

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 5/1/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Srebrenica case	CoM session	Elections in Georgia	BL Clinical Centre
FBiH HoR in session	BiH Development strategy	OHR on priorities	Pensions on Monday
New ICTY interviews	Elections in Georgia	Strike in USK	Public kitchen opened
World News	Plane crash in Egypt		Cutbacks in DPs Ministry

Oslobodjenje	Lawyers team representing Srebrenica people announces: Talks or Hague's lawsuit against Netherlands; ICG report for Mostar: City's administration under veil of secrecy; Dragan Kalinic: I don't know where is Karadzic; Mirza Hajric: BiH is good region for investment
Dnevni Avaz	Tihic on reforms and inequality of Bosniaks: I expect Ashdown to respect justified objections
Dnevni List	Guardians and self-proclaimed experts will have to be held accountable; Lack of responsibility for return of Croats to Republika Srpska; Barisa Colak: Restructuring of Mostar must not be isolated example
Vecernji List	Ljubo Beslic: Ashdown's proposal unjust towards Croats; Neum fears the Klek-Peljesac bridge
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines

Glas Srpske	How to help the family of Tomislav Trifunovic: The family of three orphans
Nezavisne Novine	Former Commander of BH Army is a candidate for state function: SDA proposes Rasim Delic as BiH Defence Minister; Julian Braithwaite: Politicians will be penalised over delay in reforms
Blic	Pensions today, 6% percent rise: Payment until [Orthodox] Christmas

War crimes

<p>Srebrenica families to file lawsuit against Dutch Government?</p>	<p>RHB, FTV, Oslobodjenje cover splash, pgs 4&5 'Talks, or the Hague's lawsuit against Netherlands', Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'Unless Dutch Government is ready to negotiate, lawsuit to the Court in the Hague will follow', Vecernji List pg 3 'Either talks or "mass-scale lawsuit', Dnevni List pg 4 'Mass lawsuit by 8000 Srebrenica people against the Netherlands' -"If Holland fails to express readiness for open talks by February or March, we will immediately raise charges against this country before the court in The Hague, and if it shows good will, submitting of the lawsuit will be prolonged for as long as necessary for reaching an agreement." – stated for Fena news Agency Semir Guzin, a member of an international team of attorneys hired by and representing about 8000 people from the families of victims in Srebrenica to realize their rights for material compensation. He added that the team attempts to contact the Dutch Government with the aim of avoiding a court procedure. The lawyers' team of comprises of Mostar, Dutch and American lawyers who hold Netherlands responsible for violating the international-legal obligation, failure to implement the mandate defined by the UN Security Council resolutions, and issuing of orders that had not been in line with implementing the mandate. Lawyers declare that the survivors of genocide in Srebrenica should be paid the total of one billion dollars for compensation, which would be divided between all 8000 people. The attorneys also intend to include the UN, as the one of the co-responsible entities for the Srebrenica crime, in eventual talks with the Dutch side. The lawsuit of 8000 Srebrenica citizens against Netherlands would be the second case of "mass lawsuit" in the history of European judiciary, following 8 years long negotiations in the case of Jews against France, Germany and Austria after WWII.</p>
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<p>Kalinic denies he is familiar with Karadzic's whereabouts</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje cover, pg 3 'I don't know where is Karadzic', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Kalinic claims he doesn't know where Karadzic is hiding', Vecernji List pg 2 'Kalinic does not know where Karadzic is', Dnevni List pg 10 'He who destroys SDS does the same to the RS', Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Dark ways swallowed US \$ 5.5 billion', Glas Srpske pg 3 'I do not know where Karadzic is!', Onasa – The Speaker of the RS National Assembly Dragan Kalinic denied that he knew where former leader of Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadzic, was hiding. He said that this could be easily checked, as all politicians in RS were monitored by the intelligence services: "I reject any kind of suspicion of by anybody, including Ms Carla Del Ponte," – stated Kalinic in an interview to Belgrade based newspapers Vesti. RSNA Speaker concluded that RS proved its commitment to fulfilling its international obligations by adopting the Law on Cooperation with ICTY.</p>
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Political issues

