

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 5/8/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30 hrs)
FBiH government	Carla Del Ponte	High Rep's letter	BL Clinical Centre
Protests in RS	Memorial in Potocari	Memorial in Potočari	Strom anniversary
Croatian national holiday	Bread price	Miners in strike	Potocari
Liberian peace mission		Disaster in Portugal	Liberia peace mission

Please note that due to the celebration of the Day of Victory and National Gratitude Day in Croatia Mostar P0 have only received Dnevni List and Croatian weekly 'Nacional' today.

Oslobodjenje	Mothers of Srebrenica against Bill Clinton; Crni Vrh near Zvornik – we still have not found 'the end' of the grave; Paddy Ashdown not allowing changes in steering boards
Dnevni Avaz	Ashdown re-installed old steering boards; Clinton confirmed his arrival; FBiH Army still without electricity;
Dnevni List	There are no appointments of temporary steering boards in public companies; Croat councilors handed over a proposal on the establishment of a city public utility company – Jahic and Beslic have to submit their proposals within three days; Strike at the Federation Bureau MIO/PIO
Glas Srpski	Why did prices of alcoholic and soft-drinks go up – the price increase without any justification; Plantations of marijuana detected – Bileca as Columbia

Nezavisne Novine	An agreement between the Republika Srpska government and European Bank for Development and Reconstruction disputable – Ivanic enabled illegal sale of Telecom shares; Banjaluka – major protests by medical personnel today
Blic	Today new protest of Banja Luka's health workers – street's shock-therapy; Milorad Dodik – at the end of this month we will request early elections

Political Affairs	
Hadzipasic on Mostar	CRHB at 18:00 hrs -"With respect to the fact that the current administrative structures present a burden to the budget, Mostar as a unified city can function only on the basis of equality of all its citizens where nobody would fear being outvoted," stated FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic on Monday.
Sullivan on Mostar	CRHB at 18:00 hrs -"For citizens of Mostar it would be better if political parties would focus on the support of initiatives, such as the establishment of a single utilities company, instead of trying to win political capital from misinterpreted statements," stated OHR Spokesperson Kevin Sullivan. Statement was given to the Fena news agency. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'Mostar could be left without the World Bank Credit' – Sullivan made the above statement reacting to criticisms that followed after a statement by OHR Spokesperson in Mostar, Avis Benes. He also stated the key question was how fast Mostar citizens could have use from the WB loan as well as more economic and more efficient services of a joint communal company. Avaz pg. 2 'Avis Benes never mentioned any constitutive people'.

Oslobodjenje commentary	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Inhabited place' by <u>Mirko Sagolj</u> – "As long as Mostar remains divided, even to two sides (only) – Bosniak and Croat – BiH too will remain to be divided in three parts – Serb, Bosniak and Croat. There's no force that can reintegrate BiH politically and demographically unless it reintegrates Mostar," opens up Sagolj. He goes on to say that an excellent chance has been missed. According to Sagolj, divided Mostar causes most damage to Bosniaks who are in the ghetto and Serbs who are feeling lost there, hence Mostar is becoming a city without identity.</p>
Mostar utilities company	<p>CRHB at 18:00 hrs – the Croat caucus of the Mostar City Council on Monday submitted to President of Mostar City Council, Ivan Moco, a proposal for the establishment of the city's utilities company, which would manage the waste disposal sites. Croat delegates also required from the Council to hold a session as soon as possible without further postponements. The proposal for the establishment of utilities company is in the accordance with the recommendations and requests by the World Bank and Office of the High Representative. It includes funds of \$2 million for the establishment of a regional waste disposal site and additional \$5 million for the cleaning of Neretva river. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 13 – also carried the story. Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'The WB and OHR requirements met' –</p>
HR in Mostar	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Paddy Ashdown in Mostar today' – the OHR announced the HR will be visiting Mostar today following the failure of the local political parties to reach an agreement on the draft Mostar Statute. Before he undertakes any sort of measures, the HR will listen to opinions of the populations involved in the process.</p>

<p>RS Association of Inmates</p>	<p>CRHB at 18:00 hrs – the RS Association of War Inmates on Monday sent a request to the High Representative, BiH Court, Sarajevo Canton government and Sarajevo Canton Interior Ministry to lay a plaque in front of the ‘Viktor Bubanj’ military barracks in a remembrance of Serb victims in that concentration camp. President of the Association, Branislav Dukic, said that this organization would lay a plaque on 19 or 20 September in this military barrack, which, according to him was a Muslim concentration camp that kept 1,763 Serb inmates while 47 lost their lives. Dukic said that the RS war inmates also requested to be received by the High Representative. Also reported by the RTRS at 19:30 hrs.</p>
---	---

