

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 5/11/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: IPTF refused to issue licenses to 72 policemen – Sarajevo Canton special police forces destroyed; Yugoslav team presents arguments before the International Court of Justice; SDP does not want coalition with SDA

Dnevni Avaz: Cheaper fuel in the Federation; Banja Luka: Paddy Ashdown on Orao affair – Preliminary investigation results to be announced in a month

Glas Srpski: Investigation into murder of General Buha continues – Witness the only evidence; Ashdown – Tax by hook or by crook

Nezavisne Novine: Federation has the cheapest gas; Mladen Ivanic – RS was supposed to sell arms to Burma

Dnevni List: Session of Federation Government: Fuel in BiH Federation cheaper as of last night

Vecernji List: The Hague accepted evidence of defense: New trial for Blaskic?

Slobodna Dalmacija: ICTY Appellate Council will discuss proposal to re-examine case of HVO General: New trial to Tihomir Blaskic?

FRY Nacional: Carla Del Ponte: Djindjic supports the Hague, the army protects Mladic

Blic: Ashdown: To finish the investigation within a month; Ognjen Tadic: We don't want coalitions, we will be opposition

Paddy Ashdown in Banja Luka; HR-related commentaries

In the course of his visit to Banja Luka on Monday, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, reiterated three BiH priorities also mentioned in a letter sent to the country leadership by the EU Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, **Chris Patten**, that included the reform of the BiH Council of Ministers and the customs system, as well as the introduction of VAT at the

state level. Ashdown said that the introduction of VAT at the state level itself could not be subject of any further discussion, and now only technical details of the process might be further considered. In Banja Luka, Ashdown met with the **RS leadership** and visit the town's **Clinical Center**. He emphasized that poor conditions, which this medical institution operated in, were the best proof of the necessity to urgently carry out economic reforms. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3, **Vecernji List**, p 2, **Glas Srpski**, front page and page 2, "Tax – By hook or by crook, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 6, " They overcome difficult situation with their devotion to the job, **Fena**, **Srna**, **RTRS** , first item, **NTV**, first item, **Bel TV**, first item, **Blic** p 7)

Dnevni List (pages 2, titled "Ashdown announced value added tax at BiH level if politicians do not reach agreement" and 9, "I am expecting preliminary report with names of responsible ones") also covered the HR's visit to Banja Luka. DL (page 2)says that asked whether there are differences between the HR and Clifford Bond, the American Ambassador in BiH, when the forming of the future BiH authority is in question, the HR stated that *"there are no differences and that the International Community does not have different stands on this issue"*.

Slobodna Dalmacija (last page, "Paddy Ashdown threatens with value added tax") also deals with the HR's visit to Banja Luka.

"The fourth High Representative of the international community in BiH, British Paddy Ashdown, is not a favorite of the public in the country. One could even says that he has cased the most public dilemmas in comparison to all previous high representatives. Why? Well, primarily because he was silently supporting the return of the nationalist on power, or because he was publicly supporting the Aliance for Change stepping down. He thereby expressed an open negative attitude towards the idea of social-democracy, which the Alliance attempted to impose in the country. In addition, he removed maybe the most popular minister, Nikola Grabovac, for principled reasons,

under a functional responsibility thereby pushing pensioners into the group of (election) abstinentes. And now he is removing Munir Munja Alibabic also for principled reasons, but without convincing arguments. He is therefore suspect of working for 'Serb thing'. And Mirko Sarovic in his mandate became the BiH president. I do not believe that Mr. Ashdown came to this tortured country with bad intentions. But his start is not promising. The journalists apart from those serving him in a way have not accepted him as a well-intentioned person. And this is a reason for him to think about everything and raise a question to himself: Where did I make a mistake?", Mirko Sagolj wrote in Oslobodjenje In Focus column.

