OHR BiH Media Round-up, 6/1/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
CoM Session	SFOR blocked village	Tax evasion cases in Brcko	Action Plan of RS Gov't
BiH HoP Session	CoM session	Police reports 14 persons	Vital national interests
Minister of Defence	Law on Intelligence	Payment of pensions	Minister of Defence
9 indictments in Brcko	Minister of Defence	SFOR action in Vrhpolje	Nemanjic Award

Oslobodjenje	Funds for a half of overdue pension secured; Delegates want benefits; Rasim Delic: I was never interested in a position of Defence Minister
Dnevni Avaz	Scandalous: What representative Mijo Blagojevic is proud of: Chetnick Duke in BiH Paliament!
Dnevni List	Investigation: Cengic, Covic, Jelavic and rest under investigation; Interview: Semin Boric: Coric takes illegal decisions; Payment of half overdue pension and disability allowance
Glas Srpske	Reactions upon statement by Sarajevo Mayor: He speaks nice, but gives false information
Nezavisne Novine	Colin Powell: Fight against terrorism is the priority of USA; Sanski Most: SFOR blocked Vrhpolje; Christmas message by Serb Patriarch Pavle: Remorse and life in peace and unity; Semsudin Mehmedovic: Premier of F BiH is responsible for discrimination of Bosniaks

Blic	‘Birc’ returns to the map of Europe; Clinical Centre without Director; Abandoned children from Kukulj: the first gifts

Defence and military issues

Debates on BiH Defence Minister – SDA wants Bosniaks for the position	RHB – In a debate around the position of the BiH Defence Minister, SDA officials are of opinion that it should be a Bosniak, whereas Nezavisne Novine claimed that the General Rasim Delic, military advisor to BiH Presidency member Sulejman Tihic, was the most serious candidate for the position. "Minister of Defence in Federation is a Croat and in RS Minister of Defence is a Serb, so it would be logical that a state Minister of Defence is a Bosniak. We will insist in the inter-party negotiations that this position belongs to Bosniaks." – stated Tihic on the issue adding he did not want to speculate on the possible candidates for the position. Oslobodjenje cover, pg 3 'I am not interested in the position of Minister' – Rasim Delic stated for daily that he was not interested in the position, and that he was not yet approached about it. RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Cavic asks for Defence Minister to be Serb and from RS', Oslobodjenje pg 8 'BiH Defence Minister should be from RS', Dnevni List pg 10 'Minister of Defence of BiH should be Serb' – RS President Dragan Cavic stated in Banja Luka on Monday that RS authorities would insist that the future BiH Defence Minister be a Serb representative. Vice President of Democratic Progress Party Goran Milojevic said that the SDA proposal to appoint Rasim Delic was not serious, but was an obstacle in implementation of the defence reform. Milojevic also added that SDA was well aware of the fact that the future Defence Minister has to be a civilian, and that if a principal of civilian control over military was to be implemented, the person could not have such war past as General Delic. Association of RS Prisoners of War also strongly opposes to Delic's appointment accusing him of being the most responsible for war crimes over Serbs. "If he is appointed to that position, the members of the Association will organize protests." – stated Branislav Dukic, President of the Association. BHTV 1 – The vice-president of HDZ Niko Lozancic: "The most logical choice is to have Croat…there are numerous reasons and one of them is that Croats will be least represented in new Armed Forces of BiH". As according to the current structure of the Council of Ministers posts were equally divided between three peoples, Tihic argues: "If any people is going to have one more position then it should go to the most numerous people". Asked for comments on such statement, Lozancic said: "It is difficult to comment Tihic's aspiration, because he wants Bosniaks to have all leading positions." Dragan Cavic: "What we hear from SDA is that Bosniak should lead SIPA, Joint staff, Minister of Defense…what remains for others?" All three sides asserted it was important to start reforms and all other things would be agreed. State Minister of Defence should be appointed in mid-February. Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'SDA and SDS vie over BiH defence minister' – Drago Vukovic, media advisor of Borislav Paravac, stated that RS expects to see the position of BiH defence minister be assumed by Serb representative. According to Vukovic, "Serb side was the one who made most of concessions and compromises during the process of defence reform. Owing to this fact, RS rightfully expects to see Serb representative be the first BiH Defence Minister." He reiterated that no agreement has been reached as yet at the level of BiH Presidency on this appointment. NN were told from Cabinet of Dragan Covic, Chairperson of BH Presidency, that this issue has not still been discussed by political officials of BiH. Slavka Marin, advisor for military affairs to Covic, said that: "Our stance is that the issue of national distribution of positions within the general staff and defence ministry should be settled. And then concrete names would be published."