<p>FBiH govt's decision on steering boards</p>	<p>With regard to the decision on the dismissal of Steering and Supervisory Boards in 25 public companies passed by the Federation government, Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 reports that according to a source close to the FBiH government, FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic realized that the government had made a mistake by passing such decision and under the pressure of the FBiH Ombudsman's Office he decided to stop its implementation. Ombudsman Branka Raguz stated for DL that on July 22 the Ombudsmen sent an official demand to the FBiH government to submit all relevant documents regarding the general dismissal of steering boards. She stressed that during consultations the Ombudsman's Office held with the OHR, doubts that some things were against the law with regard to this case were raised and it was concluded that the FBiH government did not express their wish to cooperate with ombudsmen strongly enough since they had not sent their reply to the ombudsmen's official demand yet. According to Raguz, after the end of the investigation, the ombudsmen will publish facts on this case.</p>
---	--

**OHR reaction
to FBiH
govt's
decision**

BHTV at 19:00 hrs – in a letter to FBiH Prime Minister, Ahmed Hadzipasic, the OHR condemns the Federation government's decision regarding the replacements of public companies' steering boards as the violation of the law. FTV at 19:30 hrs – Ashdown draws attention that the replacement of public companies' steering boards for two months period are not legal. Such appointments are contrary to earlier decision of the High Representative on appointments of steering boards and ministers. Ashdown insists that steering boards, which were in a charge on July 16, should remain and continue to perform its duties in a responsible way. DL pg. 3 'The OHR concerned about FBiH government's decision on removals' – High Representative Paddy Ashdown sent a letter to Hadzipasic in which the HR expresses his concern about this decision. Among the other things, the letter reads as follows. "Our firm stand is that these dismissals and subsequent appointments obviously violate the spirit and provisions of the Law on ministerial, governmental and other appointments in the FBiH." The HR says that it is correct that the Law makes possible temporary appointments for the period of 60 days in order to fill vacant positions, however, the vacant positions should be created in a legal way first and obviously this was not the case. Nezavisne Novine pg. 'Ashdown halted appointments at new steering boards at 25 firms' – also reported. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 2 – the biggest front-page story in today's issue is on the letter HR sent to Hadipasic. "Our permanent stand is that such solution and additional appointments are obviously in violation of the Law on Ministerial, Governmental and other Appointments in the Federation." The letter also reported in Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 8.

<p>Initiative for early elections</p>	<p>RTRS at 19:30 hrs – the Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) will officially submit an initiative to the BiH Parliament by the end of the month requesting the organizing of early elections. This idea has been supported by all opposition parties in the RS, as the only solution for stamping out crime in the RS politics. According to Milorad Dodik, the affairs break out every day, and no actions have been taken. The IC is also not engaging enough in the matter. The BiH Social Democratic Party (SDP) emphasized their concern regarding the HR's statement on a long-term postponement of the tax reform implementation. Blic pg. 7 'We request early elections', Vecernje Novosti pg. 6 'Early elections in autumn' – "We received support for our initiative from all opposition parties in BiH and it was also welcomed with understanding among important circles of the international community," Dodik said. According to Dodik early elections are the only way for moving out of the general economic and social crisis that the ruling structures are unable to pull the BiH out of. According to Dodik, early elections would not be so expensive if held together with the local elections. Dodik announced that the SNSD Main Board would meet in mid-August and that it would afterwards call on non-governmental organizations, unions and citizens to join the lobbying for early elections. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'Hold early elections in BiH' – statement by Dodik. Also in Avaz pg. 4 'Dodik will request holding of an extraordinary elections from the BiH Parliament'.</p>
--	--

**DL editorial
on HR**

Dnevni List pg. 6 by Slavo Kukic 'Fate of partly said' – the author welcomes, to an extent, the re-organization of the customs system in BiH saying that the newly established customs regions should finally cross the entity border lines. However, Kukic argues that High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, did not go all the way in the reforms of the customs. In that context, Kukic argues that a ratio in the distribution of revenues between the entities and state remains the same and the current ratio, according to Kukic, is at detriment and in function of dismantling of the State. "Does the High Representative see that?" asks Kukic. The author is also touching upon the issue of staffing in the new customs system. According to him, the national parties are doing everything to get rid of Director of the FBiH Customs Administration, Zelimir Rebac, in order to hush up their deeds. In this context, Kukic says after the 'revolution in public companies', alluding to the removals in steering boards in the FBiH, the revolution which makes mockery out of the law that HR Ashdown personally saw it gets imposed, if Rebac, who is in Kukic's eyes one of the last obstacles to the Mafia, gets removed, that would be a definitive sign that the HR Ashdown has lost to national parties.

