

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 8/11/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Six senior SDP BiH officials request change of the statute – It is enough to have only Bosniaks on the to party position!; Entities, Brcko District sign an agreement – Fuel prices to increase again

Dnevni Avaz: Shocking findings of a Zagreb daily – Alibabic falsely accused Puljic of terrorism as well; Agreement on (oil) taxes signed in Sarajevo – Lower fuel prices in BiH for seven more days

Dnevni List: Oil will be expensive again!; SIPA agency starts working

Vecernji List: Karadzic hides on Ozren; Trial to Ivan Bender began

Glas Srpski: Certification denied to Bijeljina Public Security Centre Head – Human rights for injustice?; We did not violate embargo

Nezavisne Novine: Oil war in Bosnia finished – Oil more expensive as of 15 November; Police search “Orao”

FRY Nacional: Jugoimport SDPR finances Milosevic’s defense and Orao financed Karadzic’s security guards

Blic: Nebojsa Radmanovic, SNSD: “We, 42 representatives, are waiting the PDP’s position”; Zlatko Lagumdžija, SDP: “Ashdown as well is responsible for the Council of Ministers”; Bosnian secret dinners: Paddy Ashdown meets representatives of national parties, while Ambassador Clifford Bond meets representatives of moderate parties

Slobodna Bosna: How did the High Representative prevent apprehension of Radovan Karadzic – A Criminal “Padyphilia”

BH Dani: Shocking – A testimony of a raped, seven-year old girl

Oil market in BiH

The agreement on a single oil derivatives market was signed in

Sarajevo on Thursday. The agreement stipulates that the two entities have to return to the previous petrol price by 15 November, while the Brcko District has to introduce a road tax by the New Year. In order to comply with the existing stand-by arrangements with the International Monetary Fund the entities have to harmonize all indirect taxation on oil derivatives. This is why it has been agreed that by 15 November at the latest the entities will once again start applying indirect taxes on oil derivatives, which were in force on 30 October. The Brcko District agreed that for the purpose of forming a single market the scope and application of indirect taxation on oil derivatives would be completely harmonized with the two entities. The Brcko District also agreed to introduce indirect taxation amounting to 0.15 KM. This tax will come into force by 31 December at the latest. *"This agreement and measures which will be adopted by the governments of the RS and the BiH Federation very soon, and by the Brcko District by the end of the year, will ensure the harmonization. For the first time we shall have a real harmonization of excise and tax duties on oil derivatives, and a true single economic area. Above all this will provide for the acquisition of public revenue and create a healthy competition amongst oil companies in BiH,"* said **Anto Domazet**, the BiH Treasury Minister, at a press conference following the meeting held at an initiative by the BiH Council of Ministers and the Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**. Hays for his part said that the OHR supported the agreement and he had been informed the IMF officials were pleased with such the outcome as well. The agreement also stipulates that the entities and Brcko District will undertake significant steps so that inter-entity permits for excise goods are issued in a just and transparent way. The measures will contribute to the lawful sale and to the distribution of excise revenue. The agreement comes into force immediately. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7, announced on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, mentioned on the front page, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 3, **Blic**, p 7)

Dnevni List (front and page 3, by Irena Barbaric) carries that the agreement on the creation of the unified economic space in the area of oil products was signed. DL says that people from the International Monetary Fund are the ones who first noticed that a different level of tax in BiH is a threat to a stand-by

arrangement and for this reason the **OHR** speeded up to arrange the meeting of the responsible ones. DL also carries that according to a BiH practice, the attempt to reach the agreement could not pass without the intervention of strangers. Since it was noticed that the participants of the meeting are late with the signing of the agreement, **Donald Hays**, the Principle Deputy High Representative, came to the meeting obviously excited and Hays invited **Sinisa Kisic**, the Mayor of the Brcko District, for a separate talk in a neighboring hall. Kisic was obviously dissatisfied with the agreement and he stated this after the signing, however, after the Hays' intervention the agreement was signed. **Ivica Zovko**, the owner of company 'Zovko' from Zepce, which is the biggest importer of oil products in BiH, stated that he welcomes this decision although increasing of the prices of oil will not bring any profit to him. Zovko added: *"Due to a recent reduction of prices only the state budget was damaged while the network stayed the same to importers and distributors and it will be so this time as well. This agreement will certainly ease the work and existence of this kind of companies, however, I stress that, when the oil importers are in question, this state has become a marsh with a lot of crocodiles!"* **Vecernji List** (front page, p 3&13) also covered this issue.