Slavo Kukic in his editorial in **Dnevni List** (page 4) writes about current activities of High Representative **Paddy Ashdown**, with regard to installment of PDV (VAT), which, in Kukic's opinion, is not suitable for Ivanic and others in the RS. Kukic says that the RS will become, what it should really be, a region of BiH. Saying that Ashdown was very determinant in removing former Federation Minister of Finances Nikola Grabovac for moral responsibility, and also Munir Alibabic from FOSS, in spite of 'job well done', Kukic adds that if he wanted to keep principled attitude, Paddy Ashdown should have been more determinant in ORAO affair as well. There is at least moral responsibility of political pinnacle in the RS, i.e. **Mladen Ivanic** and **Mirko Sarovic**, but "Ashdown is pleased with requesting detailed investigation". Kukic adds: "I don't believe that Ashdown has some devil plans (...) I also don't believe that he is protecting war criminals (...) but right to suspicion becomes more and more legitimate".

*"Statement of Head of UN Mission in BiH, **Jacques P. Klein**, that mujahadeens should remain in BiH, is an indirect anti-American stand, with regard to this issue, and practically support to position of EU members, where High Representative Paddy Ashdown also stands. High Representative is most likely*

*making compromise about remain of mujahadeens with SDA party. Such claims are going so far, to say that **Paddy Ashdown** is ready to offer stay of mujahadeens in return for obedience of Bosniak side in implementation of reforms”, says the editorial titled “Do we need mujahadeens?”, by Miso Relota in **Dnevni List** (page 6).*

Orao affair

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, said in Banja Luka on Monday that the investigation into the Orao affair would have to be full and comprehensive and conducted with the assistance of the BiH state authorities and the international community. The first preliminary results are expected to be announced in a month and those responsible will have to face consequences. (Oslobodjenje, p 4, 5, Dnevni Avaz, front page: “First results of the Orao investigation to be announced in a month”, p 3, Nezavisne Novine, p 2, Glas Srpski, p 2, Fena, Srna, Vecernje Novostip 5, Blicp 7, FRY Nacional p 7)

Vecernji List (page 2, by G. Knezovic, title: “*I will face culprits with responsibility*”) carries an article on the **Orao affair**. The article says that the RS officials did not only violate the UN embargo against Iraq but also provisions of the Dayton Constitution of BiH on competence of the state in foreign trade. VL quotes **Donald Hays**, the Principle Deputy High Representative, as saying that the information about the illegal trade of Orao with Iraq were revealed abroad. In addition this article carries that **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, demanded that the RS officials determine the real truth about the Orao affair and concrete individual responsibility of all subjects. The HR stated: “*If the persons involved in the affair do not take over the responsibility, then the RS officials and institutions have to ensure it, and if they also do not do it, I will use my authorities to face them with the responsibility.*”

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic told a news conference in Banja Luka on Monday that the RS delegation indeed was in

Burma on a business trip. He said that when they found out that Burma is under unilateral embargo the whole visit was halted. He also said that SFOR was informed about this. He said that everything indicates that a certain number of companies from the BiH Federation were in violation of the UN embargo on weapons export. *"I think that it will very interesting to see the reactions once the information about this are disclosed"*, said Ivanic, and added that the RS should not use it as an excuse not to resolve the **Orao affair**. The Prime Minister said he intended to enable the international institutions to find the truth in the Orao affair, because there is no way you can hide the truth. He said he never saw the contract signed between the Orao Aviation Institute and RS Government, adding that he was told that the contract does exist and was signed on October 26th 2000. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Oslobodjenje**, p 8, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Vecernje Novosti** p 5, **Blic** p 7, **Nacional** p 7)

As for **NHI Chairman Kresimir Zubak** said he expected that a far larger number of people would be held responsible for the **Orao affair**. He said if that does not happen he will insist that the High Representative apply the same criteria that he applied on other affairs that he resolved. He said it is necessary to establish whether some companies from the BiH Federation, which deal with arms production, violated the UN embargo on export of weapons to Iraq. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 5)

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 14, by Dino Mikulandra) carries an editorial dealing with the Orao affair. The author refers to the report on the Orao affair made by Stratfor, which is the one of leading American institutes for examining and creating of a global public opinion. The editorial says that *"according to the Stratfor report, a compete turnaround of the American politics towards BiH might be expected soon, which will not only destroy Pale as a heart of the RS, but which will affect the U.S. position on Bosnian Muslims the most"*.