Economic Affairs

<p>Mostarsko Blato project</p>	<p>CRHB at 18:00 hrs – after consultations with the OHR, whose audits banned the implementation of the investments programs, the FBiH government at its latest session gave an approval for the continuance of the Mostarsko Blato project. The government decided that the interrupted investment in Mostarsko Blato could be continued after the Elektroprivreda Herceg-Bosna drafted the hydro-geological study with a review of the verified institution that would establish possible consequences to the environment due to the implementation of the project. The second condition is to find a strategic partner who would participate with up to 33% of the total estimated worth of the investment.</p>
---------------------------------------	---

<p>Ivanic's involvement in telecom affair</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 5 'Ivanic enabled illegal sale of Telecom shares' –former Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, gave a green light for the illegal sale of Telecom Srpske shares to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) without a prior decision being made by the Republika Srpska National Assembly or the creation of a privatisation plan. According to the Law on Privatisation of the state owned capital in firms working within the fields of production and distribution of power, railway traffic, telecommunication and oil industry, the privatisation is performed according to the assent given by the Parliament. Article 11 of this Law reads that 'investments, which represent a pre-requisite for the purchase of state owned capital at that firm, cannot be financed, given as a loan or guaranteed through the resources of the same firm'.</p>
--	---

FBiH Pension Fund	<p>Dnevni List pg. 1 and 7 – President of the Association of Pensioners of Republika Srpska (RS), Ranko Rakulj, warned the other day that pensioners from the RS would request exclusion of BiH from the Council of Europe unless the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) implements the BiH Human Rights Chamber's (BiH HRC) decision from August 1, which says that pensioners who earned pensions in the FBiH but currently resided in the RS, were paid by the FBiH Pension Fund (FBiH MIO/PIO). Moreover, the SDS yesterday requested the FBiH MIO/PIO to implement the BiH HRC's decision. DL's notes that in case that some 25,000 pensioners from the RS were to be transferred to the FBiH MIO/PIO, the FBiH MIO/PIO would collapse, thus leaving other pensioners without already poor pensions. Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Pay out pensions earned in the Federation' – a member of the SDS Main Board, Cvijetin Nikic, requested from the FBiH Pensions Fund to respect the mentioned decision by the human Rights Chamber and start paying out pensions to all users who earned them on the Federation territory.</p>
--------------------------	---

<p>SDP on tax and customs reforms</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 7 'Getting rich through evasions and avoiding of paying of taxes' – the SDP BiH expressed its concern over the work of the Commission for Reforms of Customs and Taxation system in BiH. An SDP press release says that one of the reasons for their concern is a statement by High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, which, according to the SDP BiH, represents a big surprise because it prolongs previously set deadline. "This means that results of the reforms will be realistic as late as 2007. In this way, the introduction of the financial order in the fiscal and para-fiscal politics is being considerably postponed and this is a good announcement for all those who are getting rich through evasions and avoiding of paying of taxes and a bad sign to domestic and especially foreign investors."</p>
--	--

Defence Affairs

**Cavic –
Locher**

CRHB at 18:00 hrs – Following a meeting with Chairman of the Defence Reforms Commission, James Locher, RS President Dragan Cavic stated that both Serb members of the Commission and he were ready to carry out defence reforms in the RS in accordance with the constitutional framework in BiH and decisions by the High Representative. Estimating that the discussion with RS President was constructive, Locher stated that if the Commission for Defence Reforms finalized its duties within the deadline, BiH would become a special candidate for the Partnership for Peace membership. BHTV at 19:00 hrs by Zorica Lolic – according to Locher, the Commission will finalise their work by the end of September, and soon after will submit a proposals to the state and entity governments. “If the Commission’s ideas are to be approved by the BiH Parliament, BiH would become a real candidate for the Partnership for Peace membership,” said Locher. This means a lot of hard work in the future period.

