OHR BiH Media Round-up, 5/2/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
Meeting with EU Officials	ICTY News	ICTY News	New War Crime Cases
Tihci mets Solana	FBiH Govt reshuffle	Defence reforms	BiH Ministry of Defence
Defence Reform	Minister of Defence	Education reforms	Tihic meets Solana
False diplomas in HNC MoI	Cavic on RS interests	FBiH Govt reshuffle	Mtg Cavic – Hays

Oslobodjenje	SDA and HDZ delegates dismissing the Govt; Prlic, Petkovic, Praljak, Coric,… on the list; Ljiljana Zelen-Karadzic sued SFOR
Dnevni Avaz	BiH Interpol Leader arrested; Dismissal agreement rejected
Dnevni List	Locher: Appointment of defence minister a pre-requisite for entering Partnership for peace; Tomac open letter to Paddy Ashdown: Admit your mistake and propose new solution to Mostar
Vecernji List	Persons of the year in BiH selected; Gotovina of Rama sues SFOR in vain
Slobodna Dalmacija	Rojs: If they prove anything, let them lock me up for life
Glas Srpske	Will oil refinery become the strategic firm for BiH: Politics involved in oil issue; Banovici: Fire burst on Bajram

Nezavisne Novine	Beriz Belkic: Party for BiH will not support Government re-shuffle; Donald Hays: Drugs, arms and white slavery are trafficked in Republika Srpska; The Hague Tribunal: Momcilo Krajisnik pleaded not guilty
Blic	Dragan Marsicanin voted in for the President of the Assembly of Serbia: SPS gave crucial vote

Defence reforms

Paravac, Covic meet EU and NATO delegation	RHB, BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje pg 4 'Three priorities for Partnership', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'To fulfil three conditions for PfP', Vecernji List pg 2 'Brussels closer with 3 basic conditions', Dnevni List pg 2 'Army and Intelligence Services at first place', Dnevni List pg 5 'Presidency supports EU intention for defining of new mandate' – On Wednesday in Sarajevo, the chairman of the BiH Presidency Dragan Covic and a Serb member to the Presidency Borislav Paravac met EU and NATO delegation led by Deputy General Director for Political and Military Issues Pieter Feith. The delegation arrived in BiH on behalf of EU High Representative for Security and Foreign Policy Javier Solana. They discussed the transformation of the international forces in BiH, future status of BiH armed forces and the accession to the Partnership for Peace. The EU/NATO delegation stressed that BiH faces three key issues before joining Partnership for Peace: appointment of the state Defence Minister, arrest of the indicted war criminals and full functioning of the Security and Information Protection Agency [SIPA]. BiH Presidency members supported the intention of the EU to define a new mandate and transfer authority from SFOR to EU forces. They also stressed the need for a stronger participation of BiH representatives in the process of transferring the SFOR mission to the EU. Covic also assured officials that BiH would fulfil specified conditions regarding defence and that it would meet the deadlines, including appointment of the BiH Defence Minister by 15 February. Covic also stated that the issue of SIPA would be solved soon. FTV – Chairman Dragan Covic was very optimistic and said that deadlines will not be broken: "The agreement [regarding the appointment of BiH defence minister] was reached five or six days ago, [but] everyone avoids to say what we have agreed on. Meaning… some three options were created and we have agreed that each side should declare on the best modality and that is why I am optimist, I think that we are very close to an agreement. There is a readiness, even though some say that it should be a Serb representative, others that it should be Bosniak and third Croat – but the readiness form all three sides to accept other solutions exists. Now, it is the issue of certain [extend of] compromise, and we left seven days for ourselves for that agreement. When it comes to SIPA I think that is an issue we have to solve urgently, because we have been dragging it for five or six months and I see no reason for it not to be solved." RTRS – While Covic claims that agreement has already been reach, Chairman of the Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic stated that the "the number of Ministries shouldn't determine and restrict our agreements".