Federation developments

As a response to the announced closure of the gas stations, the BiH Federation Government on Monday reduced tax on oil sale from 20 to 12% thereby determining the new retail oil prices that will be the lowest in BiH. The temporary decision meant as a counter-measure followed similar decisions made by the Governments of the RS and Brcko District made without prior consultations with the authorized Federation authorities. (Oslobodjenje, front page, p 6, Dnevni Avaz, front page, p 2, Nezavisne Novine, p 3)

The International Police (IPTF) de-certified (refused to issue licenses) to 72 policemen in the Sarajevo Canton, including 22 members of the special police forces unit. Out of these 22 special police officers, 19 participated in an action against organized crime in the Zujevina restaurant in August 1999. Two of them are currently representing the country in a special policemen competition in the United States. These elite policemen have allegedly maltreated and beaten up apprehended persons thereby abusing their fundamental human rights. Himzo Selimovic, the Sarajevo Police Commissioner, did not want to comment on the matter. He only confirmed that the IPTF would officially deliver solutions to the dismissed policemen in seven days adding that they would then have a right to lodge complaints. (Oslobodjenje, front page, pages 4-5)

War crimes, related news

Dnevni List (front and page 5, title "Croatian Government is satisfied with the decision of ICTY in Blaskic case"), **Vecernji List** (front and pages 3,11, title "ICTY Prosecution: We are studying proposals of the Appellate council"), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (front and page 3, title "New trial for Tihomir Blaskic"), **Vjesnik** (page 2, title "Blaskic case: discussion about new process on November 21") and **Jutarnji List** (front and page 3, title "New trial for Blaskic") carry reports on decision of Appellate Council of ICTY to re-examine new evidences in case against **Tihomir Blaskic**, who was indicted for war crimes, including massacre in village Ahmici, near Vitez, on April 16, 1993. All papers say that new evidences

are present thanks to Croatian Government, that gave materials from archives of Croatian intelligence, Croatian President **Stjepan Mesic**, that gave documentation from archives of late President Tudjman, and activities of investigators of ICTY, that have found some materials in archives of Army BiH. All papers say that this is a big turnover in "Blaskic case" and speculate that after discussion on November 21, Blaskic could face a new trial.

Ivica Glibusic in his editorial in **Dnevni List** (page 2) raises question *"of responsibility of persons in Zagreb, Sarajevo and Mostar, that have known about the documentation that is serving as new evidences in 'Blaskic case' but they have not presented it to Prosecution nor to Blaskic's defence. Because of such omissions, Blaskic could have stayed lifetime victim of backstage games of Sarajevo, Mostar and Zagreb. (...) Individuals should be taken responsible for conspiracy that was framed in 'Blaskic case'"*, Glibusic wrote. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 7, also reports on the issue)

Vecernji List (page 3, by Zdenko Jurilj) carries that on September 12, 2002, the RS Government sent to The Hague new bills of indictment against high-ranked Commanders of HVO, HV (Croatian Army) and BiH Army, who are suspected of preparing, planning and ordering the military-police action 'Oluja' ("Storm") in order to occupy the western part of the RS. **Alija Izetbegovic, Rasim Delic, Atif Dudakovic, Tihomir Blaskic** and **Zeljko Glasnovic** are also among the suspects.

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Marko Markovic) carries that **Sulejman Tihic**, a Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, proclaimed tens of Croats from Bugojno terrorists during 1993 and 1994, when Tihic was working for the BiH Embassy in Germany. This conclusion was made on the ground of the decision by which Tihic refused to issue traveling documents to many HVO members and persons, who were imprisoned in the prison camps controlled by the BiH Army, and who came to Germany afterwards.

