

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 9/1/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Cold wave in BiH	Djindjic's statement	Etas Valves Company	RS Day – 9 th January
No list of lawyers – OHR	CoM establishment	OHR – CoM	Cavic reception
Kostajnica murders	Etas Valves Company	Milan Milutinovic	No celebration in Brcko
Milutinovic	US plane crash	US plane crash	Second day of Xmas

Oslobodjenje	20 thousand taken ill in the Federation; Control of pensions – inspectors still have not entered PIO Institute?, Strike in ZDK – minister will go on strike against himself?, Hague – Plavsic witness at Stakic's trial, A car accident near Bugojno – a bus overturned trying to avoid a an accident
Dnevni Avaz	Djindjic's new attack on BiH, What was CIA looking for in Bugojno – the same person an architect for Saddam's and Tito's bunker?, A letter to officials – removed from FOSS want their rights, Fake humanitarians – Ljiljana and husband Djordjevic admitted the fraud
Dnevni List	Members of HVO will achieve their rights in BiH; Federation PM Behmen – pensions were paid out according to unanimous decision by the government
Vecernji List	BiH a country of biggest pessimists; VL reporters with returnees to Kakanj – job in Kakanj is sheer lottery
Slobodna Dalmacija	Kostajnica expects every night in fear; Topalovic on psychiatric evaluation

Nezavisne Novine	The snow and glaze make travel conditions difficult: Nowhere without winter equipment; Anto Domazet, BiH Treasury Minister: BiH institutions should have original income; Niko Lozancic: HDZ requests abolishment of entities; CIPS project slowed down: the issuance of new ID cards to start at the end of January
Blic	Snow paralyses southwestern RS; OHR: Domestic politicians to decide about division of customs revenues; IDs late because of computers; European policemen exercise strictness; Dodik: Exaggerated reaction from Sarajevo