Tihic meets Solana who urges for defence reforms	BHTV 1, FTV, RHB, Oslobodjenje pg 10 'Arrest of criminals before SFOR's departure', Vecernji List pg 3 'Tihic and Solana on defense reform', Slobodna Dalmacija last pg 'Europe ready to help BiH', FENA – BiH Presidency member Sulejman Tihic discussed reform of the defence system in BiH with EU High Representative for Security and Foreign Policy Javier Solana in Brussels on Wednesday. Tihic told FENA after the talks that they also discussed the need for reorganising security services as soon as possible, and the possible replacement of SFOR by EU forces. Tihic and Solana agreed that BiH authorities need to participate in that process and that it would be good if indicted war criminals, especially Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, were arrested by that time. Discussing the fulfilment of the remaining 16 conditions from the Feasibility Study for starting talks on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, Tihic presented his thoughts on why this process is taking too long and what is holding it back. He stressed that FBiH institutions are prepared to transfer their authorities in all necessary sectors and that they can fulfill these measures. "The problem lies in passing specific reform measures and laws for transferring authorities from RS institutions", Tihic said. RTRS – Following the meeting with Solana, Sulejman Tihic stated: "We exchanged opinions regarding the replacement of SFOR with EU Military Forces. We wish BiH Authorities were actively involved in making decision on this. I think that EU Military Forces need to keep mandate of current SFOR." Dnevni Avaz cover 'Dismissal agreement deserted', pg 5 'Party for BiH deserted that plans on dismissal of Ahmet Hadzipasic' – Tihic said in an interview to DA: "We are afraid that someone from RS could slow down the defence reform. Looking at the national composition, it is very hard to accept that Foreign Minister and Defence Minister are from the same people" and stressed that the ethnicity is not the only important criteria in selection of the minister.

Hays meets Cavic, Kalinic	BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje pg 5 'Priorities are PfP and EU admission', Glas Srpske pg 3 'Much trouble on the path to Europe' – RS President Dragan Cavic – who on Wednesday met with Donald Hays, Principal Deputy High Representative, in Banja Luka – stated that the signing of the Agreement on Stabilization and Admission, as well as the membership to the Partnership for Peace, is in interest of RS, adding that the statements which claims that RS is an obstacle to those procedures can only make damage the entity. Cavic stressed that it was in RS interest to join Partnership for Peace, but admitted that it was very important for future organization of BiH when this and SAA would be signed. "If that Agreement is to be signed at the time of this constitutional structure of BiH, meaning with its entities, which is the only possibility, that will be a confirmation that values of Dayton's solutions are valid and long-term."- said Cavic. RTRS – "If we want to become independent, we must accept responsibility for processes that are very difficult and painful, but necessary. Delaying of those processes would mean delaying the agony and moving away from the road that all countries take in the region "- said Cavic. FTV – Hays also met with the RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic, who repeated that BiH Defence Minister should be a Serb. BHTV 1 – Dragan Kalinic thinks that agreement will be reached and that there will be no need for anybody outside to impose solution to this issue. "We haven't yet agreed whether [Minister] will be Bosniak or Serb. In that regard, our position is the same as said by President Cavic and myself yesterday during the negotiations"- said Kalinic. Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'We need minister which will get us close to PfP', Oslobodjenje pg 6 'Reforms must be implemented by the end of March', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Srpska meets its duties' – Dragan Cavic and RS NA Speaker Dragan Kalinic also met Chair of CoM Adnan Terzic to discuss the appointment of defence minister, and repeated their demands for the appointee to be a Serb and to fulfil all professional criteria.

Defence Reforms Commission held session	FTV, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Locher: Two important deadlines are before us', Dnevni List front splash, pg 5 'Appointment of defence minister a pre-requisite for entering Partnership for peace', Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'Defence reform by middle May', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Istanbul is the worst test' – Chairman of the Defense Reform Commission James Locher said that one of key tasks in field of the defense reform in BiH is appointment of the Defense Minister and his two deputies, then six high officers who will perform duties in the Joint Headquarters and Operative Command. Commission on Tuesday held its first meeting, after the High Representative Paddy Ashdown extended its mandate. DRC Chair stressed that the responsibility for reforms' implementation is with the Government and the Commission will only provide necessary assistance, with an aim for BiH becoming a member state of Partnership for Peace during the NATO Istanbul summit scheduled for June. Locher also said that the appointment of Defence Minister by 15 February will be a key test. According to FBiH Defence Minister Miroslav Nikolic, harmonization of the entities' laws with the law on BiH defence is one of the preconditions for BiH's appointment to the Partnership for Peace. RTSR – "One of the very important issues is to analyse current storage locations for weapons and ammunitions"- said Miroslav Nikolic. He stated that one team would inspect parallelism in FBiH Army. Commission also concluded that the annual budget for the state defence ministry should be 4.9 million KM. Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Deadline for Partnership for Peace by May' – Locher said that all deadlines must be met by the mid May, in order to allow time for NATO to analyse everything achieved.

