS President Dragan Cavic, in which he presented his opinion regarding the establishing of the intelligence agency at BiH level, initiative for revision of the Dayton Agreement, reforms, necessity for the presence of the international community in BiH, fight against terrorism and corruption, cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, the Srebrenica Commission, expectations for the next year etc.</p> |
| <p>SNSD on PDP and SDS</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'Informal criminal centres behind SDS and PDP' – Milorad Dodik, SNSD President, on Tuesday stated that SNSD would not take part in any revision of Dayton Peace Agreement. He assessed that instead much work should be done on multi-ethnicity of the entities, stressing that Republika Srpska has already implemented much of those issues.</p> <p>He also said that informal criminal centres of power are backing SDS and PDP, which is proved through shameful performance at Republika Srpska National Assembly sessions. He also quoted the example of Banjaluka seated Kristal Banka, on which Republika Srpska Parliament concluded it was illegally sold for 1 EURO, but no measures were undertaken afterwards. He said that SDS and PDP protest organised crime at Telekom Srpske, bank privatisation, Republika Srpska Elektroprivreda, etc.</p> <p>He also expressed hope that general elections would be held along with municipal elections at the end of 2004, otherwise there is no hope that anything would improve at the political and economic scene of Republika Srpska and BiH as well.</p> |
| <p>SDS on 2003</p> | <p>Glas Srpske, pg. 2, 'Stability preserved' – At yesterday's press conference in Banjaluka, Dusan Stojicic, SDS Spokesperson, stated that in 2003, Republika Srpska has preserved its political and institutional stability, noting that the trends in social and economic sphere observed over the past three months are encouraging.</p> <p>He also says there is no need at this point in time for raising the issue on re-composition of political relations in Republika Srpska, because the current parliament majority is stable and functions properly.</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>NN New Year's editorial</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine editorial by <u>Branko Todorovic</u>, 'Happy New Year' – The author is extremely sarcastically about any good thing, that local population of BiH can hope in the future. He says that people do not have anything to hope for bearing in mind they live in the state where three crime ideologies, figured in three political parties and responsible for the death of over hundreds thousand people are awarded with international legitimacy.</p> <p>He raises many other questions related to returnees' security, ongoing privatisation process, living standard in BiH and opportunities for the youth of BiH. He says that responses should be provided by those local officials leading the state, but also those international officials, who are indulgent towards them and tolerate their criminal records and crimes in an exchange of insignificant signs of co-operation.</p> |
| <p>Tarzac New Year's interviews</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pgs. 4-5 of the special New year's supplement 'I work in a different way and I am not a man who knows everything', Dnevni Avaz pg. 5 'We have saved the country from full bankruptcy' – Interviews with Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic (note that it is not about the same texts). Among other things, he said he was much more optimistic than he had been at the beginning of his term in office.</p> |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Feral Tribune on European Parliament MPs’ initiative on change of the Dayton</p> | <p>Feral Tribune (p 52-53, “Dayton belated reason”, by <u>Ivan Lovrenovic</u>; N.B. original headline is a pun: “Daytonski spor razum” – “sporazum” means “Agreement, Accord”, while “razum” means “reason”) carries that the Declaration by 24 European Parliament MPs is the first elaborated, comprehensive and thorough criticism of the Dayton Accords by which its authors show that they have penetrated the essence of the problem and that they have plucked up the necessary moral courage to say what the clerks of the international administration in BiH, led by the High Representative, hate to hear most: that nothing can be changed or democratised in BiH “from the inside” and the “will of constituent peoples” until political prerequisites are changed. And this can be only done by the will of the International Community, by the same will and the same IC, which imposed the current absurd framework. Lovrenovic finds Paddy Ashdown’s reaction to the initiative cynical as “no one knows better than himself that it is exactly the Dayton system and the way he himself practices it which keep and strengthen the constellation of political relations and social situation which makes it impossible for political forces that can and are able to initiate any significant changes to be generated”. Lovrenovic concludes that having the Dayton Accords on the agenda of European political public would be the best news for BiH in the next year, the news that BiH politicians (and the IC in BiH) can never afford.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Appointments in judiciary, police