Djindjic's statement

Reactions to Djindjic's statement	<p>Avaz pg. 1, 2 and 3, Oslobođenje pg. 3 (three articles) 'Attack on BiH's sovereignty', 'Zoran Djindjic had Kosovo problem in mind', 'OHR – there should be no argument about borders'.</p> <p>Reactions to Djindjic's statement to 'Der Spiegel' that in case Kosovo was granted independence the lost territory should be made up for by annexing parts of BiH.</p> <p>Sulejman Tihic, BiH Presidency member, stated that the statement represented support to forces of division and new clashes. "This statement by Djindjic is a direct attack on sovereignty and integrity of BiH, and it clashes with everything all signed agreements and joint statements of FRY and BiH officials." He further added that BiH public was expecting from the Yugoslav government to distance from the statement, since this was not his first statement of such sort.</p> <p>Cristina Gallach, Solana's Spokeswoman, stated that there was no need to organise any sort of conferences to discuss borders. "The time when state borders of Balkan countries were defined is behind us." She further added that there was no connection between the Kosovo status and a status of any other country in the region. "Such statements are unacceptable for the EU." Gallach said Solana never talked to Djindjic about the issue. The article also carried an insert entitled 'Arrival on Tuesday' – about Solana's visit to BiH to officially open the EUPM.</p> <p>Greek representative in the EU said 'Greece did not have anything to add to the statement from Solana's office'. (Vecernje Novosti pg. 2)</p> <p>Julian Braithwaite, OHR Spokesperson, told Avaz that Kosovo was under an international administration, as defined by a UN SC resolution. "Serbia is not internationally recognised country, and BiH is a country recognised through international agreements. Therefore, a parallel could not be drawn between the three subjects." Dnevni List pg. 7 carries a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Oleg Milisic, as saying that the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown's, view is that borders in Europe are not subjects of international conferences. "Whatever the status of Kosovo, this will not effect neighboring sovereign states," says Milisic.</p> <p>The SDA Vice President, Elmir Jahic, views the statement of Serbian Prime Minister as another confirmation that even after the fall of Slobodan Milosevic's regime, nothing has changed essentially in relations of the Serbian authorities towards BiH. Jahic emphasised that Djindjic and others had to accept that BiH was an independent state.</p> <p>Niko Lozancic, Vice President of HDZ BiH. "It has become disgusting to comment statements of politicians from neighbouring countries all the time. As these are anti-Dayton statements, I expect the international community to dismiss Mr. Djindjic."</p> <p>Sahbaz Dzihanovic reminded Djindjic that the problem of Kosovo is an internal problem of his country, a member of the SBiH Presidency, stated that BiH was an independent, sovereign and internationally recognised country.</p> <p>SDP said that the statement is aimed at causing of new political divisions in BiH.</p> <p>Milorad Dodik, SNSD leader, stated that the statement represented the official Belgrade's standpoint and that FRY had the right to certain things related to the Dayton Agreement.</p> <p>"Djindjic's statement should be seen as one of the initiatives, nothing more."</p> <p>Dragan Mikerevic, Vice President of the PPP, stated that any change of the borders in the region would cause big problems.</p> <p>Djindjic's Cabinet emphasised in an announcement that one should not deny the DPA, which outlines the state sovereignty of BiH, but out of the same reasons Serbian sovereignty should not be denied either. The statement further read that the IC was obliged to apply same standards in regards to respecting every country's territory integrity.</p> <p>Vladan Batic, Serbian Justice Minister, interpreted Djindjic's call for another DPA was only to discuss the issue of Kosovo and Metohija and not to revise the existing DPA. He added that principles of the DPA should not be ignored in the process of resolving the Kosovo issue.</p> <p>According to Batic, a reaction from the BiH Foreign Ministry was premature since there was no need for it. The reaction (which Batic gave to Radio B 92) is the only one so far by an official from Belgrade following a condemnation of Djindjic's statement by the BiH Foreign Ministry.</p> <p>Bajram Rexhepi, Kosovo Prime Minister, said that the statement was confusing and unclear, but it was still a positive step forward 'as an acceptance that a new reality in Kosovo had been created, no matter whether leaders in Belgrade wanted that or not'. "His statement is very unclear. He did not specify which borders he had in mind and whether he was referring to the other Kosovo borders apart from that with Serbia or whether he meant that Kosovo should be divided," Rexhepi said, according to Zeri, the Pristina-based paper in the Albanian language. (Vecernje Novosti pg. 2, Blic pg. 3)</p> <p>Nebojsa Covic, President of the Co-ordination Centre for Kosovo, said that Djindjic's statement was one of the ideas on how to solve the problem in the province. "We will support the division of Kosovo as long as other side supports the independence," Covic said, adding that personally he was not for Kosovo division, but for achieving standards of multiethnic life in the province. (Blic pg. 3)</p> <p>Rada Trajkovic, a delegate of the 'Povrtak' coalition, said that Djindjic wanted to show that Kosovo problem was a difficult one, and that was not only Serbia's problem, but also a problem of the whole region. "If Kosovo gets independence, then there will be question what to do with the RS and some other places because all of them would be guided by that principle," Trajkovic said. (Blic pg. 3)</p> <p>The US Council for Foreign Policy in its two-year report put 'the direct negotiations of Belgrade and Pristina' among priorities of the US policy 'in former Yugoslavia'. In the Council's report it is said that in the period 2002-2004 direct talks Belgrade-Pristina should start. Kosovo status should be solved by 2007. (Blic pg. 3)</p>
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Donnelly	FENA – the US Enterprise Institute expert Tom Donnelly, who had previously covered the crisis in former Yugoslavia on behalf of the Congress, said that Americans should remain in the Balkans with an aim of creating conditions for the permanent resolving of problems in the area of former Yugoslavia. Commenting on Djindjic's statement, Donnelly told the BBC that something like this was expected, Tanjug reported. "If you allow the independence of Kosovo then many people in Montenegro will wonder – why cannot we have our own state? This would be a terrible precedent for Bosnia. Serbs in the RS would unite with Serbia, Croats from Bosnia with Croatia, and all that would be left in the middle would be some fragmented government in Sarajevo, and Americans would have to remain present to prevent a new conflict. Thus, it is much more important to work on the overcoming of ethnic divisions than to work on the enhancing them," said Donnelly.
Commentary in Avaz	'The Comment of the Day' column by <u>Fadil Mandal</u> today entitled 'Djindjic's new attack on BiH' in Avaz on pg. 3. "Zoran Djindjic is testing again an assessment by certain international power centres that he is the prototype of a pro-European leader of some sort of democratic Serbia," says Mandal. He goes on to claim that Djindjic was spending time with Karadzic in Pale during the siege of Sarajevo, which is the fact one should bare in mind when scanning 'the work of this nationalist in a nicely tailored modernist suit'. According to the author, the latest attack by Djindjic should not be underestimated. "Out loud Djindjic is presenting ideas shared by supporters of certain important European diplomats." Mandal's idea of fighting the problem is only by a joint answer from BiH.
Survey	Avaz on pg. 3 presented results of a survey entitled 'State leadership should dismiss Djindjic's idea on changing borders'. 67% said yes, 11% said no and 22% abstained.