FBiH Govt reshuffle	
Dzihanovic of Party for BiH rejects SDA initiative	Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Replacement of the Government would be absolutely contra-productive', Vecernji List pg 2 'Vice President of BiH against removal of Government', Dnevni List pg 3 'Destiny of FBIH Government is hands of Parliament', Slobodna Dalmacija pg 16 'Government remains after all', Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 3 'Party for BiH will not support Government re-shuffle'- FBiH Vice President Sahbaz Dzihanovic official rejected SDA initiative for dismissal of Federation Government, which was submitted to FBiH President Niko Lozancic and deputies. Due to such move, SDA will have to take the initiative before the FBiH parliament. BHTV 1 – Dzihanovic explained that he made such decision as he believes that the Government reshuffle at this time would be contra-productive and harmful for the reforms. "I have decided based on conscience and facts presented to me in favour of or against dismissal of the Government. At this time I really wouldn't like to prognosticate what will be reactions following this decision, but I would bring the same [decision] in any case as it is the statement of my full belief that at this time, the replacement of FBiH Government would be harmful for situation in both FBiH and BiH"- said Sahbaz Dzihanovic.

Reactions following Dzihanovic's rejection	FTV – Following the decision by Sahbaz Dzihanovic, FBiH President Niko Lozancic stated that thought that constitutional preconditions for the government's reconstruction through Federation leadership haven't been fulfilled at this time. Seada Palavric strongly criticised Dzihanovic's decision: "I think that this time Party for BiH has showed that they, in fact, are not a real party, that the things said today by President of the Party, are not relevant tomorrow and there is no support for other leaders. Until now, the only relevant thing for SBiH was to stay in Government." FTV speculates that it is unknown why did SBiH leader, Safet Halilovic, changed his mind regarding the dismissals, but according to its source, that was a decision of SBiH founder dr. Haris Silajdzic. Oslobodjenje cover splash, pg 7 'SDA and HDZ delegates dismissing FBiH Government' – Following rejection by the FBiH Vice President to support SDA initiative for dismissal of FBiH Govt, daily writes that it would now have to be discussed before the delegates of FBiH Parliament – where SDA it would be able to ensure majority votes without Party for BiH if it was supported by HDZ. However, article questions where the discussion on the initiative is even possible since the FBiH House of Peoples is not completed to date. FBiH Vice President Desnica Radivojevic stated that he was sure that SDA and HDZ together would be able to win majority votes in the parliament, while SDA official Mirsad Kebo confirmed that the party will have to re-examine its coalition relation with Party for BiH following Dzihanovic's action. Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 3 'Palavric: Betrayal of Party for BiH was expected' – Seada Palavric, SDA Vice President, said she was not surprised at all over refusal of Party for BiH to support Government re-shuffle in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She said: "Its was not a question whether they would betray us, but just when and where they would do it." Ivan Madunic, Head of HDZ Caucus at Federal Parliament, said that: "Party for BiH must be satisfied with the work of Federal Government or with the positions it assumes within its composition." BHTV 1 – "I am sorry that it is like this, because the procedure would be over much sooner. However, FBiH Constitution allows two options in order to reaplce the Government: first was this one – for the President and Vice- Presidents to make decision to replace the Government – and the second is for the Parliament, and its both Houses, to vote mistrust to the Government by simple majority. If this decision of Mr. Dzihanovic turns to be final we will approach to this second option"- said Seada Palavric, SDA Vice President. Dnevni List pg 3 'Destiny of FBIH Government is hands of Parliament' – Speaker of the FBiH House of Representatives, Muhamed Ibrahimovic, says he is not officially informed about Dzihanovic's decision adding that he will act accordingly should there be an initiative for removal of the Govt. "The initiative has to be launched by someone, be it by MPs or Caucuses. In order to have a vote of no confidence to the FBiH Government, there needs to be a simple majority in the FBiH Parliament", says Ibrahimovic. Oslobodjenje pg 7 'Replacement will last for months?' – Ibrahimovic explained the procedure in which FBiH Parliament would have to follow in case it was asked to bring decision regarding SDA initiative. Daily concludes that in the best case, FBiH HoR would take months to bring decision.