RS President Dragan Cavic believes that the solutions to be proposed will be acceptable to all the parties in BiH, and will comply with all special needs in the country. RTRS at 19:30 hrs by Aida Halilovic – reported on the meeting. Glas Srpske pg. 2 ‘To partnership by shortcut’, Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 ‘Defence reform in parliaments by November’ – “The work of the Commission so far saw many issues resolved. However, there are still issues left to be discussed,” said Cavic. He expressed his full commitment to defence reform within the constitutional framework of BiH. Blic pg. 6 ‘Final proposal on 25 September’ – “I expect us to reach an agreement that will be in accordance with conditions necessary for BiH’s accession to the Partnership for Peace, as well as all other Euro-Atlantic structures, fully respecting the fact that BiH is a state consisted of two entities and three constitutive peoples”, Cavic said. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 ‘The final solutions in September’. Avaz pg. 4 ‘An agreement reached on the main defence issues’.

<p>Interview with Stankovic</p>	<p>Glas Srpske pg. 5 'Lining up has started' – Milovan Stankovic, Republika Srpska Defence Minister, denied claims by BETA news agency that the Council of NATO and Russia demanded from the BiH authorities to form a joint ministry of defence and general staff. He said that he could not comment on what had been stated at the meeting, which he had not attended. He is of the opinion that the survival of the Republika Srpska Army and its bodies cannot be disputed. He expressed expectation that the goals, which the Republika Srpska has set, will be accomplished, including the preservation of its defence structure.</p> <p>"We expect state structures for civil control and command over armed troops in BiH to be established at the level of BiH. However, the highest level of identity of the Republika Srpska Army, Defence Ministry and General Staff must be preserved." He also said that no one has so far demanded the abolishment of the Army or military bodies in the Republika Srpska. He further explains that the existing plan on reform, which includes the establishment of the new system points out that certain compromises between the negotiating sides will be necessary. However, no compromise is to refer to the abolishment of the military structures in the Republika Srpska. Their full identity will be preserved, claims Stankovic. He also said that the Defence Ministry has already undertaken certain steps on the reform of Army. "We have made a plan on the re-deployment of units. We made the first package of proposals for the Republika Srpska government, which should allocate some Republika Srpska Army real estate to other users. We have also worked out the reduction of number of warehouses."</p> <p>According to Stankovic, activities have been intensified towards identifying the surplus manpower and resources for a social program in the event of lay-offs.</p>
--	--

<p>Clinton opening Memorial</p>	<p>CRHB at 18:00 hrs – former US President Bill Clinton agreed to official open the Srebrenica – Potocari Memorial Centre. Chairman of the Potocari Memorial Centre Fund, Paddy Ashdown, confirmed this on Monday. He stated that Clinton was the choice of members of the Association of Srebrenica victims’ families due to his contribution to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>The Fund also believes that this is an appropriate choice having in mind the US contribution to the Fund for the construction of the Memorial Centre, which official opening is planned for 20 September. BHTV at 19:00 hrs by <u>Sejla Tafro</u> – based on the decision by the BiH Human Rights Chamber, the RS government is obligated to pay out 2 million KM to the Association. A member of the Main Board for the Centre construction, Beriz Belkic, said that the BH Telecom campaign for collecting the funds for the centre had been extended until the end of September. FTV at 19:30 hrs by <u>Zeljko Tica</u> – the Mothers of Srebrenica wanted Clinton to open the Centre since they consider his support essential for ending the war and also for the role of the US in the process of peace stabilization. Head of the Islamic Community, reis Cerić, informed that Qatar pledged 200,000 Euro, United Arab Emirates \$200,000 and a symbolic donation of Yasser Arafat was \$5,000. RTRS at 19:30 hrs by <u>Jelena Rajakovic</u> – carried a report from yesterday’s press conf. Nezavisne Novine pg. 6 ‘Approximately 8.5 million KM collected for the memorial’, Glas Srpske pg. 3 ‘Clinton coming to Potocari’. Vecernje Novosti pg. 3, Blic pg. 16. Yesterday’s press conf also reported Avaz pg. 1 and 3. Contrary to all above listed reports, Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3 wrote that the Association Mothers of Srebrenice and Podrinje thinks the decision on Clinton opening the Centre is scandalous. In an announcement by the Mothers of Srebrenica it is stated that Clinton silently watched the killing of the international recognized BiH Republic (at the time) and its citizens and indirectly participated in the Srebrenica massacre by not doing anything. They concluded that the Memorial centre was in the hands of those who were accomplice and those who committed genocide in Srebrenica.</p>
--	---

Fassier's letter	Avaz pg. 3 'The RS should conduct an investigation on the massacre' – senior HR Deputy, Bernard Fassier, wrote to the RS heads, Dragan Cavic, Dragan Mikerevic and Dragan Kalinic, requesting from him the implementation of a decision by the Human Rights Chamber on missing Srebrenica people. He stated the deadlines were approaching and they had to be respected. He also reminded them the RS needed to arrest war indictees Karadzic and Mladic.
Avaz's survey	Avaz pg. 3 – conducted a survey asking whether people support Bill Clinton opening the Memorial Centre. 78% said yes, 3% no and 19% abstained.