BiH-related news

BiH Presidency members met yesterday with the head of the **IMF Mission to BiH, Peter Doyle**. Doyle said that the IMF is very interested in introduction of **VAT** at the BiH level, adding that such long-term project requires serious preparations and political will. IMF assesses that it takes at least two to three years to get the VAT introduced at the state level. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 4, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Oslobodjenje**, p 10, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Blic**, p 7)

Nezavisne Novine, p 7, quotes **RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic** as saying that revenue collection from the value added tax (**VAT**) will not be included in the RS budget for the next year. The RS Prime Minister told yesterday a news conference that VAT item will not be included in the 2003 budget and that the current tax system will continue to exist. *"It takes at least two years to get the VAT system introduced, because it is a very complicated process"*, said Ivanic. The High Representative proposed introduction of the VAT system at the state level within the reforms envisaged by the High Representative. (FRY **Nacional** p 11, **Blic** p 7)

FRY challenged Monday the jurisdiction of the Hague-based **International Court of Justice** (ICJ) to decide a charge brought by **BiH** of alleged genocide during the 1992-95 war.

The first day of the hearings expected to last one week, Yugoslavia's advocate, **Tibor Varady**, argued before a 13-judge panel that Yugoslavia was not a member of the United Nations at the time of the suit (22 March 1993), nor was it a party to the Genocide Convention. Varady noted that Yugoslavia became a UN member only in the autumn of 2000 and that it signed the Genocide Convention in 2001, which warrants a revision of the 1996 judgment when the ICJ proclaimed it had jurisdiction over the suit. Phon van den Biesen, the Dutch lawyer who represents BiH, cited the Yugoslav government's letter to the United Nations in April 1992 pledging to strictly abide by all international commitments of the former Yugoslavia, arguing that this means that the ICJ does have jurisdiction over the

case. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7, mentioned on the front page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 7, **Vecernje Novosti**, p 2, carried just Varady's statement)

Alibabic's removal

Vecernji List (page 15, by Dejan Jazvic) carries an article regarding the accusations that **Munir Alibabic Munja**, a removed Head of the Federation Intelligence Service (FOSS) addressed at **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative. VL says: *"Although these are the most serious accusations that someone has addressed at the High Representative so far, none from the domestic politicians decided to make a public stand on this issue. The reason for it lies in the fact that Ashdown has a crucial role in the constituting of the executive authority and none wants that the HR becomes an enemy to that politician or his party due to some hasty statement."* VL also says that it is interesting that BiH politicians, who were openly attacking or defending Alibabic before the HR removed him, do no comment on Alibabic's claims. VL adds: *"This especially refers to **Zlatko Lagumdzija**, the BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, who according to well-informed ones, was the biggest political protector of a controversial agent Munir Alibabic."*

Jutranji List (page 8, by Snjezana Pavic, "English Intelligence agents make colony of BiH") carries an interview with **Munir Alibabic Munja**, a removed Head of the Federation Intelligence Service (FOSS). In this interview Alibabic is accusing **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative, that he was making deals with **Alija Izetbegovic** and **Haris Silajdzic**. Alibabic says that *"he himself was planning to resign because he does not want to cooperate with SDA, however, the HR got the start of him in an inconsiderate and impudent way"*. According to Alibabic, *"the cause of his removal is the HR' deal with Izetbegovic, and the reason for it are the FOSS information about Karadzic's movement, about a raid of secret Intelligence Services from Yugoslavia on the BiH territory and an attempt of the English Intelligence Services to turn BiH into their colony"*. Alibabic says that *"the HR does a favor to Izetbegovic because the HR cannot make the authority that he*

wants without the SDA consent". Alibabic also says that "the HR makes moves that lead towards the BiH division and for this reason the HR supports national parties, that will implement this division". Asked whether **Carla del Ponte**, the Chief Hague Prosecutor, demanded his removal because Alibabic wanted to have control over the Croat investigations on the war crimes also, Alibabic says that this information is not truth and that FOSS is organized in a way that it has one Department, that deals with the war crimes, which is divided in three parts, the Bosniak, Croat and Serb respectively.