DA int with Tihic on Dzihanovic's decision	Dnevni Avaz cover 'Dismissal agreement deserted', pg 5 'Party for BiH deserted that plans on dismissal of Ahmet Hadzipasic' – In an interview to DA, BH Presidency member and SDA President Sulejman Tihic very strongly criticised refusal by the Party for BiH to accept its initiative for dismissal of FBiH Government: "Party for BiH has a right to be satisfied with its work in the Govt, perhaps as its ministries has secured a continuity in the last three governments – SDA, Alliance and than again SDA. After those three mandates, we have a very good chance to check the results, but it seems that for some it is more important to be on the power." Tihic also said that he respected PM Ahmet Hadzipasic very much, "more than Party for BiH does", but added that SDA Presidency concluded that he simply did not fulfil the obligations. He also denied media speculations that there is division inside the party regarding this initiative.
HDZ to redefine relations with Coalition partners	Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'HDZ wants partnership relations in the authorities' – Spokesperson for HDZ Pero Pavlovic stated to FENA news agency that his party wants to openly participates the authorities, but only as the member with equal rights. Answering the question as to what HDZ conclusion from its Presidency session was referring to when it said it would redefine its coalition relations, Pavlovic said that HDZ desires to be a true partner, to reach agreements with the parties on power. "We are witnesses that several times in its functioning, FBiH Government did not respect the fact that we are partners", said Pavlovic.

War crimes

Del Ponte on new indictments	RHB, RTRS, Vecernji List pg 16 ‘Another 8 to 9 new bills of indictment arrive to BiH’, Slobodna Dalmacija front, pg 16 ‘The ones responsible for crimes in Bugojno also in The Hague?’, Dnevni List pg 7 ‘New The Hague indictments’, Vjesnik pg 10 ‘Del Ponte announced new bills of indictment against Bosniaks and Croats from BiH’ – In an interview to FTV on Tuesday, Chief ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte announced that 8 or 9 new indictments against Bosniaks and Croats would be issued by the Hague Tribunal by the end of the year. She expressed hope that the handover of new defendants from BiH would pass without problems. She also sdai that Oslobodjenje cover, pg 3 ‘Petkovic, Praljak, Prlic, Coric and Stojic on the Hague list’ by D. Zadravec – Daily reads that 5 new indictees will be Croats, speculating that those will include: former Chief of HVO [Croat Defence Council] Main HQ, general Milivoj Petkovic; general Slobodan Praljak, also former Chief of HVO Main HQ; Jadranko Prlic, former Prime Minister of Herceg Bosna and BiH Foreign Minister; Valentin Coric, former Chief HVO Military Police; and Bruno Stojic, former Herceg Bosna defence minister. Zagreb based magazine Globus also claims that the indictment will include war crimes committed during Bosniak-Croat conflict, ethnic cleansing, and destruction of Stolac and Mostar. Vecernji List pg 4 ‘BiH Army Commander also on list’- VL speculates that when suspects from the line of the Bosniak people are in question, one of them was a high-ranked officer in the BiH Army Headquarters and he was the BiH Army Commander for some time. The other 3 or 4 Bosniak suspects are reportedly commanders responsible for crimes committed over Serbs in Sarajevo and Croats in central Bosnia and northern Herzegovina. VL says that the bills of indictment should arrive by June this year.

Krajisnik pleads not guilty before ICTY	RHB, BHTV 1, RTRS, FTV, Oslobodjenje pg 8 'I am innocent, truth will win', Dnevni Avaz pg 12 'Harmon: He knew about crimes and did nothing to prevent them', Dnevni List back pg 'I am innocent and when the truth wins, I will be free' – Former leader of Bosnian Serbs and Radovan Karadzic's close ally, Momcilo Krajisnik pleaded not guilty on all points of the indictment issued by the ICTY. Trial of Krajisnik before the Tribunal has continued on Wednesday. Krajisnik has been indicted for taking part in a Bosnian Serb campaign to drive Muslims and Croats from their homes in a wave of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia in a bid to carve out a unified Serb state during the collapse of multiethnic Yugoslavia. Krajisnik pleaded not guilty to eight counts of genocide, complicity in genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Oslobodjenje pg 10 'Soon end of Karadzic's escaping' – In an statement for British Guardian magazine, Chief ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte stated that Krajisnik should have been joined in the Tribunal by Radovan Karadzic. She also added it was a mistake that she did not insist for Biljana Plavsic to witness in Krajisnik's trail which would ease entire procedure. Guardian notes that this trial is one of the most important being held before the ICTY.
Ljiljana Karadzic sues SFOR	Oslobodjenje cover, pg 8 'Ljiljana Zelen-Karadzic sued SFOR troops' – Following the recent SFOR search of house in Pale owned by Karadzic family, the wife of war crimes suspect Ljiljana Zelen-Karadzic filed the charges against the SFOR troops to damaging her property. Charges were field with the Public Security Centre Srpsko Sarajevo.