De-certification of the Sarajevo Canton Special policemen, Bijeljina policemen

The **IPTF** (International Police Task Force) decision **to revoke work permits of Sarajevo cantonal (special) policemen** has provoked negative reactions among the policemen. Reactions are stormy on the account of doubts about the rightfulness of IPTF Commissioner Sven Fredericksen's decision. The confederation of the independent trade unions of the BiH Federation police demands that the IPTF reconsider its decision. The Sarajevo cantonal police trade union has asked the BiH trade union HQ to protect it in connection with the decision to revoke work permits. *"The confederation of the BiH trade unions has sent a*

request to the IPTF commissioner to reconsider decisions regarding work permits of policemen in the Sarajevo canton as well as in other cantons in BiH, because we have established that he has unfortunately violated the basic human rights of some policemen. We requested that he reconsider his decision. Mr Frederickson has put himself above law and courts and human rights conventions, and he has passed a judgment in advance," said **Edhem Biber**, the president of the BiH confederation of the independent trade unions. The president of the Association of the Federation police independent trade unions, **Hamdo Melez**, emphasized that, first, they would try to stop this from being implemented until the legal validity of the decision to revoke work permits is established. "If there is no positive outcome, then we shall use other legal means: protection through legal institutions, starting with our regular courts and going all the way to UN courts for human rights," he added. (**BHTV 1, Oslobođenje**, pages 4-5, mentioned on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 11)

Head of the Public Security Centre in **Bijeljina** Radomir Marjanovic said on Thursday that himself and **55 police officers in this centre have not received permanent certificates for work** in the police force. He said that IPTF Commissioner Sven Frederiksen also refused to award the permanent certificate to head of the crime police Zoran Petric, adding that a check-up of another 100 policemen was under way. The reasons for this are different and they vary from lack of school diplomas, war past, and overstepping of authorization. Marjanovic said that Petric and himself will not perform their duties starting from Friday. Marjanovic said that the IPTF explanation states that he did not demonstrate abilities to respect human rights, and added that this IPTF decision is connected to the case of a several persons who robbed an exchange office in Valjevo and killed the owner. Marjanovic said the Police learned that those people were hiding in Bijeljina, but at the time did not have any evidence on their criminal activities in Bijeljina. Marjanovic then extradited them to Valjevo. Marjanovic said he has been denied licence because he extradited these people to Serbia and they did not want to go there, which means that he violated these

criminal' human rights. **Glas Srpski** (front page), **Nezavisne Novine** (p 6).

Orao Affair

Nezavisne Novine reports that the RS Police are checking the **Orao** Institute. Representatives of the Ministry of Interior Administration and Crime Police entered the building after the RS Tax Administration, the RS Supreme Auditor and RS Defence Ministry's Commission had finished the inspection. Bijeljina-based Orao Aviation Institute yesterday issued a press release, which states that the Institute did not violate the UN Security Council embargo on export of weapons to Iraq. The representatives of the Institute find the measures, taken by the RS Government, drastic and incomprehensible. The Institute claims that its production program does not include the production of weapons and military equipment and as a proof for this statement the Institute calls on the Decision on classification of goods on forms of export and import (RS Official Gazette 31/97) and the Decision on classification of goods on regimes of export and import (BiH Official Gazette 22/98 and 30/02). The Institute claims that the SFOR Commander did not have the grounds to report the Orao location to SFOR and that the RS Defence Ministry reported the location because it was under pressure by the SFOR Commander, which was at variance with the Instruction to the parties. *"All these documents treat turbo jet engines as the goods that are under free trade regime and are not classified as weapons. Orao Aviation Institute has never concealed the information, nor has it ever provided RS Defence Ministry's commission with false information. For the reasons unknown to us the IC and RS institutions have launched an unseen campaign against "Orao"',* states the press release. The paper quotes an Orao manager **Teodosije Kecman** as denying the statement made by Dragan Cavic that Orao provided the RS Defence Ministry Commission with false information. He said that neither RS Army HQ nor Defence Ministry or others want to take a stand on this issue. Kecman said that Orao did not export anything to Iraq. He also claims that RS politicians are trying to save their own skin. *"What they are doing is wrong. They think if someone from the Orao gets caught that they will stay clean. Orao is a very*