Political Affairs

**'Orao'
affair**

Avaz pg. 4 'International community do not believe Banja Luka' – the daily quoted a senior Western diplomat who is a member of the Working Group analysing the 'Orao' report (anonymous). According to the sources, the longer they are examining the report, the less they believe in it. "It is silly to point finger at Biljana Plavsic, and we have reason to believe that the large amount of material forwarded to us was sent with a single aim only – to blind us," said the source. The same further stated that there is general belief that the RS made an attempt to explain the 'Orao' affair in a very unconvincingly and funny way. He expressed IC's concern regarding the RS leadership's approached the problem.

On the same page in Avaz, there is another article concerning the affair entitled 'SDS members who headed customs did not see arms smuggling'. The report recalls that Cavic, amongst other things, avoided talking about the role of the RS Customs Administration in the entire affair. His reasons for doing so are unknown, but what is known is that SDS members headed the RS Customs in the past two years. After the establishment of Ivanic's government, Goran Popovic (senior SDS official) was appointed the customs head. After the 'textile affair' in Cazin, and under the IC's pressure, Popovic resigned. Instead, another SDS official was appointed to the post – Djuro Bulic.

The third article in Oslobodjenje on pg. 4 is entitled 'The report is in Sarovic's cabinet in Lukavica'. That the report has been forwarded to Sarovic's Cabinet in Lukavica, but not in the Presidency building. Srdjan Arnaut, the Presidency SG, stated the report should be forwarded today. Also reported in Nezavisne Novine on pg. 3 'BiH Presidency did not receive the final 'Orao' report'.

CoM	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 5 ‘CoM still on vetting’ – a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Oleg Milisic, regarding the vetting procedure of CoM members. He said the process was still taking place and that the OHR was trying to complete the process ASAP, but this concerns a very important issue – the proposed candidates should perform their duties in the CoM in the next four years.</p>
Benes	<p>Avaz pg. 4 ‘OHR will insist on abolishing parallelisms in Mostar’ – OHR Spokesperson in Mostar, Avis Benes, stated that one of OHR Mostar’s most important tasks in this year was to abolish parallelisms in Mostar and strengthen the city administration. As for the implementation of the housing laws in the last year, Benes said that the level of the implementation in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton was above the average in the Federation.</p>
OHR on Coric	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 5 ‘OHR South – reserves towards Coric’ – a short article on another statement by Benes that the OHR South has reserves towards a HDZ candidate for the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton PM designate, Miroslav Coric. “The OHR submitted to the relevant Assembly an opinion on the proposed candidate where certain reserves were expressed regarding the approval of his appointment,” said Benes.</p>

<p>OHR on Gadzic</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 5 'The appointment of Mila Gadzic questionable for OHR' – a daily's source close to OHR Sarajevo stated that a HDZ candidate for BiH Minister of Economic Relations and Foreign Trade, Dr. Mila Gadzic, will not be cleared by the OHR to assume the post. According to DL's source, Gadzic is not 'suitable' because of her role in the privatization of the Mostar-based 'Soko' Company during the time she was the Director of the Privatization Agency of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. DL goes on to say that this decision by the OHR will slow down the formation of the BiH CoM even more because the HDZ BiH is surely to react. However, the daily says that bigger problems should not be expected because the HDZ BiH will have to appoint a new candidate very soon, a candidate 'that will suit the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown'.</p>
<p>RS government</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 7 'Composition of the new RS government will be known in five days' – RS Prime Minister designate, Dragan Mikerevic stated that in the next two days he will have more consultations with RS parties related to the composition of the new RS government. Mikerevic also stated that he would address the OHR, which participated in the selection of the personnel for the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Interior, Defence, Refugees and DPs and Ministry for Education, and ask for opinion and approval. The composition of the new government will depend on the result of consultations with the SDS and according to Mikerevic, one of the options is that the Government is created mostly of SDS and PDP.</p>