<p>OHR on priorities for 2004</p>	<p>FTV by <u>Spomenka Ljubic</u> – As it has been already announced, the OHR starts the new year working with three priorities: reforms in security sector and judiciary, and seeking the solution for Mostar. OHR spokesperson Kevin Sullivan stressed that there has already been some improvement in regarding these, however he added that such process has to continue as soon as possible in order to achieve success. “There is no time to waste. We cannot waste a week, or even a day. This is a process that we need to start at the very beginning of this year, so we can see its end very soon. It’s because the BiH is in a race for establishing the necessary institutions and accomplish the goals before the deadlines,” stressed Sullivan. On the Mostar issue, Sullivan added: “As soon as the drafts are completed and adopted, the citizens of Mostar will be able to enjoy the welfare of normal administration. As soon as the city starts to function normally, the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton will enjoy economic benefit of it as well.” Asked about the deadlines for accomplishing these goals, Sullivan did not mention particular dates: “The High Representative will talk about the details of the process continuation. But what we have to keep on mind is: the sooner – the better, not only when it comes to these priorities, but talking about the reforms’ implementation in general.”</p>
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<p>Comments on OHR-set priorities for 2004</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'The most important is to implement constitutional amendments on constituency of peoples' –</p> <p>Following the announcement from OHR on security, judiciary and Mostar issue being priorities for 2004, DA article reads that leaders of BiH ruling parties in principle agreed with the High Representative Paddy Ashdown. SDA Vice-President Elmir Jahic commented that the top priority should be implementation of the constitutional amendments regarding the constituency of peoples, adding that next important thing is the self-sustainable return: "In addition, it is of particular importance that everything adopted by the executive authorities is implemented, that is that the politicians who obstruct, for instance, implementation of the decision by BiH Constitutional Court, are sanctioned." The president of the Party for BiH Safet Halilovic underlined the importance of economic reforms in addition to ones outlined by the OHR, and stressed that the high education reform must not be forgotten either. SDU President Miro Lazovic said that OHR's priorities 'will be crucial for BiH' only under certain conditions: "That will happen only if security reform leads to arrest of Radovan Karadzic, and judiciary reforms to full appliance of the constitutional amendments regarding the equality of all peoples in that sector." BOSS leader Mirnes Ajanovic shares Lazovic's opinion.</p>
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**NN interview
with Julian
Braithwaite [on
reforms and
priorities]**

Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 4 'Politicians will be penalised over delay in reforms' – In an interview carried by NN, the OHR Chief Spokesperson, Julian Braithwaite, says that the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, will not impose decisions, which would ensure BiH meets pre-requisites necessary for negotiations on accession and stabilisation agreement. Instead, local politicians should do that, according to Braithwaite. He further stresses the importance of three priority tasks in 2004 set by HiRep (reforms of judiciary, intelligence agency and Mostar restructuring). He also says that HiRep will demand from local authorities to strengthen the work of state police, meaning that State Information and Protection Agency transfers into State Investigation and Protection Agency with police authorities as soon as possible. On judicial reform, Braithwaite says that entity and state HJPC's should unify by March or April this year at latest. On Mostar issue, OHR Chief Spokesperson says that on Friday, HiRep will present the report of the Commission led by Norbert Winterstein. On this report, he expresses belief it represents a good foundation and starting point.

**Mostar issue
update**

Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Norbert Winterstein's proposal not satisfactory for either SDA or HDZ' – Article reads that the High Rep announcement of Mostar issue being a priority for the very beginning of 2004 has raised new 'political dilemmas' in the city. SDA representative in the Mostar Commission Fatima Leho stated that her party will not give up on its proposal for Mostar to be structured as a single city with 6 municipalities. HDZ is also dissatisfied with 'the fact that High Representative will probably impose the proposal of Norbert Winterstein on Mostar structure'. HDZ Rep Josip Merdzo said that such attitude would mean new blockade for Mostar. Representative of the Party for BiH Safet Omerovic says that Winterstein's proposal was close to theirs, but added that few things should be reworked. This opinion is also shared by the SDU member Goran Crnogorac.

Dnevni Avaz pg 5, inset 'SDA was never in favour of divided Mostar' – Asked to comment criticism against SDA stand on Mostar, BH Presidency Member Sulejman Tihic answered: "SDA was never in favour of divided Mostar. SDA will accept all solutions which are in direction of the single city, but it will not accept the solutions of Mostar being Croat city, the solution [which would] legalize ethnic cleansing."

Vecernji List front splash 'Ashdown's proposal unjust towards Croats', pg 5 'Ashdown's proposal on Mostar unjust towards Croats' by Zoran Kresic – Commenting the journalist statement that Bosniaks would in the future City Council of Mostar have more councilors than Croat, the Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Ljubo Beslic, notes that the figures are right saying the proposal that the Chairman of Mostar Commission, Norbert Winterstein, prepared was unacceptable. In that context, Beslic says it is unacceptable that a Bosniak vote is worth more than a Croat vote and that eventually, the people in minority with less votes has more councilors.