successful company. Unfortunately, our politicians and world politicians do not think that such a company should exist here", said Kecman. (**Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 2, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Blic**, p 7, **FRY Nacional**, p 5)

Nebojsa Radmanovic, SNSD party, invited the RS President, Dragan Cavic, to state precisely who was responsible for military equipment exports to Iraq. He explained that the representatives of the authorities should, as soon as possible, say who was responsible, in order to know who would bear sanctions because currently "the entire RS suffers". (**Blic**, p 7, **FRY Nacional**, p 5)

Post-election developments

The BiH Social Democratic Party (**SDP**) will hold its emergency congress in Sarajevo on 23 November, the SDP announced on Thursday. In addition to the incumbent, Zlatko Lagumdzija, there are 28 other candidates for the post of SDP president including Bogic Bogicevic, Alija Behmen, Selim Beslagic, Miro Lazovic, Sejfidin Tokic, Ivo Komsic and Mirsad Dzapo. The decision to hold an emergency congress was passed by the party's main board in response to the bad election results. (**Dnevni Avaz** p 3)

According to the Oslobodjenje front-page story (continued on the p 6), six prominent members and senior officials of SDP BiH, Sead Avdic, Tatjana Ljubic-Mijatovic, Esad Zgodic, Ivo Komsic, Miro Lazovic and Sejfidin Tokic held an informal meeting in Sarajevo on Thursday. They concluded the long-lasting tradition of having a Bosniak on the top party post should be stopped. They are also intending to propose several strategic decisions at the upcoming party congress, including the one stipulating that from now on the SDP President is elected for one-year term.

Glas Srpski (p 2) and **Nezavisne Novine** (p 5), quote **SDS Spokesman Dusan Stojicic** as saying after the SDS Main Board session that the SDS Main Board is of the opinion that that the parties, which currently make the parliamentary majority, should form the government. He said that the SDS leadership is

tasked with negotiating the formation of parliamentary majority with these parties (PDP, SPRS, Pensioners' Party and some other smaller parties. He said that the RS NA inaugural session will probably take place between 15th and 20th of November. He said that it is impossible to form a parliamentary majority without PDP, adding that SDS believes that PDP will continue to cooperate with its current coalition partners.

OHR/International community's activities, related commentaries

The Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, and the Head of the CAFAO Office in BiH, Alan Jensen, sent a letter to the Heads of the BiH Federation Customs and Tax Administrations, Zelimir Rebac and Midhat Arifovic, hailing their efforts in combating tax and customs frauds in the entity. They emphasized that any attempt of undermining the work of these crucial services by either political or criminal groups would not be tolerated. (Dnevni Avaz, p 2, Oslobođenje, p 4)

The OHR Spokesman, Patrik Volf, told journalists in Sarajevo on Thursday that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, was encouraged by a consensus reached a day earlier among the representatives of the major BiH political parties about the need for reform of the BiH Council of Ministers and the abolishment of the rotation principle at the chairman's post. (Dnevni Avaz, p 2)

