

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 6/1/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Frankfurt airport closed	New IDs	Topalovic's appeal	Reactions to 'Orao' report
PDP-SDS agreement	Dodik on 'Orao' affair	SDS-PDP agreement	PDP-SDS agreement
Puljic's Xmas message	Milutnovic's arrest	Kotorsko	UNMIBH
	Brcko on SBS	Police in Glamoc	

Oslobodjenje	40% of the lowest salaries to unemployed; 'Orao' affair – politicians still analysing the report; Srebrenica people requesting Powel's removal; Protest by US Croats to Bush – a request to ban Saudi help to BiH
Dnevni Avaz	Covic and Tihic did not receive the report; Reform of the customs system – the first big test for the new government;
Dnevni List	Janica and Ivica Kostelic winners on the same day; "Observer" about role of Greeks in the Srebrenica massacre
Glas Srpski	Modrica: The Church donates roasting meat; RS Finance Ministry: Customs should be cancelled
Nezavisne Novine	Orthodox believers celebrate Christmas; Nezavisne Novine finds out: The Pope, John Paul II to visit Banja Luka on 22 nd June

No 'Orao' report for Covic and Tihic	<p>Avaz pg. 1, 2 and 3 – the 'Orao' report has so far only been forwarded to the BiH presidency Chair, Mirko Sarovic, but not to other two Presidency members – Covic and Tihic. "We are expecting to have it on our desks today. I will make a comment once I've read the report," stated Tihic. Avaz commented on the report saying that Covic managed to avoid talking about illegal trade of weapons in Iraq in the period between 1998 and 2002. At that time, Nikola Poplasen was replacing Plavsic, and once Poplasen was removed the post was taken over by Sarovic. Also, following Momir Talic's extradition to The Hague, the post of the RS Army HQ head was taken over by Nikola Simic. "All this indicates that the blame has been placed in an earlier period when the SDS was not in authority," reads the daily. Even though it has been concluded by the BiH Presidency that the report should be forwarded to the Permanent Committee for Military Issues, RS officials have not forwarded it.</p>
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<p>Reactions to the report</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 2 (several titles) 'Reaction of international institutions will be joint', 'Political responsibility can not be avoided', 'It was not said that Velibor Ostojic was President of the Main Board', Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3, Nezavisne Novine pg. 3, Dnevni List pg. 5 'Cavic's statement – culmination of hypocrisy' – reactions to a press conference by Cavic where he talked about the 'Orao' report. Avaz again carried a statement by OHR Spokesperson Braithwaite that OHR would analyse thoroughly everything they received from RS officials. Vice-President of the SPRS, Tihomir Gligoric, stated that it remained interesting to see how the whole process would end and whether the question of political responsibility of those who knew about it would be raised.</p> <p>Manojlo Milovanovic, former RS Defence Minister, stated there was a lot of material mistakes in the report. For example, Head of the RS Army HQ in 1997 was not Momir Talic, but General Pero Colic. Also, the RS government took control over the weapons industry in 1996 and not a year after as suggested in the report. Milovanovic also pointed out that President of the Main Board for the weapons industry in the mentioned period was Velibor Ostojic, and his name was not even mentioned in the report. SDP SG, Svetozar Pudara, thinks it's impossible her successor knew nothing of the document on illegal weapons trade, which must had been kept in an archive. Mirko Banjac said it was impossible current RS authorities were not guilty of for the affair. Mijo Anic, Federation Defence Minister, said there was no chance Plavsic was responsible for the affair. Mirnes Ajanovic, B0SS President, said the current RS authorities were to blame for the affair. Milorad Dodik described Cavic's statement that the affair was enabled due to 'ambient created back in 1997' as the culmination of hypocrisy.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine has learnt from a source close to the former RS President, Biljana Plavsic that the change in the RS Army General Staff occurred in 1996 when Ratko Mladic was replaced with General Pero Colic. "Biljana Plavsic had no influence on that particular structure in the RS Army General Staff and RS Defence Ministry led by SDS's Minister Milan Ninkovic. She also had no influence on them in 1997 when she was in Banja Luka and Defence Ministry and Army HQ were in Pale. Exactly because of that conflict they called her the rebel President," stated the source. The same source commented Cavic's statement that the archive disappeared as saying that it could have only disappeared from Pale, not from Banja Luka. "That General Staff