Dnevni List front, pg 2 'Restructuring of Mostar must not be isolated example' by Miso Relota – Alike Deputy Mayor Beslic, the President of HDZ BiH, Barisa Colak, is unhappy with the proposal regarding the electoral system.

<p>ICG's recommendations for Mostar issue</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje cover, pg 5 'City's Administration under the veil of secrecy' – The International Crisis Group in its final report for 2003 outlines a series of recommendations for Mostar City issue. In its recommendation directed at the High Representative Paddy Ashdown, ICG proposes him to make temporary decision banning municipality officials to issue construction licences or any other decisions in regard to using public construction land. Report further reads that it was necessary to appoint auditors who would monitor and control the public spending in the city and municipalities in upcoming period. In addition to advising abolishment of existing municipalities as the units of local self-rule with separate budgets, ICG also addressed to the members of the Mostar Commission, who are expected to hold another session together with the High Representative, suggesting them to treat all the disputable issues, such as budget and elections, as the issue of vital national interests which would require two-thirds support from each of caucuses for its adoption. At the end, ICG concludes that it was hard to obtain information on the work of the City Administration.</p>
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<p>CoM, FBiH Parliament to hold sessions</p>	<p>BHTV 1 – The BiH Council of Ministers will hold its first session in 2004 on Monday, at which they will discuss a draft budget for the state institutions and the draft law on fulfilling international obligations in 2004. As for the RS Government, it is scheduled to hold the session also on Monday and discuss the working plans of entity's Ministries.</p> <p>FTV, RHB – The pensions will be the main topic at the session of the FBiH Parliament on Monday. The representatives will be discussing the temporary financing of FBiH budget for the next few months. It is planned for the half of the overdue pension and disability allowance to be included in the budget. Oslobodjenje also reports on this.</p> <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Decision on financing FBiH and equality of Bosniaks in authorities before delegates' – Chief of SDA caucus in FBiH HoR Semsudin Mehmedovic stated for DA that intense discussion is also expected to be lead on the issue of equality of Bosniaks in authorities' institutions: "Following the initiative of our and BOSS caucus of delegates, agenda also included the issue of inequality of Bosniaks in authorities, with an accent to judiciary, security and defence."</p>
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**DA interview
with Tihic**

Dnevni Avaz cover splash 'I expect Ashdown to respect our justified objections', pg 5 'I believe that Ashdown will respect our justified objections' by Edina Sarac –

In an interview to DA, member of BiH Presidency Sulejman Tihic support the reforms announced by the Paddy Ashdown be priorities for 2004. "However, I also expect the High Representative to respect justified objections by a half of delegates of the state Parliament, 70% of the FBiH Parliament and almost all political parties, except SDP, when it comes to inequality of Bosniaks especially in judiciary and security." – said Tihic stressing that the objections did not come only from SDA. "You see, at the scene we have arrogant attitude towards these objections and a trial to treat them as the stand of a single party, SDA, and a trial to show that SDA is trying to influence the work of these institutions. We rejects something like that, as it is not truth." – said Tihic. Presidency member also mentioned the case of FOSS, where he refused to name the persons which prevent appointment of Bosniak Director of FOSS, but also expressed his belief that the situation will change soon "as Ashdown wishes well to BiH and its citizens so he will respect these justified objections." Commenting the OHR's mark that all objections regarding the appointments of judges and prosecutors should be addressed to the BiH Constitutional Court, Tihic said: "Those are stories for little children. Every lawyer knows well that you cannot submit appeal to BiH Constitutional Court when it comes to individual decisions on appointment, knowing again how fast is Constitutional Court it would be impossible to have the turn within two years." Tihic concluded that it was logical for state Defence Minister to be Bosniak, as entities' are a Croat and a Serb.