Nezavisne Novine reports (p 4) that representatives of Croat and Bosniak parties that attended the meeting with SDHR Schroombgens claim that Serb parties are against the transformation of Council of Ministers. On the other hand Serb representatives denied these allegations. Representatives of Serb parties say that they are not against the elimination of the rotation principle, and added that what is important for them is to preserve the mechanisms of ethnic consensus and parity. **Nebojsa Radmanovic (SNSD)** and **Dragan Mikerevic (PDP)**

said they are not opposing the elimination of the rotation principle, and added that the principles of parity and ethnic consensus have to be preserved. **Glas Srpski** reported on the same issue (p 2: "As Constitution says"). It also quotes (p 5) **SDS Spokesman Dusan Stojicic** as saying that the basic principles of CoM's work, that is, the parity, consensus, and rotation, cannot be violated. He said that SDS is taking part in negotiations on transformation of the CoM, and especially on the elimination of the rotation principle, but no agreement regarding this issue has been reached yet.

The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is scheduled on November 17 to visit Sarajevo where he will meet with the BiH state leadership and discuss the current political development in the country particularly with regard to a lack of cooperation with the ICTY and affairs related to the violation of the UN arms embargo on Iraq. (Dnevni Avaz, p 2, Oslobodjenje, p 3, Dnevni List, p 2)

Vecernji List (page 2, by G. Knezovic, "Lawyers propose agreement on protectorate") carries editorial in which author reminds that High Representative **Paddy Ashdown**, since his arrival May 27, has brought more than fifty obligatory decisions, that have been understood as strengthening of protectorate. *"Legal experts in and outside BiH, when analysing undefined legal status in BiH, notice that domestic institutions are not capable of implementing legal measures, and that it is necessary that protectorate of international representatives replaces them. They also notice that authorities of international representatives, especially the High Representative in BiH, are increasing, and that real protectorate, much stronger than it is defined by the Dayton Accord, is actually present. (...) Some legal experts propose that for BiH it is necessary to make an agreement on time limited protectorate"*, says the author.

In an opening editorial in this week's Slobodna Bosna ("The Great Dictator or the High Representative"), the magazine's

Editor-in-Chief, Senad Avdic, wrote that Paddy Ashdown had once cooperative and communicative OHR public relations sector transformed into a darkest possible AGITPROP-like (referring to the former communist agitation and propaganda departments) headquarters designed only to strengthen the reputation of the High Representative and accordingly form public opinion. The good example for such claims is, according to Avdic, recent publication of the allegations that Ashdown prevented the apprehension of the most wanted war crime suspect Radovan Karadzic. Avdic emphasized that following the publication of these allegations, Ashdown's AGITPROP had started its dangerous campaign of 'violence' over journalists and editors rejecting any Ashdown's participation in lightening the truth. *"And the most important question is being ignored, the question which has initiated the affair: Why last summer Radovan Karadzic was not apprehended when he was surrounded in a Orthodox Church in the wider region of Ozern, and who ordered not to arrest him and his bodyguards?"*, Avdic wonders.

Slobodna Bosna's Asim Metiljevic wrote in this week's issue of the magazine an article about the OHR and raise of the salaries in CRA. According to Metiljevic, the BiH Council of Ministers first rejected and than approved the increase of the CRA employees' salaries. *"Such an irresponsible interference in the distribution of budgetary funds by OHT creates an entire benefited bureaucratic class that is fully separated from the economic reality of the society,"* Metiljevic concludes.

"Paddy Ashdown was not democratically elected by anyone in the October 5 BiH general elections, and he is explaining that his reform project and not nationalists won the elections," said David Chandler, a professor at the respectable Brunel Univeristy in London, who has been fiercely criticizing the international community's policy in BiH, in an interview with this week's Slobodna Bosna.