The Hague

<p>Interview with Del Ponte</p>	<p>BHTV at 19:00 hrs – ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, expects the arrest of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic by the end of this year. In an interview for the Vienna magazine 'Profile', Del Ponte emphasized that Karadzic resided in the RS and was being protected by the local community that still saw him as a hero. Del Ponte also stressed that authorities, police and military forces in RS were providing the additional protection to Karadzic. In case that these parties do not cooperate in the future on this matter, NATO will take the responsibility to conduct the arrest. The military forces in Serbia are protecting Ratko Mladic, and with some political will in Serbia he could be arrested. RTRS at 19:30 hrs – also carried the same excerpt from the interview. Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'NATO must arrest Karadzic' – Del Ponte expressed disappointment over the fact that the US conditioned its financial support to Serbia and Montenegro only with the arrest of Veselin Sljivancanin, instead of demanding the arrest of Ratko Mladic as well. Vecernje Novosti pg. 17 'We will arrest them this year' – also carried excerpts from the interview. Avaz pg. 8 'Del Ponte – Karadzic protected by the authorities, police and the RS Army'.</p>
--	--

Refugee Affairs

<p>BHTV on return</p>	<p>BHTV at 19:00 hrs by <u>Seid Masnica</u> – according to BiH Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, Ivica Marinovic, the BiH authorities will be able to take over the entire responsibility from the IC regarding the refugees return at the beginning of 2004. A reporter spoke of a difficult situation of returnees in the Prozor Rama municipality, and pointed to a long way for providing sustainable return. Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Within the authorities of the BiH authorities as of next year'.</p>
<p>Kebo</p>	<p>FTV at 19:30 hrs by <u>Meri Musa</u> – BiH Minister for Refugees and Human Rights, Mirsad Kebo, visited Rama-Prozor and Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje in order to learn about the process of return. It was stressed that returnees in villages did not have water supply, and the road and electric supplies were not regular. There are no conditions for a sustainable return since the support for the agriculture production was not available for returnees. Additional problem are long distances to schools, so primary school is for example 6 km far from villages. "On Thursday, we will discuss the establishing of a state fund for return, which will improve the spending of funds for the return," said Kebo. Avaz pg. 4 'Necessary to regain donors' interest'.</p>

FBiH Fund for Return	<p>FTV at 19:30 hrs by <u>Aida</u> Salcinovic – at the Federation Ministry for Refugees it was announced that the establishment of a Fund for Return would improve the entire system of allocating assistance. The Fund will collect all available funds and a single database with information from cantons, regional office and all organization will be a helpful tool for the efficient managing of an assistance.</p> <p>Another round for application for the assistance was issued, but since refugees from the RS were not informed the deadline would be extended for another 15 days.</p> <p>FBiH Minister for Refugees, Edin Music, regrets that returnees had to apply again after earlier five to 10 attempts with the same documentation. However, all applicants expect much more transparent procedure and a fair treatment of the neediest. Only 15% of applications can be financed with the available funds</p>
---------------------------------	--

OHR Affairs

New SDHR

Dnevni List pg. 4 'Ambassador Wnendt new SDHR' – High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, welcomed the arrival of Ambassador Werner Wnendt to the position of Senior Deputy High Representative. Wnendt is taking over this duty from Ambassador Gerhard Enver Schroembgens. DL says that the HR thanked Schroembgens on hard work and the way in which Schroembgens dedicated to large number of duties in the area of the peace implementation, such as the contribution to refugees return and building of institutions including the education reform and re-organizations of armed forces in BiH. An OHR press release says that Ambassador Wnendt will take over these and other obligations from Ambassador Schroembgens. Glas Srpske pg. 2 'Wnendt instead of Schroembgens', Nezavisne Novine pg. 10 'Werner Wnendt is new Senior Deputy the HR' – also carried the story. Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Ambassador Wnendt instead of Schroembgens' and Avaz pg. 2 'Ambassador Wnendt replaced Schroembgens'.