<p>Humphreys on SAA</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg 6 'Domestic authorities are for IC too slow in taking decisions' – The Head of EC delegation in BiH, Michael Humphreys, stated that the Stabilization and Association Agreement on BiH joining the EU could take effect in late 2007 the earliest. Humphreys notes that the very talks could begin in early 2005 and would last at least one year, which could end up in signing of the SAA in early 2006, and after that the SAA would have to be ratified by all the EU institutions and member countries, which takes extra two years. Furthermore, DL reports that Humphreys agreed with opinion that the IC sometimes did not have the patience to let domestic authorities take decisions, pointing out it was not because the lack of trust but in most cases because of certain deadlines.</p>
<p>Kalinic: SDS is unified!</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Dark ways swallowed US \$ 5.5 billion' – SDS President Dragan Kalinic stated to Serbian media that the top of SDS is unified, stressing that "a person who succeeds in destroying SDS would have destroyed the Republika Srpska as well". Responding to press question where were US\$ 5.5 billion invested by international community in BiH in the last seven years, Kalinic expressed suspicion that investigation on this has ever been conducted, noting that "many dark ways may have swallowed these money, including both local and international long fingers".</p>
<p>DL: Mikerevic on RS holidays</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg 10 'Law on Saints' Days and Holidays outdated' – Commenting that BiH is unique when it comes to the number of holidays as well as the fact that there is still no Law on State Holidays, DL carries the Republika Srpska Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic as saying that the Law on Saints' Days and Holidays is outdated and that, for the sake of foreign investments, political consensus on this Law must be reached.</p>

<p>DL says 2004 off with a bad start</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg 2 'Bad start of new year' by <u>Jurislav Petrovic</u> – Author argues that 2003 will not be remembered as one of successful years having in mind events surrounding the construction of corridor Vc, the third GSM licence, removals in steering and supervisory boards of public companies and finally, everything surrounding the "Aluminij". Regarding the start of new year, Petrovic says: "The very fact that the new year starts with decrees of the High Representative does not say anything good. We will probably in the next year watch the High Representative fixing mistakes of our politicians and it goes on and on".</p>
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<p>Economic and social issues</p>	
<p>Advisory Board for Strategy for the Development of Information Society in BiH in session</p>	<p>BHTV 1, FTV, Oslobođenje pg 4 'BiH will adopt the Development Strategy for Information Society', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Strategy for BiH development as the Information Society' – The Chairman of the Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic scheduled a meeting of the Advisory Board to discuss the Strategy for the Development of the Information Society in BiH. The document will be a framework for issuing other laws, regulations and acts at the level of BiH State and its entities aimed at ensuring the development of BiH as an information society. The Board comprises of Adnan Terzic, FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic, RS Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic, state and entity Ministers of Communications Branko Dokic, Nedžad Brankovic and Dragan Solaja, Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays, UNDP official Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, Norwegian Ambassador to BiH Henrik Ofstadt and a representative of the Norwegian Agency for International Development Jon Hanssen.</p>

**Third GSM
licence
update**

Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'HT Mostar did not give up on the licence for GSM operator' – The President of the HT Mostar board Stipe Prlic stated for DA that this company did not give up on the third GSM licence for BiH, and that it would do everything to become another GSM operator in the country. "We have submitted the request for the third GSM licence twice, as we do not want to give up on the mobile telephony. True, if we would get this licence, we would be behind other operators, as they did much more in development in this period while we did not have a mobile telephony system." – said Prlic adding that it would be the same if Eronet would be given a licence, and meanwhile HT Mostar would return its shares in that company.

Dnevni List pg 4 'CRA chooses between Eronet and HT Mostar' – In light of upcoming decision by the Communications Regulatory Agency on third GSM licence in the second part of January DL claims that HT Mostar is closer to getting the licence because it is a company in which the State has the majority stake, and on top of that HT Mostar claims 51% of shares in Eronet. According to DL, the likely scenario is that HT Mostar gets the licence and transfers it, for a certain fee, to Eronet, or that Eronet be returned to HT Mostar's ownership and gets the licence.

Vecernji List pg 4 'Robinson worried about lawyer' by Zoran Kresic – Amid the process of awarding of 3rd GSM licence, "Eronet" and "HT Mostar" are in the middle of legal battle for the ownership of Eronet's shares. VL says the legal proceedings are marked with a scandal because the HT Mostar's legal representative is a lawyer Plamenko Custovic, who is also a member of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council, which decides on appointments of judges. The Provisional Administrator of Hercegovacka bank, one of shareholders in Eronet, Toby Robinson, says the competent institutions will be asked to declare themselves on conflict of interest in Custovic case.