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Tihic says prejudices against Bosniaks reason for their poor representation in judiciary</p> | <p>Herceg-Bosna Radio, FTV, Dnevni Avaz 'Tihic: It is about prejudices with regard to Bosniaks-muslims', Oslobođenje pg. 3 'Bosniaks considered inappropriate (as candidates) due to prejudices with regard to Islam, Bosniaks' – "During the past year on several occasions we have indicated the inequitable position of Bosniaks in the judiciary and police institutions. Thus, we reject all accusations that SDA is interfering into the work of police and courts. We shall use all democratic means to ensure an equal position of the Bosniak people", said SDA leader Sulejman Tihic at a press conference in Sarajevo on Tuesday. "It seems that certain representatives of the international community, because of their prejudices against/with regard to Islam, feel that Bosniaks are inappropriate for performing top functions in the systems of security and judiciary. Simultaneously, prosecutors and judges are being appointed by persons that performed such duties in the time and the areas of the greatest mass crimes against Bosniaks, but failed to do anything to process them", said the SDA President.</p> <p>Dnevni List (page 6, "Tihic: We want BiH to become more Bosnian and joint", by Nina) carries that SDA held its New Year's press conference yesterday. SDA President Sulejman Tihic stated that SDA will advocate that BiH becomes more Bosnian and joint, without ethnic divisions. Tihic also criticized the RS authorities because of their non-cooperation with The Hague and he referred to an unequal position of Bosniaks in the judicial and Security Service institutions and refuted accusations that SDA interferes in the work of the Police and judiciary. Commenting on the Aluminij issue, Tihic said that this is an economic issue and that the electricity price for Aluminij and any other consumer, including the special ones, should be determined in accordance with the economic criteria. Slobodna Dalmacija (page 23, "Bosniaks are not eligible because of Islam", by Z. Rerig) also covered the SDA press conference.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine, pg. 6, 'I do not interfere in the selection of judges' – In an interview to NN, Sulejman Tihic, SDA President, says he does not interfere with the work of BiH HJPC, namely the selection of judges and prosecutors. On this, he stresses that: "It is my constitutional obligation to point at inequality of Bosniaks. And this is exactly what I am doing."</p> <p>He denies claims that SDA is protecting criminals by insisting on annulment of election process of judges and prosecutors.</p> <p>He also expresses regret that SDA coalition partners (SDS and HDZ) failed to express support to these fully justified demands of SDA. He further expresses support to the election of Bakir Izetbegovic as 4th Vice President of SDA.</p> <p>On appointment of Minister of Defence and Head of BiH Army General Staff, Tihic says that these officials should be appointed in February. He expresses view that Defence Minister should be a Bosnia, without wanting to make any comment on press inquiry as to whether Rasim Delic would meet qualifications necessary for this post.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>EU Ambassadors on independence of judiciary</p> | <p>FTV, Oslobođenje pg. 4 'Independent judiciary key for European integration', FENA – The Ambassadors of the European Union in BiH underline that the creation and maintenance of a strong, politically independent Judiciary is key to BiH ' s European ambitions. The establishment of the Rule of Law demands that judicial appointments are made primarily on the basis of merit, and by the independent High Judicial and Prosecutorial councils, not by the Political Parties, the Italian Embassy stated on Tuesday on behalf of the EU ambassadors. The Ambassadors of the EU in BiH stress therefore that any hint that this process is being reversed, or that this principle is being undermined, would seriously hamper this Country's progress towards further European integration, and slow the considerable progress that has been made in establishing the Rule of Law in BiH.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| <p>Economic/social issues</p> |
|--------------------------------------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Supply of electricity to Aluminij to be continued in the next 30 days</p> | <p>Herceg-Bosna Radio, BHTV, FTV, Oslobođenje pg. 7, mentioned on the front page 'Electricity to Aluminij for the next 30 days', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2, FENA – FBiH Government at its Tuesday's session in Mostar came to the conclusion that in the next 30 days supply of electricity to "Aluminij" d.d. Mosta will be continued. According to a statement issued by the Federal Government, Government ordered to "Elektroprivreda BiH" and the Mostar Company to agree upon within the period the conditions, define mutual contract obligations, and to ensure supply of electricity in 2004. "Government insists that representatives of the two companies find strength to agree upon the matter with the aim of preserving total economic courses and creating prerequisites for balanced foreign trade in the interests of further economic development", it is pointed out in the statement.</p> <p>Vecernji List (front and page 3, "Aluminij's life has been extended for 30 days", <u>by Z. Kresic</u>), Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 21, "Workers will not go out on streets for the time being", <u>by Z. Zekic</u>) also deal with the Aluminij issue. The author in SD report says that the OHR and Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays gave support to Aluminij in this case.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**OHR supports
Hadzipasic's
proposal for
Aluminij**

Slobodna Dalmacija (last page, "TV lynch of 'Aluminij' ", by Z. Zekic) carries that the Independent Trade Union of 'Aluminij' sent an open letter to Editor-in-Chief of the FTV Informative Program Marija Topic-Crnoja because of the way of reporting on the work of 'Aluminij', or to put it more precisely, because of the reporting on possible shutting down of the Aluminij's production and the dirty campaign that the FTV Informative Program was running against the biggest, BiH exporter. The letter also says that in case that Topic-Crnoja is not able to stop the campaign she is asked to submit resignation for moral and professional reasons. DL (page 9, "We demand resignation of Marija Topic-Crnoja", by Nina) also covered this letter.

Oslobodjenje also covered the issue.

Oslobodjenje pg. 7 'Support to Premier Hadzipasic's proposal', FENA – The way how the issue of the Aluminij Mostar Company is resolved will have enormous implications for the future of the BiH economy, OHR spokesperson Mario Brkic told a press conference in Sarajevo on Tuesday. "Aluminij is one of the largest and most important factors in the BiH economy making up almost 10 percent of BiH export. If this company is shut down than 1.000 jobs would be put at risk, a negative message would be sent to foreign investors that BiH is not a safe place for investments and all this would undermine international confidence in the idea that BiH is moving in the right direction", Brkic said. OHR described the proposal made by FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic for a provisional solution as legal and commercially founded.