SFOR searched Vrhpolje village	RTRS, FTV, BHTV 1, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'SFOR looked for illegal weapons', Oslobodjenje pg 8 'SFOR blocked village Vrhpolje', Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 5 'SFOR blocked Vrhpolje', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Search for weapons' – SFOR troops on Monday morning blocked village Vrhpolje near Sanski Most on in a search for hidden weaponry. While SFOR refused to give any details on the case, it has been reported that the village was entirely blocked and that all people coming in and leaving were checked by NATO-led troops. Chris Hut from Canadian battalion said: "It was not a special action, but a part of 'door to door' campaign as part of Harvest activities [carried out] in collaboration with local police." SFOR also promised to report on findings of their investigations on Tuesday.
FTV: FMoI investigates 14 persons over violating weapon export embargo	FTV, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Ante Jelavic and Hasan Cengic suspects for violating embargo on export of weapons', Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Official report against 14 persons', Dnevni List front splash, pg 3 Cengic, Covic, Jelavic and rest under investigation' – FTV on Monday reported that the Police Administration of FBiH Ministry of Interior had submitted the relevant Prosecutorial offices reports against 14 persons over abuse of office and authority. Among names mentioned by the FTV are some former and current senior officials including Ante Jelavic, Hasan Cengic, Dragan Covic and Miroslav Coric. According to the source, the crime in question was breaching of the UN, USA and EU imposed embargo on export of arms from the FBiH, which resulted in financial gain of 2,5 million KMs.
BHTV 1 feature on Intelligence Agency Law	BHTV 1 by Gvozden Sarac – Law on Intelligence Agency should be passed by the end of February as the High Representative Paddy Ashdown set this issue as a priority for BiH authorities. Reported investigated where obstruction could come from. The Deputy Speaker BiH House of Representatives Sefik Dzaferovic commented: "It is already known that obstruction was coming from RS and I hope we can overcome it in next month and a half." Bosko Siljegovic from SDS caucus said the Law should be adopted in same way as Indirect Taxation Law: "If we get approval from RS NA then we can start working on improving and passing the Law". Establishment of the new Intelligence Agency will require significant budget allocation, and BiH Security Minister Security Barisa Colak comments: "It will be difficult to find money under current limitations, but we have to make possible for start of the agency and we expect assistance of international community." The Agency should start operating on March 1.
Powell for NN on fight against terrorism	RTRS, Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 7 'Fight against terrorism is the priority of USA' – In op-ed to NN, Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, says that the US priority in this year will be the fight against terrorism. Another priority of this state concerns improvement of co-operation amongst the biggest world states, because this represents a key of successful outcome of the fight against terrorism. "We are fighting against terrorism as we have to, but we want to make a better world as it is our destiny." – writes Secretary Powel in NN.
Nikolic on upcoming reductions in FBiH Army	Dnevni Avaz cover, pg 5 'For 3700 dismissed settlements over 10.000 KM envisaged' by Edina Sarac – In an interview to DA, FBiH Defence Minister Miroslav Nikolic talked about the upcoming reductions in FBiH Army in accordance with the defence reforms, which is to commence after Government adopts the criteria. Nikolic said that about 4900 troops will be dismissed, and that 37 million KM is needed to be secured for their settlements.
Update on SIPA	Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'SIPA management learned on moving into Zrak premises from papers' – Sredoje Novic, SIPA Director, announced that the contract with the Federal Government and "Zrak" factory will be signed soon, in which order SIPA would be enabled to move into the premises of this factory asap. He also said that SIPA was not officially informed of conclusion of BiH CoM (regarding allocation of Zrak facility), but instead learned of this from papers.