<p>SDP vs. OHR</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 3 'The SDP announces fight against OHR's universal role' – a report from yesterday's press conference of the SDP BiH at which a member of the SDP Presidency, Boro Bjelobrk, rendered some, in SDP's opinion, topical issues. One of the issues was the discontent of the SDP because allegedly the local authorities were becoming more subordinate to the OHR and other international institutions. "We will not agree to become mere yes-men of OHR", says Bjelobrk. He substantiated his claims with the investigation into the 'Orao' case, which was forwarded to the OHR and not the BiH Presidency. Bjelobrk also rendered the issue of vetting of some ministerial candidates conducted by the OHR and said that the vetting, even if necessary, ought to be applied for all candidates and the vetting ought to be carried out by parliamentary institutions of BiH and not the OHR.</p>
<p>FBiH HoR</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 2 'The Federation HoR to sit on January 21', FENA – a statement by Speaker of the Federation Parliament's House of Representatives, Muhamed Ibrahimovic, that the next session of the chamber should take place on January 21. During the session, the chamber should appoint the second Deputy Speaker, in this case the Deputy Speaker from the line of the Serb people. Moreover, the HoR should discuss Proposal of decision on changes and amendments to the Book of Rules of the House of Representatives but only about some technical details. The parties participating in the HoR should meet on January 17 to discuss these issues in details.</p>

**Construction
of Stolac
mosque**

Vecernji List pg. 2 'Different standards by the IC towards Bijeljina and Stolac for the same case' – on the archeological excavations at the location of the Atik mosque in Bijeljina. It was detected that the most important medieval archeological site in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been built on the foundations of a Christian religious facility. Moreover, archeologists found 17 stacks (stack is a medieval tombstone). In the context of the above-mentioned statement, the author says had the OHR forbidden the excavations and applied the situation from the Stolac case where the construction of the Careva mosque continued, the cultural-historic heritage in Bijeljina would have ended up underneath concrete. Kresic goes on to say that OHR firmly stood behind requests of the Bosniak and Islamic community in Stolac and that the Stolac mosque most probably destroyed traces of a different civilization. Talking about 'application of different standards', VL says that the OHR states that a committee for implementation of Annex 8 regarding reconstruction of destroyed religious facilities has been established. "It is clear that people have a right to reconstruct religious and cultural facilities forcibly destroyed in the war. Both mosques got the reconstruction permit and the OHR fully supports the reconstruction", VL was told by OHR.

The daily also carries a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Avis Benes, as answering a journalist's question whether the IC has different criteria and approach regarding the reconstruction of the two aforementioned mosques because both of them are allegedly constructed on foundations of Christian medieval temples. Benes said that there was a law on reconstruction of destroyed religious facility and that the reconstruction of these mosques has the construction documentation.

Economic Affairs	
Domazet on joint customs and VAT	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 15 'State share of customs and VAT for good reputation' – a statement by BiH Minister of Treasure, Ante Domazet, on single customs and VAT. The minister on Wednesday supported the reform of the customs system and said that 'a smaller percentage of customs and VAT' should be allocated for financing state institutions. He explained that improvements in the customs reform should become apparent by April this year when BiH was expecting the second IMF transaction with 60 million Euro. The transaction was conditioned with the following requests – strengthening the SBS, abolish double taxing, harmonise entity laws on bankruptcy and implement the customs reform. He further suggested the introduction of the VAT at the state level, emphasising that discussions with the IMF on the subject so far have not been productive.</p>
Sullivan on single customs	<p>Blic pg. 6 'The authorities will decide about division', Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 13 'Customs officers must become Bosnians' – "Reform of the customs administrations is the OHR priority, and it will not be negotiable. We expect the local authorities to accept the agreement on the customs reform implementation. Principle of dividing revenues of joint customs has not been agreed yet, and it should be solved by local politicians," OHR spokesman, Kevin Sullivan, told a press conference in Banja Luka on Wednesday. He said that RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic's statement to abolish the customs was absurd, since the revenues collected through customs were too big to give them up, and that no European country had a possibility to abolish the customs.</p>