Mikerevic: US demand RS to fully cooperate with ICTY	Nezavisne Novine pg 6 ‘USA demands from RS to improve co-operation with The Hague’ – RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, said that USA demands from RS to improve its co-operation with the Hague Tribunal, in order to neutralise any obstacle on the BiH path towards Partnership for Peace.

Other political issues

Ashdown to visit BL	Oslobodjenje pg 6 ‘EU demands must not be lost from sight’, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 ‘Ashdown will seriously warn RS leadership’, Nezavisne Novine pg 5 ‘Ashdown with Cavic and Djeric today’ – The High Representative Paddy Ashdown will visit Banja Luka today. During the talks with RS officials Ashdown will stress that BiH and its entities must not lose from sight the 16 conditions set by the EU in areas in which progress needs to be made by the end of June this year if BiH wishes to enter the next phase of integration processes. HR Ashdown will meet with RS President Dragan Cavic, RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic and RS Interior Minister Zoran Djeric. At the press conference held on Wednesday, Ljiljana Radetic, Spokesperson of OHR in Banjaluka, said that during his visit to BL “the High Representative will be underling that BiH and its Entities mustn’t loose sight of the 16 areas in which the EU signalled there had to be significant progress by the end of June if BiH is to be ready for the next stage of European integration. After Mostar the HR’s focus is moving to security and the rule of in BiH. Without the co-operation of the RS in these areas, the reforms will be stalled and BiH’s path to Europe blocked – that is why he is visiting the RS tomorrow, to warn the RS leadership not to veto this country’s future in Europe.” RTRS – Dragan Cavic announced that HR and himself would explain at the press conference what are obstructions towards the implementation of reforms and BiH’s road towards Europe posed by RS.

Cavic on Ashdown's remark that RS obstructs reforms	Slobodna Dalmacija pg 16 'Dangerous initiatives', Vecernje Novosti pg 6 'RS remains', Blic pg 13 'Cavic: Ashdown is confusing citizens' – "The High Representative is coming to see me on Thursday and because of this I do not wish to comment on his statement saying that the most of obstacles to reforms is coming from RS. I can only say that such assessments are very dangerous", RS President Dragan Cavic stated on Wednesday. After a meeting with PDHR Donald Hays, Cavic stated that "such statements were confusing citizens who must know that reforms were unavoidable because of European integrations". Nezavisne Novine pg 11 'Authority obstructs reforms' – The opposition parties in RS [Igor Radojicic from SNSD, Drago Kalabic from DNS, Slobodan Popovic from SDP of BiH] are of the view that by having stated that reforms in BiH proceed slowly, the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, has finally acknowledged that nationalistic parties do not have a capacity to carry out any serious task. On the other side, position parties [Dusan Stojicic from SDS, Nevenka Trifkovic from PDP] claim that Ashdown is now exerting additional pressure against RS, which, in their view, is on the reform path unlike the FBiH.

PDP on Ashdown	Blic pg 13 'PDP: Who was threatened by Djeric?', Vecernje Novosti pg 21 'Evidence or apology', Nezavisne Novine pg 5 'Ashdown with Cavic and Djeric today', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Evidence or apology' – The PDP party requests from the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, to substantiate his statements in relation to Interior Minister Zoran Djeric's threats to journalists. As the PDP stated in a press release issued yesterday, it was necessary that Ashdown "say precisely which journalists have been threatened to by Djeric, where it has happened and when". "If the public does not get answers to these questions, we think the High Representative should apologize Minister Djeric and entire public", the party stated.
OHR on Mostar	RHB, Oslobodjenje pg 10 'Offering assistance to Mayor's Office', Dnevni List pg 18 'There will be no supervision for Mostar', Slobodna Dalmacija 'Mostar still without Supervisor' – OHR Mostar called upon Hamdija Jahic, Mostar Mayor and his deputy Ljubo Besic to implement new City Statute. OHR stressed that the implementation of the new Mostar Statute is responsibility of political officials denying the possibility of establishment of international supervision for the city. However, as it was said, international community will offer support, especially to Mayor's Office, in the implementation process.