Post-election coalitions

Dnevni List (page 3, by D.L.) carries editorial in which the author says that nobody knows who will be in new authorities in BiH. Saying that western diplomats do not hide their surprise and disappointment with results of recent elections, and that none of them congratulated to 'national' parties, the author emphasises the fact that US Ambassador **Clifford Bond** stated openly that his Government will not co-operate with BiH authorities which are composed out of 'national' parties. However, the daily says that there are speculations which say that leaders of the RS will not be removed due to "Orao" affair, i.e. that, for example, **Mirko Sarovic** will remain member of BiH Presidency, and be "blackmailed" from the International Community to break the resistance in the RS.

NHI Chairman Kresimir Zubak said on Monday that the representatives of the PDP, SNSD, SBiH, NHI, SDP and Working for Prosperity Party were to meet last night in Banja Luka to discuss possibilities of forming coalitions at the entity and state levels. He said that the last night's meeting of moderate parties is only a continuation of the talks, which took place last week in Sarajevo. According to him, the NHI will form coalition with the parties, which wish to implement political reforms that will enable BiH to join Europe. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4). **RTRS** reported on the same issue last night and quotes SDP Chairman **Zlatko Lagumdzija** as saying that he wants to make a deal with

moderate parties whether they will all become opposition parties or form a coalition. He said he is open for any agreement with these parties, which is more than he can say for SDS, SDA and HDZ.

Oslobodjenje learns (front page) that the President of the Party for BiH, **Safet Halilovic**, had during an informal meeting in Sarajevo on Sunday offered the SDP leader, **Zlatko Lagumdzija**, to form a coalition at the level of the Federation. Halilovic, however, said that such the coalition was possible only with the participation of SDA. Lagumdzija rejected the offer, according to the newspaper.

"The support provided by the international community to the national(istic) political parties in the recent elections in BiH showed that the international community was actually working to politically eliminate SDP BiH as the only party, which the country had the future with," said **Ivo Komsic**, a member of the SDP Presidency at Monday's roundtable on the "Current Political Situation in BiH and the Perspectives," organized in Sarajevo by the BiH Forum of Democratic Alternative. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4)

SRS Chairman Ognjen Tadic said on Monday in Banja Luka that SRS would continue to work as an opposition party no matter which parties form the government. He said that at the SRS HQ session, which took place in Belgrade last weekend, the SRS top leadership supported Ognjen Tadic and Mirko Blagojevic, the SRS faction, which does not want to form the government with SDS. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Glas Srpski**, p 2, **Blic** p 2, **Vecernje Novosti** p 13)

RS-related items

Glas Srpski reports (p 5) that the letter, which the OHR distributed along with video tapes and other material for the education campaign to radio stations in BiH, states that the education campaign titled "All for school, school for all" as well as all the video clips will be run on Bosnian-Serb and

Croatian languages. Glas Srpski states that the **RS linguists and language experts** were stunned with a new language called Bosnian-Serb language. The paper reports that there is a large number of people who bring the name of this new language in connection with the High Representative's statement on Bosnian nation in May this year.

Nezavisne Novine reports (p 8) that minority share holders of the **Kristal Banka** AD Banja Luka on Monday filed criminal reports against RS prime Minister **Mladen Ivanic** and former RS Finance Minister **Milenko Vracar**. They also filed criminal report against Miodrag Beric, the Head of the Unit for privatisation of the state capital in RS banks, Slavica Milikic, the General Manager of the Kristal banka AD Banja Luka and the General Manager of the Hypo Alpe Adria Bank AG from Klagenfurt for misuse of office.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Discussion on jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in Den Haag over the accusation of BiH versus FRY commenced today
- There are evidences on broader co-operation regarding the export of weapons to Iraq from both BiH entities
- Lower prices of oil derivates in FBiH starting midnight

FTV 1 (1930)

- Representative of Yugoslavia before the International Court of Justice admitted offering BiH settlement for withdrawing of the complaint
- US Group Stratfor claims that FBiH have been arranging export of weapons to Iraq
- Petrol in Federation cheaper for 25-30 phenings

RTRS (1930)

- Tax on added value on the BiH level is done deal for Ashdown. For RS Government is still unacceptable