was under control of Radovan Karadzic and Slobodan Milosevic, and under direct command of the RS Supreme Defense Council, composed of the following members: Momcilo Krajisnik, Dragan Kalinic, Gojko Kllickovic, Pero Colic, Dragan Kijac, Slavko Paleksic and Milan Ninkovic," said the source. The Head of the Biljana Plavsic's cabinet for military issues, Ostoja Barasin, stated that her Cabinet was never requested to give its approval for any arrangement of 'Orao' Institute. Commenting on the missing documents, Barasin said that after the transfer of duty between Biljana Plavsic and Nikola Poplasen, all documents related to military issues were taken by Poplasen's Advisor for military issues, Stanislav Galic. "No documents were destroyed and if they are not given to RS President, Dragan Cavic, then he should ask Mirko Sarovic where the documents were as he was in Poplasen's Cabinet," said Barasin. Glas Srpski on pg. 3 also carries the report on Orao affair and focuses on Dragan Cavic's statement on the issue.</p>
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<p>Commentary on Avaz</p>	<p>The 'Comment of the Day' column (Avaz pg. 3) written in today's issue by <u>Almasa Bajric</u> is entitled 'Ignoring of the state'. She angles her comment on the fact that the report has only been forwarded to the Presidency Chair Sarovic, but not to Tihic and Covic.</p> <p>According to Bajric, this is an obvious attempt by Covic to exclude state institutions from resolving the affair.</p> <p>"This chance was used to show that the RS is not responsible to BiH state institutions for their actions, or it is obligated to respect BiH decisions and conclusions."</p>
<p>PDP-SDS agreement</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'PDP and SDS reached an agreement on government', Avaz pg. 2 'PDP and SDS distributed ministerial posts', Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 – that the PDP and SDS reached an agreement on the distribution of ministerial posts in the RS government and the BiH CoM. As confirmed yesterday by PDP Spokesperson, Igor Crnadak, refused to give names of representatives nominated for ministerial posts.</p>
<p>RS government</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 5 'The Assembly will confirm the new RS government in ten days', Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Mikerevic and SNSD failed to reach an agreement' – Dragan Mikerevic, RS PM, will most probably announce structure of his new cabinet on 12 or 13 of January. The RS Assembly should confirm new members on January 16. Mikerevic ended consultations with political parties. On Saturday, he met with SNSD President Dodik. During the meeting, the two failed to reach an agreement as Dodik was offered three ministerial posts and he requested seven.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine on pg. 7 carried more details of the RS government establishment.</p> <p>The RS government designate, Dragan Mikerevic, stated that the SBiH was ready to support the RS government but that it wanted one ministerial seat in return. He added that they offered the Justice Ministry to the SBiH. Even though the RS Socialist Party claimed that it would not participate in power with national parties, Mikerevic claimed this could change. "Representatives of the SPRS have presented certain proposals and we will see whether a compromise is possible," said Mikerevic. After another round of talks with the SNSD, Mikerevic stated that it was clear that the SNSD would not participate in the new RS government.</p> <p>The daily has learnt that a high PDP official, Zoran Djeric, was proposed for the RS Interior Minister, while Boris Gasparic was a candidate for the Minister of Trade. According to Nezavisne Novine, SDS will get the Ministry for Health and RS Customs Administration. The daily also claims that the RS Finance Ministry is a point of dispute – the SDS does not want the current Finance Minister, Simeun Vilendecic to remain in the post, while that is exactly what the current RS PM, Mladen Ivanic wants.</p>
<p>Request for Powel's removal</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'Srebrenica people requesting Charlie Powel's removal' – a letter sent by Srebrenica returnees to HR Paddy Ashdown. Returnees listed a number of complaints such as the lack of efforts by Srebrenica officials to improve living conditions for Srebrenica returnees and IC officials moving from Srebrenica to Bratunac. They however pointed out that the most devastating role was the one of Charlie Powel, OHR Head for Bratunac and Srebrenica, who had been spending his time hunting and going to picnics with members of extreme groups. According to Srebrenica citizens, Powel has continued the shameful role of Jensen and other predecessors. They request from Ashdown to monitor the spending of donations by the UNDP, and the removal of Powel.</p>