Terzic in BL	RHB, Glas Srpske pg 2 ‘To keep pace with the world’, Dnevni List pg 4 ‘State administration must reform itself’- In addressing to participants at the meeting with Head of Municipalities of the region Banja Luka, organised by the Council of Europe, Chairman of Council of Ministries Adnan Terzic stated that BiH could successfully implement reforms that lead it to Euro Atlantic Integration, under the condition for the state administration to show readiness to firstly undergo reform process itself. Terzic stressed that forthcoming reforms were necessary and that they have to be implemented as soon as possible. The meeting of the Banja Luka region municipal officials, represented a continuation of efforts taken by the Council of Europe’ and its domestic and international partners aimed at improving the work of municipalities in BiH. Oslobodjenje pg 6 ‘Reforms must be implemented by the end of March’ – Terzic also met with the RS President Dragan Cavic and RSNA Speaker Dragan Kalinic, and all three agreed that about 50 reforms need to be implemented by the end of March.

Tomac on Ashdown	Vecernji List pg 2 ‘Tomac: Mostar Statute is anti-constitutional’, Dnevni List front, pg 11 ‘Admit your mistake and propose new solution to Mostar’ – Former Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament and former senior official of SDP of Croatia, Professor Zdravko Tomac, sharply criticized the new Mostar Statute enacted by the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, noting that it “imposes unjust, non-democratic and discriminatory solutions to the Croats in BiH” and prevents the Croat majority in Mostar, whilst in the same time, the same is not applied elsewhere. Professor Tomac notes that the HR’s decision on Mostar is against the BiH Constitution, BiH Election Law and fundamental democratic and civilization standards. “Why do you mind the Croat majority in Mostar, whilst you do not mind the Bosniak domination in the Federation (of BiH) and in the most cities in the Federation of BiH?”, asks Professor Tomac. According to Tomac, the new Statute will, “instead of overcoming wartime and national divisions, create new conflicts with immeasurable consequences.” Tomac suggests to the HR to admit his mistake and propose a new solution that would function and be in harmony with the Constitution, laws and fundamental rights and freedoms.

NN editorial on Mostar decision	Nezavisne Novine pg 7 ‘End of divisions’ editorial by Muhamed Insanic – The author is writing about Mostar decision imposed by the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, saying it would mark the end of all the troubles of Mostar citizens. Editorial reads that while the decision may not take place over night, “at least gives them a chance to start from the very beginning.”
EU Parliament on BiH	FTV – The working session of the European Parliament Speaker with the parliamentary speakers of the acceding countries commenced on Wednesday in Budapest and focused its discussion at the EU enlargement and parliamentary co-operation between the enlarged union and the Western Balkans countries. BiH parliamentary delegation is participating in the meeting, and the special attention was paid to BiH. Conclusions of this session say that EU member states must give constant support to BiH and that BiH Governments must speed up their work if they want to fulfil sixteen demands, which are necessary for signing of the Stabilization and Admission Agreement. “I think that chances exist for BiH, of course that is its goal, to become EU member state, but those chances mean that all levels of the government in BiH must take full responsibility and fasten reforms, demanded by EU”- said Nikola Spiric, BiH House of Representatives Speaker.

BiH Election Commission warns it has no money for local elections	Vecernji List pg 4 ‘Municipalities without money for local elections’, Oslobodjenje pg 9 ‘Not even a KM for municipal elections’ – BiH Election Commission in second half of February will start with the voter registration process for upcoming municipal elections. However, Deputy Chair of the Commission Lidija Korac warned that to date not a single KM was paid to the Commission’s bank account for local elections. She stressed that unless municipalities pay the money needed for implementation of elections, Commission will be in big problems.

Economic issues

Mikerevic, Hadzipasic in Washington	RHB, FENA, Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'Obligatory decrease of costs demanded', Dnevni List pg 3 'Support to reforms in area of fiscal policy', Blic pg 12 'Reforms demand financial help' – FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic and RS Prime Minister Dragan Mikerevic had a meeting with the officials from US Treasury Ministry, IMF and USAID. Prime Minister Hadzipasic stressed that year 2004 is the period of activities at BiH State level, and prioritized the tasks of creating conditions for subventions to domestic production, activities in the domain of tax policy and protection of domestic consumers. Meeting participants agreed that the key success would be to increase employment and ensure funds that would stimulate further development. FTV, Oslobodjenje pg 5 'Doors to Iraq closed to BiH' – In the telephone interview with FTV, Hadzipasic confirmed that BiH was not one of the 63 countries listed to be approved to participate Iraqi reconstruction. Therefore, only possibility for BiH companies is to be subcontracted. He also said that BiH was allowed to negotiate directly with Iraqi companies or to work trough Kuwait or some other countries.