**FBiH: a half of
backlog pension
will not be
paid this year**

Herceg Bosna Radio, BHTV, FTV, Oslobođenje front page, pg. 5 'A half of backlog pension to be paid after New Year holidays', Dnevni Avaz pg. 3, FENA – A half of one backlog pension will not be paid by December 31 this year. The FBiH House of Representatives adopted on Tuesday the proposal of the FBiH Government for planning the payment of a half of the pension in the decision on temporary financing of the Federation for the first quarter of the next year. The House of Representatives should discuss this decision at a session on January 5. The FBiH House of Representatives held a special session following the request by BOSS representative Mirnes Ajanovic that changes be made to this year's budget that would allow the payment of a half of one backlog pension by the end of this year.

Vecernji List page 4, "Nevertheless, New Year without promised pension", by zk, Dnevni List page 3, "To whom session turned into farce suits?", by M. Relota also covered this session.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Employees in FBiH customs, tax administrations and courts might go on strike over low salaries</p> | <p>BHTV, FTV, Dnevni List page 8, <u>by R. Radic</u> –</p> <p>Some 3500 employees in Federation tax administration, customs and courts may start general strike if Federation Government does not fulfil request for higher salaries. They already started to suspend work for one hour each day. They insist on harmonization with salaries at state level what would mean an increase of 28%. Head of Trade Unions of public servant Nihad Guso said: “We don’t see reasons why civil servants at state-level have got 67% higher salaries. Fight against corruption can not be effective with so low salaries for tax inspectors, custom officials.” Civil servants in Federation wonder how director of SIPA may get 5 thousands KM from tax payers as well as some in other institutions established by foreigners, while those who collect tax revenues are so poorly paid.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Interview with
Republika
Srpska Chief
Auditor**

Nezavisne Novine, cover and pgs. 8 & 9 in NN NY supplement 'We will not be indulgent towards Santa Claus either ' – In an interview to NN, Bosko Ceko, Republika Srpska Chief Auditor, says that Audit Office will not be indulgent towards anyone, even – hypothetically speaking – towards Santa Claus, if law establishes he broke the law by having giving gifts to children.

As for real audits, Ceko says that international auditors plan to undertake some activities, owing to which the Republika Srpska auditors would be able to focus and target public companies.

Commenting on slow process of replacement of those responsible for mismanagement (according to audit reports), he says that the key functions at Republika Srpska Vault are occupied by persons, who repeat same mistakes every year. He stresses that Republika Srpska Ministry of Finance and the Republika Srpska Government should do something about it.

He says the Audit Office has sought from the Republika Srpska Government to allow it to perform audits at Srpske Poste, Republika Srpska Railways, Oil Refinery or Srpske Poste, because he finds his team to be capable of performing this task in a qualitative manner. He says Audit Office carried out 43 audits in this year.

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Mikerevic meets with delegation of RS pensioners</p> | <p>RTRS, Nezavisne Novine, pg. 5, 'Reforms to follow at PIO'; Glas Srpske, pg. 3, 'Poor use of Fund' – Following the meeting with the representatives of the Republika Srpska Association of Pensioners, RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, yesterday stated that the reform of pension and disability insurance in needs to be implemented in Republika Srpska in 2004. According to him, another priority of the Republika Srpska Government in 2004 would be to negotiate with the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding reaching agreement on payment of pensions according to the place they were earned.</p> <p>According to NN inset, Mico Micic, Republika Srpska Minister of Labour and soldiers and disability protection, the December pensions will be most likely paid out before Christmas.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Media

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>BH Telecom, PBS fail to sign contract on RTV tax collection</p> | <p>BHTV, FTV – BH Telecom and PBS did not sign contract on collection of TV subscription fee through telephone bills on Tuesday and deadline set by PIC in Brussels is end of 2003. BiH Minister for Communications Branko Dokic explained: “Federation side has got some concerns how auditors in the company would consider this activity, but OHR has provided guarantee what would be enough to conclude this contract.” Oleg Milisic from OHR: “This contract has double purpose. Firstly it will resolve financial crises in public broadcasting system and secondly it is one of 16 conditions set by EU for further negotiations on accession.” Everyone expects the contract will be signed on Wednesday.</p> |
| <p>DL: HRTV Mostar and Croat Radio Herceg-Bosna filed lawsuit against CRA</p> | <p>Dnevni List (p 8, “BiH Court will decide on use of national prefixes”, by <u>Ivica Glibusic</u>) carries that HRTV Mostar and Croat Radio Herzeg-Bosna have filed lawsuits with the BiH Court against CRA’s decision that no public broadcaster can have any ethnic prefix or a symbol in its name. The charges followed after the CRA declared it was beyond its jurisdiction to debate on these media outlets’ appeal to CRA. Nada Dalipagic, Mostar lawyer who represents the mentioned media, says that, in case BiH Court dismisses the lawsuit, there is a possibility left to file charges with the Constitutional Court.</p> |