<p>Ashdown-Lagumdzija dispute</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'SDP – Ashdown's claims unacceptable', Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 – an announcement from the SDP Press Office. "In a text, that we reacted to only two days after it was no supplemented by HR or OHR, it was stated that HR Ashdown said that Radovan Karadzic would not be arrested by US Apache, but that he would be arrested once he loses peoples support." The announcement goes on to say that in reactions by OHR spokespeople – both Braithwaite and Sullivan – it was never stated that HR Ashdown did not say what was written in Avaz. "We, as well as BiH citizens, can not be led by what someone thought even if that someone was HR Ashdown, but explicitly by what he said and what he did." (Dnevni List pg. 4 'SDP and Ashdown have different approach to solving problems in BiH')</p>
<p>Corruption in BiH</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 18 'Criminal charges against 24 corrupted politicians' – the first in a series of articles entitled 'Corruption in the Federation'. It reads that the local police, Financial Police and Tax Administration submitted to relevant prosecutions criminal charges against 24 politicians for corruption. If prosecutions accept charges, the public will be informed of names of corrupted BiH politicians. One of them is probably Presidency member Covic.</p>
<p>A letter by US Croats</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 6 'Protest US Croats to Bush – a request to ban Saudi help to BiH' – a letter written by US Croats (National Federation of US Croats – NFCA) to US State Secretary Colin Powel regarding the recent murders in Kostajnica. Committed by a fanatic, a member of a humanitarian organisation sponsored by Saudi Arabia. John Kraljic expressed worry over Croats' current position. They requested the banning any further help from Saudi Arabia. Also, blame the US government for non-implementing politics of protecting the rights of Croats.</p>

<p>Future of Mostar</p>	<p>Dnevni List on Saturday pg. 7 'Mostar at the point where it can not move forward' by <u>Zvonimir Jukic</u> – about the future organizational set-up of Mostar. The author starts the article by noting that Mostar City authorities did not make any efforts to organize a joint celebration of the New Year for the whole city. This, according to Jukic, shows that the integration processes in Mostar have been stopped. Also, it says that despite the Mostar SDA rejecting appeals by the Deputy Mayor of Mostar, Neven Tomic, to work closely on the further integration of the city, both the SBiH and SDP have taken upon themselves to come up with a document on the future organization of the city. In their efforts, they are allegedly joined by a group of liberal and moderate intellectuals from the west part of the city with the Croat majority. "Making such new plans for Mostar clearly shows that the city has reached the point where it cannot go forward without concrete steps being made. With the current set-up, Mostar has reached its maximum regarding the integration and in the future it can move forward only through reforms. The negative stance by the Mostar SDA regarding the reforms in Mostar has caused, some sources reveal, a reaction by the IC. These reactions have so far been at the diplomatic level and far away from the public eye (...)</p> <p>Although it has supported the negative stance of the Mostar SDA about creation of a single Municipality of Mostar, leaders of this party are aware how much damage it could cause to the SDA if the OHR undoubtedly supports Mostar as one municipality. That's why the SDA leadership has formed a most prominent team comprising of Sulejman Tihic, Adnan Terzic and Mirsad Kebo. They should soon discuss the issue of Mostar with the High Representative. At this meeting, after they have been convinced about the real OHR's intention regarding the issue, the leaders of SDA will evidently take a final stance in the matter", reads Dnevni List.</p>
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<h2>Economic Affairs</h2>	
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<p>Reform of customs</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 3, Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Uniting of customs' – today a report by a group international experts (Davidi, Jensen, Fisher and Ingram) on the problems of customs and necessary reform will be presented. OHR Spokesperson Braithwaite could not talk about report details, but mentioned it contained a proposal for measures that should be taken. "This is a top priority for HT. At the same time, this is first big test for new government, especially RS reps in state authority bodies," said Braithwaite. He further added that after this, the OHR would turn to the introduction of VAT. During this month, OHR will also intensify its work on functioning of the State Court.</p>
<p>RS Finance Ministry on customs</p>	<p>Glas Srpski pg. 1 – has learnt from the RS Finance Ministry that the RS government will advocate cancellation of customs administrations instead of introduction of a single customs administration. The RS Finance Minister, Simeun Vilendecic, told the daily that the Finance Ministry was currently doing analyses as to what would be the effect of the cancellation of customs and that preliminary results indicate that the idea was justified. Vilendecic recalled that the European Union plans envisage cancellation of customs in all countries in South Eastern Europe in 2008. "If that is so, then it is better to do it sooner than later and avoid making of some other customs administration at BiH level," said Vilendecic.</p>