Hays discusses economic issues with Cavic, Kalinic	RTRS, Glas Srpske pg 3 'Much trouble on the path to Europe', Vecernje Novosti pg 6 'RS remains', Blic pg 13 'Cavic: Ashdown is confusing citizens', Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'USA demands from RS to improve co-operation with The Hague' – Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays and RS President Dragan Cavic at their meeting held on Wednesday also discussed possible improvements to the social and economic situation and privatisation, agreeing that privatisation in RS is slow and not transparent and that Laws required changes from the beginning. FTV – PDHR Hays also spoke with the RSNA Speaker Dragan Kalinic about lists of priority reforms. Hays said that RS Government has already started to carry out reforms by bringing the decision on the Indirect Tax Administration head office. However, he also expressed his concern as the BiH authorities have only five months left to fulfil all of the priorities.

RS Customs Administration said to fully support ITA	RTRS, Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘Support to linking of customs administrations in BiH’ – The Collegium of directors of RS Customs Administration (RUC) on Wednesday expressed full support to the implementation of the Law on indirect taxation system and expressed commitment to full implementation of activities related to linking the customs administrations and fight against smuggling. This was stated after yesterday’s meeting in Banjaluka between RUC officials and officials of BiH ITA, which was also attended by Kemal Causevic, ITA Director.

Criminal affairs	
BH Interpol official arrested	Dnevni Avaz cover splash, pg 3 ‘Leader of BH Interpol arrested’, – According to sorce close to state prosecution and courts, Asim Fazlic, Deputy Director of BiH Interpol, was arrested on Wednesday night for the suspicion of office misuse, that is for jeopardizing investigation and assisted the suspects for the murder to Taib Torlakovic. Fazlic is suspected of leaking information regarding the investigations to the persons against who police issued arrest warrants. SRNA new agency also reported on this issue.

Hays and EUPM on drugs related affairs in RS	Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 5 'Drugs, arms and white slavery are trafficked in Republika Srpska' – Donald Hays, Principle Deputy High Representative, is of the view that the Republika Srpska Government should undertake urgent measures to establish who is responsible for the affair related to import of acetic acid anhydride, which is used for production of drugs. According to him, if the Republika Srpska Government failed to investigate this, it would be held responsible for this affair. He is also of the view that the behaviour of Zoran Djeric, Republika Srpska Interior Minister, should be investigated. Responding to a press question, Hays said that "it is clear to everybody that smuggling in arms, drugs and trafficking in women has been carried out in Republika Srpska for some time now. And such thing take place after any war, when resources and possible implementation of legal provisions are diminished." Nezavisne Novine pg 5 'EUPM is following up on case of acetic acid anhydride import' – At the press conference held in Banja Luka on Wednesday, Alun Roebrts, EUPM Spokesperson, said that EUPM is closely followng up on the case of import of acetic acid anhydride to RS, used for production of synthetic drugs. He also said that BiH Prosecutor's Office should interview officials of ministries in charge of this issue in Republika Srpska, as well as managers of "Terpentin" firm.

Other issues	
NATO Spokesperson on its future office in BiH	Dnevni Avaz pg 2 ‘NATO’s office by the end of the year’, Oslobodjenje pg 3 ‘It all depends on the EU peacekeeping mission’, Vecernji List pg 5 ‘Unclear things about NATO’s Office in BiH’, FENA – NATO Spokesperson James Appathurai stated for FENA news agency that the time of setting up NATO’s office in BiH, its composition and role are still not clear, however added that this has been intensively discussed. “If by the end of year there is a decision on EU taking over peacekeeping mission to BiH, than there certainly would be NATO’s office established in BiH in the period between summer and the end of year.”
RTV subscription	Oslobodjenje pg 4 ‘RTV fee with January bills’ – Collection of RTV subscription through telephone bills has already started in RS, as bills for January included additional 6 KM to be directed for RTV. This comes as the result of the agreement reached between RS Government and Telekom Srpske.