Alibabic's removal

The list of scandals that are in relation to the removed FOSS Director Munir Munja Alibabic is every day longer and longer. As reported under the sign "exclusive" by the Zagreb daily Vecernji List on Thursday, particularly irritating was leak of intelligence data according to which the Head of the BiH Islamic Community, Mustafa Ceric, and BiH Cardinal Vinko Puljic might be connected to some terrorists and extreme nationalists. In addition, an information that Zlatko Miletic, their favorite, has been appointed BiH Federation Police Commissioner shows that Alibabic and his sponsor Zlatko Lagumdzija do not rest. (Dnevni Avaz, front page, p 4: "Alibabic falsely accused Puljic of terrorism as well")

Vecernji List (front and page 15, by Robert Bubalo, title "*Radovan Karadzic is on Ozren*") carries article in which removed Head of FOSS **Munir Alibabic Munja** says that **Radovan Karadzic**, indicted war criminal, is hiding on mountain Ozren, between Doboj and Tuzla. Alibabic stated that High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** is not willing to listen information about movement of Karadzic. "*Ashdown used to say that he doesn't need such things. Among his closer associates, Ashdown would even say that the war crimes are history*", Alibabic said. Removed Head of FOSS also stated that if there wasn't for individuals from International Community who protect Karadzic, arresting him would be a child's game. "*SFOR was sometimes reacting in this way – Don't send us information if Karadzic is somewhere close to religious objects, we can not discredit ourselves – and Karadzic was surrounded in one religious object for 15 days, and they did not arrest him*", Alibabic says. Alibabic claims that lord Ashdown knows that military and civil secret services are co-ordinating Karadzic's security, but the High Representative co-operates with them and gives them certificates. Alibabic also said that Ashdown will not undertake any action, if there is no American pressure, adding that "*the lord is simply glad that Karadzic is hiding so successfully*". However, the author of the article says that some international sources claim that Alibabic was removed for the same thing he accuses others, for protecting

ERO, Eronet cases

Vecernji List (front and page 3, by Zoran Kresic, title *"Bender: Ero is still in ownership of Pension Fund"*) reads that trial to **Ivan Bender**, former General Manager of Pension Fund MIO Mostar and high-ranked official of HDZ, **Mario Boras**, Manager of "TUH-Invest" and **Nikola Antunovic**, former President of Steering Board of Pension Fund MIO Mostar, started yesterday. Bender pleaded not guilty on all claims of accusations, i.e. misuse of office and embezzlement in sale of Hotel "ERO" at price "much lower than the real one". Bender claimed that loan taken from TUH-Invest for pay out of pensions could have been returned in 2001, but 14 million KM of this Fund were blocked in 'Hercegovacka banka' due to SFOR raid. Bender added that neither Provisional Administrator **Toby Robinson**, nor OHR, nor ex Minister **Nikola Grabovac** tried to help Pension Fund to re-gain that money.

Dnevni list (page 9, by Zoran Vidic, title *"Putting money in pockets of relatives and friends"*) continues with a chronology on the illegal **Eronet** privatisation (NB: see previous issues of "Cropress") by saying that disputable contract between the Ministry of Defence and HPT, according to former Federation Minister of Defence **Vladimir Soljic**, was not signed at all. In a circle of his close associates Soljic stated that war operations were a higher priority to him in 1995, then laying cable for HPT lines. Allegedly, Soljic asked responsibility from Covic and his associates at Presidency of HDZ in 1998, but, as the daily says, Covic's lobby was strong at the time, and Soljic was marginalized after that.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Thursday, 1900)

- BIH against FRY hearing, decision to be made next year
- Old oil prices after November 15
- RS MoI inspectors are checking out the Orao factory's performance
- US initiative for adoption of resolution on Iraq

FTV 1 (1930)

- Fourth day of hearing on court's jurisdiction regarding BiH indictment against FRY
- RS Helsinki Committee for Human Rights claims: the most of the indictments against Bosniaks and Croats are result of political aims
- Desertification of 22 Sarajevo Cantonal police officers can have influence on security situation
- Transition agreement related to oil derivatives has been signed between Federation, RS and Brcko District

RTRS (1930)

- "Orao" rejects accusations on violation of UN embargo
- Agreement on harmonized prices of oil derivatives in BiH has been signed
- IPTF denied certificates to Head of Bijeljina Public Security Center and 54 police officers from Bijeljina and Zvornik