Commission supports state control over arms production	Dnevni Avaz pg 8 ‘Principles of Law on Weaponry production supported’, Oslobodjenje pg 9 ‘State control over military industry’ – State Joint Commission for Defence and Security Policies and the Control over Defence and Security Structures on Monday adopted the draft Law on military production in BiH. According to the Commission member Branko Zrno, this draft Law essentially puts production of weaponry and military equipment under the state control, as proposed by the Council of Ministers, and in the future it should help in avoiding affairs such as it was Orao [of selling arms to Iraq].

Political issues

FBiH HoR session; approval of payment of overdue pension	RHB, BHTV 1, Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Pensions will be paid out half of a pension' Oslobodjenje cover splash, pgs 4&5 'Means for overdue pensions secured' – The FBiH House of Representatives adopted in the draft decision on temporary financing of the Federation for the first quarter of this year. The decision also includes funds for the payment of a half overdue pension and disability pay. In order to make these funds operational the decision needs to be adopted by the FBiH House of Peoples. FTV – FBIH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic: "Financing for the first half of pension is provided and only some technicalities in the Fund need to be completed. Another half of pension depends on budget execution during the year." Several delegates complained that new budget has not yet been prepared while Prime Minister Hadzipasic stated that the draft budget would be available for discussion at the next session. Oslobodjenje pg 5 'We are cheated again!' – Following the FBiH HoR session, President of the Pensioners Association Jozo Ljiljanic stated that this category of population was not satisfied with the decision on the payment of a half of overdue pension, as they were expecting Government to adopt the decision on payment of all three pending pensions. Dnevni List front, pg 3 'Payment of half overdue pension and disability allowance' – FBiH PM, Ahmet Hadzipasic, says the pensioners can expect payment of the other half of overdue pension during the year, which is envisaged in the FBiH Draft budget for 2004, which is estimated t be 1.2 billion KM. "Payment of other overdue claims will depend on overall economic growth and financial discipline in FBiH", says PM Hadzipasic. Oslobodjenje pg 9 'Insufficient number of Bosniaks in Judiciary and Police' – One of important issues that were discussed at the session was "sidelining of Bosniaks by violation of decision on constituent status of people", which was initiated by Mirnes Ajanovic (BOSS) and SDA Caucus. Apparently, there was a lot of criticism about the work of the IC, and the President of SDA Caucus, Semsudin Mehmedovic, presented information about appointment of judges and prosecutors, contesting the quality of some appointed judges and prosecutors and criteria used by the High Prosecutorial and Judicial Councils. In this context, DL reports that a conclusion was passed that a commission, whose task would be to prepare a resolution on representation of constituent peoples in bodies of authority, be formed. Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'It is clear that Oja made mistake and offended Bosniaks' – In addition, SDA Vice President Bakir Izetbegovic addressed the delegates and criticised Head of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council Jan Erik Oja over Bosniak representation in judiciary.