<p>Hadzipasic on HR decision on Industrial Electricity Tariffs</p>	<p>Dnevni List front splash, pg 7 'Guardians and self-proclaimed experts will have to be held accountable' by <u>Miso Relota</u> – Asked to comment on the High Representative's Decision regarding the supply of electricity to "Aluminij", the FBiH Prime Minister, Ahmet Hadzipasic, says the solutions the HR offered are solutions that the FBiH Government had been offering in the past month and a half.</p> <p>"But, unreasonable heads, petty politics and 'experts' led to situation that the IC intervenes and now they accept the IC's decision without objections, which is, to put it simply, beyond comprehension. Such a way of work and behaviour is exactly what draws us away from Europe and makes this Government inefficient (...) How can the 'experts' go before the miners and tell them that what they had advocated was unreasonable, will they compensate the 'damage' to them", says PM Hadzipasic.</p>
<p>IMF urges economic reforms</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Large apparatus of BiH Government stimulates grey economy' – The mission of the International Monetary Fund [IMF] sent to BiH authorities a large document on the priorities for 2004 and necessary economic reforms in upcoming period, underlying that this year will be crucial for the implementation of reforms in BiH. "The Government is too large, and that makes economic activities difficult. Large apparatus of BiH Government pushes private initiatives into grey economy by increasing tax fees, which would be decreased. We express our regret as the chance for this to be done this year is overshadowed by the decisions on spending." – reads IMF statement. Fund further urges adoption of the Indirect Taxation Agency, merging of customs and VAT introduction latest by 1 July 2005.</p>

<p>BHTV 1 feature on Development Strategy</p>	<p>BHTV 1 <u>by Gvozden Sarac</u> – Later this month, BiH Parliament will discuss the BiH Development Strategy, which outlines preconditions for the sustainable development of the country, poverty reduction, accomplishing of the conditions for admission to EU and more intensive inclusion in the world trade trends. Even though they have been active in drafting the Development Strategy, members of the Syndicates' Union are not satisfied with the privatisation solutions or social care programs. "The funds for social care for the people who will be losing their jobs in the reforms' implementation process are lacking. We should be able to provide at least a minimum for these people to survive the transition period," stressed Edhem Biber, the President of the BiH Independent Syndicates' Union. Member of the board working on the draft Strategy, Zeljko Papic, admits that the document has some deficiencies, but stressed that it represents a good ground for economic development. Professor at the Economy School within Banja Luka University, Slobodan Djordjic says that it would take 18 months to return to the situation in 1991 if BiH was to follow the Strategy. On the other hand, representatives of the BiH authorities have no doubt that the Strategy will give positive results very soon. "We are organizing a donor conference together with the World Bank, which should provide necessary support to our structural reforms," stressed the BiH Prime Minister Adnan Terzic.</p>
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<p>Hajric: BiH is good region for investments</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje cover 'BiH is a good region for investing', pg 6 ''Economist' recommended BiH as good region for investing' – The director of the Foreign Investments Promotions Agency, Mirza Hajric, stated that in the latest report by analytical company 'Economist' his agency received positive marks. "This Department [Economist] has recommended BiH as a very good region for investing. BiH is well ranked and it is in the same line with Turkey. I am sure that is continuation of what Bulldozer Commission started. If we practically apply some measures, we will be awarded with new investments, otherwise... we will be guilty."</p>
<p>Pensions in RS as of today</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 8 'December pensions as of today', Blic pg 13 'Pensions today, 6% increase' – Payments of pensions for December will start in RS on Monday. Head of RS Pension Fund Jovo Kosmajac has announced that these pensions were increase for 6% in comparison to the pensions for previous month. Kosmajac claims that all pensions, regardless to the high number of holiday days, will be paid before Orthodox Christmas, as well as the average pensions now amounts 160 KM.</p>

Media issues

<p>FTV feature on collection of subscription</p>	<p>FTV – BH Telecom and the HT Mostar have not yet made an agreement with the Public Broadcasting Service and the Federal Television on the collection of the TV subscription through telephone bills, which is claimed by FTV to ensure the financial stability of the broadcasters. Deadline for reaching the agreement was 31 December, and was met in RS in negotiations between Telekom Srpske and RTRS. Broadcasters submitted a letter to the FBiH Government demanding this issue to be discussed at its session to be held on Thursday, and to give Telecom operators an approval to reach the agreements. The chairman of the PBS Steering Board Plamenko Custovic stated: “The issue has been solved in the RS, and we expect it to be solved in the FBiH by the end of the week as well. The issue had to be completed by now; unfortunately, we will have to wait for little longer. But I do not doubt it will eventually be solved.”</p>
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