Judicial Affairs

Constitutional Court

Avaz pg. 4 'For almost a year BiH has not had the Constitutional Court' – no functioning Constitutional Court in BiH for almost a year. The Federation Parliament nominated four judges for the Court (Cazim Sadikovic, Hatidza Hadziosmanovic, Valerija Galic and Mate Tadic), but they yet have not taken an oath. The reason being that two RS judges have not been proposed yet. In the first round, the RS government proposed Radomir Lukic and Miodrag Simovic, but HR Ashdown annulled their election upon a request by Bosniak members of the RS Constitutional Commission. Also, Tihic has requested from HR to annul election of the Federation judges because amongst the elected members there are no Serbs. Meanwhile, the election of the RS judges has been taken over by the HJPC. Sanela Tunovic, HJPC stated that it would take more time to complete the Constitutional Court.

Police Affairs

**UNMIBH forced
resignations
in SBK**

Oslobodjenje pg. 8 'UN extorted resignations of Zubaca and Harambasic' – the resignations by the Central Bosnia Canton (SBK) MoI Minister and Deputy, Midhata Zubaca and Ivica Harambasic, were extorted by UNMIBH as a condition for the certification of the given MoI. According to a report devised by UNMIBH investigation team, Harambasic, amongst other things, worked for at least a year for both Republic Croatia MoI and the SBK MoI. A number of complaints listed in Zubaca's report. One of them being that he refused to suspend anyone from the Ministry after a report by the Federation Financial Police on non-planned expenses of 3,8 million KM.

**Incident in
Brcko**

Dnevni List pg. 19 (Sunday), Glas Srpski pg. 3 (Saturday and Sunday) – the monument of Draza Mihajlovic at the centre of Brcko was again damaged. An unknown perpetrator broke a candlestick, several chains around the monument and iron pillar of the fence around the monument. 'Povratak' Association of Brcko people condemned the incident. The Association President, Ramiz Kikanovic, believes that the issues in relation to monuments in Brcko should be solved in a democratic manner through an Assembly procedure. Ravna Gora Chetnik Movement also issued a press release upon this incident, in which they requested that 'Brcko come under the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the RS again because it is the only way that Brcko can become a normal town'. The press release also reads that members of the Ravna Gora movement have been attentively following the events in the District and have reached the conclusion that 'the District as a territorial, political and economic autonomy cannot become a reality until Sarajevo, as the capital of BiH, shows that'. They also say that they have found the vandals who damaged the monument of Draza Mihajlovic. "They are citizens who want unitary BiH and domination of one group of citizens over the others. They are citizens who do not want the Brcko District to be multicultural, multiethnic and multi-confessional society. They are citizens who blindly follow the maxim of Alija Izetbegovic that Islam and non-Islam cannot be together". (Blic pg. 8 on Saturday, Glas Srpski pg. 3 also on Saturday).