Bosniaks seek protection of national interests in RS	BHTV 1, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg 5 'Changes would increase number of Serb citizens for 50.000!', Oslobodjenje pg 4 'Protection of vital national interest', Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'Bosniaks oppose to addenda to Republika Srpska Law on citizenship' – The Bosniak Caucus in the RS Council of Peoples decided to set into motion the mechanism for the protection of the vital national interest on the issue of changes to the RS citizenship law. Caucus Chair Ramiz Salkic told at the press conference held on Monday that changes to this law are in violation of the BiH citizenship law. He explained that changes to the RS law following the word 'residence' add 'or stay' and that Bosniaks think that this is in contradiction with the law at the BiH level, which makes no mention of this. Bosniak delegates think that this could impact a large number of people and that it could undermine the ethnic structure. He added that according to their figures between 50.000 and 60.000 citizens would receive the right of RS citizenship with this change. The RS Council of Peoples is planned to meet around January 20. Desanka Radjevic, Head of the Serb Representatives Club said that this request for protection of vital interests is a political hypocrisy.
CoM session: budget not adopted	RHB, Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Return Fund to be established', Oslobodjenje pg 5 'State institutions still without budget', Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Soon appointment of the Return Fund director' – The BiH Council of Ministers did not discuss the draft BiH budget for 2004 at its session held on Monday, despite the time being included in the agenda. The Council stated that these documents have not completed the required procedure, i.e. that they were not discussed by the boards for internal policy and economy. BiH Civil Affairs Minister Safet Halilovic said after the session that the budget issue is an important one and that there are a number of dilemmas that will surface during future debates. At the proposal of the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the CoM started the procedure for establishing the Return Fund. Activities include the appointment of the Fund director, which is one of the priorities from the EU Council of Ministers Commission Report on starting talks on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. FTV, BHTV 1, Oslobodjenje pg 6 '200.000 KM out of the state budget' – Council of Ministers decided to provide urgent 200.000 KM assistance to Iran following the earthquake.

FTV feature on constituency of peoples	FTV by Tomislav Djuric – SDA initiated establishment of the parliamentary Commission, within FBiH House of Representatives, on representation of constituent peoples, however but reporter says that it turned out all constituent people felt underrepresented. Bosniak representatives, first of all SDA representatives, were provoked by lack of equal representation of Bosniaks in judicial institutions. Vice President of SDA Bakir Izetbegovic commented: "It seems there is a project to suppress Bosniaks in accordance with somebody's criteria". HDZ complained over representation of Croats in media, Ivan Madunic said: "Employment balance in media reflect current Serb-Bosniak division of BiH". SNSD also complained over non-respect of constitutional amendments. If the commission provides support for SDA complaints then High Representative would be confronted not only with one party. Opposition suggested another way to deal with this issue, by passing constitution amendments first and then to change them without OHR.
DA on BH parliamentarian Mirko Blagojevic	Dnevni Avaz cover splash, pg 2 'Chetnick Duke in BiH Paliament!' – DA says that the biography of delegate to BiH Parliament Mirko Blagojevic that can be found at the institution's official web site, reads as follows: "I took part in the war, and for services in Knezina monastery was named Serb Chetnick Duke." Blagojevic is a representative of Serb Radical Union dr. Vojislav Seselj within BiH House of Representatives.
Mostar update	Dnevni List pg 2 'Final division of Mostar' by Ivica Glibusic – DL argues that " Mostarians hoped that their city would be organized as other cities in the FBiH, but it seems they were wrong The recipe from the OHR's cuisine is adopted only in Mostar and nowhere else, many politicians and political parties have mouth full of fight against parallelism in the city and canton, whilst, when it comes to organization of Mostar, they advocate instatement of the same. One should not hold the politicians responsible, because that was expected from them. On the other hand, international officials who are here to implement law and order, should be held accountable", says Glibusic. The author also criticizes the Proposal prepared by the Chairman of Mostar Commission, Norbert Winterstein, the bit about the electoral rules in particular, saying that "nobody mentions the apartheid foreseen by Winterstein's proposal of organization of Mostar, where in future elections for the City Council, a vote of one member of one people will be less worth than a vote of one member of other people. To put it simply, the people that has the majority in the city, will be the minority in the authority (…) Similar type of elections was applied only in South Africa, where the Blacks were the majority, but minority in power". Glibusic's conclusion is that Mostar will remain a divided city with national tensions, which will be used for daily politics, even after the process has been completed.

Update on HNK Government	Dnevni List front, pg 7 'Semin Boric: Coric takes illegal decisions' by Vedran Kljajic – The Finance Minister in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC), Semin Boric, told DL that the Bosniak Ministers in the HNC Government would return to actively participate in the work of the said Government once the HNC PM, Miroslav Coric, has re-examined some of his decision, for which Boric believes to be illegal. "When Coric ensures full equality and takes into consideration positions of Bosniak Ministers, we are ready to get involved in the work of HNC Government", says Boric, noting that the 4 Bosniak Ministers do their job within respective ministries on daily basis.
Patriot interview with Dragan Mikerevic	Patriot magazine pgs 12-14 'We will fight crime and corruption' – In an interview to Patriot, RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, says that he wished the RS Government had done much more than it actually had in the past year. However, he notes that the results achieved by his Cabinet should be regarded in the light of realistic possibilities and potentials of Republika Srpska, as well as the complexity of relations and problems, with which this entity is faced. Regarding this, he adds that: "Under these circumstances, Government has managed to ensure the openness of Republika Srpska towards international community. A great value is that international community has accepted this Government and also that this Government holds credibility with European Union and USA." On initiative of European parliamentarians regarding Dayton revision, he presents the Republika Srpska Government stance that state institutions cannot strengthen at the expense of entity institutions. According to him, we will not allow that the strengthening of state institutions involves weakening of entity institutions. He stresses Government will not allow centralisation and unitarisation of BiH, because the only way how BiH can be perspective is if its constitutional structure is decentralised.
BH Parliamentarians discuss Law on their rights and obligations	Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Delegates with two mandates can go to pension', Oslobodjenje cover, pg 5 'Delegates want to legalize privileges' – BiH House of Peozxples' Commission for Financial and Administration Tasks on Monday discussed the draft Law on duties and obligations of representatives and delegates, which envisages a number of benefits for BiH parliamentarians. Member of the Commission, Velimir Jukic, confirmed for daily that the text of draft Law was established, but also several amendments to it without wanting to give more details on their content. If the Law is passed, representatives and delegates will be able to go into pension at age of 55, which is 10 years before all other working citizens, and a number of other privileges such as life insurance.

Oslobodjenje editorial on ruling authorities and HR Ashdown	Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Ashdown's threats' editorial by Mirko Sagolj – Following announcement by the OHR on three priorities for 2004 – security, judiciary and Mostar – author writes that the HR Paddy Ashdown "keeps dictating authorities new tasks, while old one keep piling. And he keeps threatening that he will not bring BiH to Europe unless these are implemented. Ashdown either doesn't understand or he doesn't want to publicly admit that ruling nationalist [parties]… are anything but interested in Europe. They are well this way, as they can do anything they want to bring the division of this country into three national feuds to the end." Editorial goes on saying that this time OHR also delivered additional 'threat' to authorities by saying that they will be punished if tasks were not implemented on time. "Experience so far showed that domestic politicians are actually afraid only of – punishment. They are afraid of being dismissed from their functions which provide them with perversely high benefits in comparison with possibilities here. Therefore, sometimes they give impression of working in the interest of pro-European BiH. However, Ashdown to date dismissed, mostly, innocent people. People to blame for difficult situation in which BiH finds itself – nationalist parties and their leaders – he encouraged to return to power, he tolerated their destructive behaviour and only few of them pressured to withdraw. If he keeps like that, these three additional tasks will be able to solve – by him. Or to give up on Europe." – concludes the editorial.