Kisic on SBS	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 5 'Kisic threatened to stop payments for the SBS', Vecernji List on Sunday and Monday pg. 4, Dnevni List pg. 6 'Continue with early tasks' – Brcko District Mayor, Sinisa Kisic, stated that the Brcko District government would stop the payment of funds for the State Border Service if the BiH Council of Ministers did not meet its obligations taken by the Agreement on Harmonisation of Petroleum Prices. By this Agreement, the District obliged to introduce an additional fee on petroleum prices, as it has been done on January 1. The CoM obliged to reach an agreement with the Croatian government on establishing petroleum corridor at Gunja-Brcko border crossing point. "We have signed the Agreement on Financing the State Border Service in 2002, and the amount was 2,5 million KM. The first annuity amounting 1,7 million KM has been paid by December 31 last year, while the payment of the second annuity amounting 800.000 KM depends directly on the CoM meeting its obligations in relation to the establishment of the petroleum corridor through the Brcko District," Kisic stated.</p>
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**The Observer
about
Srebrenica**

Dnevni List pg. 5 'Greek volunteers killed in Srebrenica' – excerpts from an article in The Observer on the role of Greek volunteers in Srebrenica. "It is what Hellenes have long feared: the shattering of a conspiracy of silence that has surrounded the role of Greek volunteers who proudly flew their flag at Srebrenica, after participating in Europe's worst massacre since the Second World War, when 7,000 men, women and children died. Next week, as Greece settles into the presidency of the European Union, Milan Milutinovic, Serbia's recently retired president, will be brought before the war crimes tribunal at The Hague. Greek involvement in the atrocity, as well as other secrets Athens would prefer buried, could be revealed when the 60-year-old testifies.

"A Dutch documentary investigating Greek complicity in the Serb wars was aired on local television in which a director of the semi-official Athens News Agency, Nikolas Voulelis, admitted to widespread censorship.

During the wars the Greek media was fanatically pro-Serb, portraying Yugoslav Muslims as 'infidel Turks' bent on destroying their Orthodox brethren.

'Editorial interference was a given,' he said. But it was not only hospitality or money that the Greeks offered. Spiritual succor was provided by the Greek Orthodox church which sent priests to the front line (several clerics received bravery medals from Plavsic)."

"Last year, in a 7,000-page report that the Dutch authorities commissioned into the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, Greece was revealed to have sent shipments of light arms and ammunition to the Bosnian Serb army between 1994 and 1995. The report describes how Greek volunteers were implored, in intercepted army telephone conversations, to raise the Greek flag after the town fell. In one, General Ratko Mladic asked that they record the scene on video for propaganda purposes. Around 100 soldiers are believed to have joined the Greek Volunteer Guard, formed at Mladic's request. The unit, which fought alongside Russians and Ukrainians, was led by Serb officers and had its own insignia – the double-headed eagle of Byzantium. At least four of its members were awarded the White Eagle medal of honor by Karadzic. Although their 'heroic' exploits were widely reported in the Greek press, the volunteers have gone to ground since the creation of the war crimes tribunal. No government or party has ever sought an inquiry into their activities."

Illegal construction in Kotorako	Dnevni List pg. 5 'A case of illegal construction in Kotorako – land owners requesting OHR's intervention' – according tot he daily the case of illegal construction in Kotorako goes to prove the judiciary is non-efficient. The removal of around 200 roofs from illegal constructed houses in Kotorako at the beginning November was to deceive public and the IC, claim Bosniaks from Kotorako. They will once again request OHR's intervention, but this time they insist on personal involvement of HR. They believe that he has the authorities to finally stop, as they say, the three-year long lawlessness in Kotorako. The piece was reported on the FTV.
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