Economic issues

Eronet certain of being awarded the licence	RHB, Oslobodjenje pg 5 ‘Only Eronet fulfils the conditions’, Dnevni Avaz pg 9 ‘CRA must not discriminate private capital when issuing the third GSM licence’ – The chairman of the Eronet Supervisory Board, Robert Gavranovic, issued a statement expressing his belief that the licence for the third GSM operator will be granted exclusively to Eronet, for only Eronet meets all legal requirements for being granted this licence. “Considering obvious tendencies of politicising this problem and exerting pressure on judiciary, the Eronet Supervisory Board once again appeals to all relevant home and international factors to reject the criteria of politics and politicisation in decision-making, and to go only by the official criteria prescribed by the CRA” – reads the press release concluding: “If the responsible persons in these bodies abide by the law, Eronet is sure to get the licence for the third GSM operator.”

Croat DemoChristians write to Covic on Eronet	RHB, Oslobodjenje pg 5 ‘Eronet is in ownership of tycoon’, Dnevni Avaz pg 9 ‘Claims that Bosniak leaders were behind conspiracy against Eronet are nothing but a trick’ – Croat Demo Christians sent a letter to the President of the BiH Presidency Dragan Covic regarding the events around Aluminium and Eronet. In the letter they have accused Covic of equalizing the problems of two companies: “Any attempt of politicizing the case of Eronet and its equalizing with the situation in Aluminij in the terms of conspiracy of Bosniac political structures is an ordinary trick. You still have a chance to lessen the damage done and to make the third GSM operator to be a public company as well as that Croatian budget users and all people finally benefit from that”, says the letter.

Halilovic on Ploce Agreement	Dnevni List pg 5 ‘Croatia applies pressure on BiH’, Dnevni Avaz pg 9 ‘New pressure against BiH to accept Ploce Agreement’ – BiH Minister of Civil Affairs, Safet Halilovic, commenting on the Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader’s announcement on construction of bridge that would connect the mainland (of Croatia) and the Peljesac peninsula, thus bypassing Neum en route to Dubrovnik, says the announcement’s aim is to apply pressure of BiH to make it more flexible, “in other words to accept any conditions when it comes to Neum and Ploce Port”. Minister Halilovic believes it is important for Croatia to solve the issue by May, because come May time, Croatia’s status as one of candidates for EU membership will be decided upon.

War crimes

Srebrenica Commission	Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘Srebrenica Commission sets its plan of work’ – Marko Arsovic, President of Srebrenica Commission, confirmed to NN that at yesterday’s meeting in Banjaluka, Commission has set the plan for its work. In this order, the task given could be accomplished within the stipulated deadline of six months. He said that yesterday’s meeting was attended by five members of the Commission, while those absent were ICRC representative and Sarajevo Institute for crimes against humanity. Owing to absence of two of its members, the Commission is to adopt the final version of the plan at its next session on 10 January. According to announcements from OHR, the report is to be completed by 14 April. Patriot magazine pgs 12-14 ‘We will fight crime and corruption’ – In an interview to Patriot, RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic responded to press question whether Srebrenica Commission would have respected the deadline of 14 April, by which it should submit report on developments in Srebrenica in 1995, expressing expectation that this job would have been completed on time, which is of extreme importance for the future of Republika Srpska.

Media

DL on PBS law	Dnevni List pg 4 ‘Kukic: No disputable issues in making Draft Law’ by I. Glibusic – DL carries that a meeting of the working group tasked to draft the Laws on Public RTV System and Public Broadcasting Service was held in Sarajevo on Monday. Slavo Kukic, a working group member, says for DL that the group yesterday worked on polishing the Drafts up. Kukic adds the work has not been finished but dynamics of the completion of the work was set (one week) after which another meeting will be held. He believes there would be no disputable issues in the text, adding that it is expected that the FBiH Government solved the issue of signing the contract between HT Mostar and BiH Telecom with FTV at its Thursday’s session.
NN on collection of subscription	Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘The problem of fee to be settled by Friday’ – The Directors of two telecom operators in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, PBS and FTV yesterday addressed a request to Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, demanding from it to settle the issue on payment of TV fees along with phone bills.