<p>Reactions to single customs</p>	<p>Nikola Spiric, high official of SNSD, stated yesterday that significant amount of money "got lost" because of the unregulated customs system in BiH and that great deal of money was laundered thanks to that (Nezavisne Novine pg. 4). Spiric also commented on the statement of Renzo Davidi, EC representative to BiH that BiH politicians do not want the establishment of the single customs administration as through the fragmented ones which exist now, criminal groups and war crimes indictees are being financed. "It would be good if Mr. Davidi and other representatives of the international community would go public with the exact data. Politicians have their names and surnames, the same as representatives of the international community." Spiric expressed fear that Davidi's statement is given only to support the instalment of a single customs administration and that criminals would keep doing their business with politicians and international representatives.</p> <p>The Vice President of the SPRS, Tihomir Gligoric, stated that criminals would always find a way to make profit and that representatives of the international community who had a right to dismiss politicians in BiH keep talking about organised crime in BiH. "It has not happened yet that somebody from the institutions they mention so often – directors of the entities customs, tax administrations, etc, is dismissed."</p> <p>The RS Prime Minister designate, Dragan Mikerevic, stated that single customs administration does not imply that the customs system will be efficient.</p> <p>The Vice President of HDZ, Niko Lozancic. "If Mr. Renzo Davidi knows something, he should tell that to local authorities. I have no information whatsoever how the protection of the war crimes indictees is financed."</p> <p>The Secretary General of SDP BiH, Svetozar Pudaric, said his party would not be surprised at all if it is discovered that war crimes indictees were financed by criminals.</p> <p>According to SDA Vice President, Elmir Jahic, SDA believes that after the introduction of single customs administration, criminal activities will be reduced and financing of the war crimes indictees made more difficult for their sponsors.</p>
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<p>Editorial in Nezavisne Novine</p>	<p>The editorial in today's issue of Nezavisne Novine on pg. 2 is written by <u>Azra Hadziahmetovic</u> and concerns the reforms of the customs service.</p> <p>Hadziahmetovic recalls that the currently operating system with two and, since recently, three customs services was created at the time when BiH was in the very early stages of creating its institutional physiognomy in line with the Dayton Peace Agreement. "If we look back," says Hadziahmetovic, "it is easy to conclude that throughout years, the customs system was constantly subject to corruption and serious criminal acts. All that resulted in the loss of public revenues for both entities amounting to 400 million KM per year. The two entity customs administrations have not co-operated, they have actually been competing. In the last two years, BiH made big steps in arranging its economic space. As a rule, all these steps required changing of solutions from the past. We have to continue that process, we must not allow our future to be the hostage of our past. The customs system has to be organised in a way that it corresponds to the principles of a single customs territory and in line with the solutions adopted in other European countries. I am sure that quite soon, we will be proud of our customs administration. Those who will loose the power they gained through the illegal flow of goods will be very loud in criticising the reform of the customs system, but more money in the budgets will bring relief to most of our citizens."</p>
<p>Kukic on Eronet</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'Eronet is a school example of theft of state property' – President of the HPT Advisory Board in Mostar, Slavko Kukic, stated that Eronet was a school example of the theft of state property and the colonial enslaving of BiH. Kukic made a statement following a statement by the Hercegovacka Bank that the Provisional Administrator Toby Robinson sold a share of 4,48 % in Eronet to the Grude municipality. According to Kukic, local Mafia first robbed Eronet few years ago in the name of national interests. Bosses of local and international Mafia are carrying out the second part of the robbery, claims Kukic.</p>

Judicial Issues

A list of unsuitable lawyers made up

Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'A list of unsuitable lawyers made up' – OHR Spokesperson in Mostar, Avis Benes, denied at yesterday's press conference in Mostar media stories about an alleged list of unsuitable lawyers. According to Benes, such list has no basis in the reality and it was a total lie. She also added that if there were any problems with lawyers' work then it was a matter for the Bar Association.

Police Affairs

Removed FOSS employees

Avaz pg. 9 'New employees illegally employed' – removed member of the FOSS, who have been requesting their rights since August last year, sent yesterday a letter to nine addresses of senior local and international officials. In the letter, they request that the process of employment of the new FOSS members be vetted. They think that legal procedures were not followed in the process of employment, and that former FOSS Director, Munir Alibabic, made an illegal decision on the employment of new workers and illegally dismissed the old ones. The letter will be sent today to HR Ashdown, Human Rights Chamber, Sulejman Tihic, Adnan Terzic, Sefik Dzaferovic, Safet Halilovic, Alija Behmen, Ivan Vuksic (acting FOSS Director) and members of the Commission for Security at the Federation parliament.

Financial Police	<p>Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – a reaction to yesterday's news that the Financial Police have carried out an inspection of the premises of Federation Pension and Disability Fund (MIO-PIO) because of suspicions that the MIO-PIO paid out 30 percent of overdue pensions without the consent of the Federation government. The daily reports that the Federation government denies media reports about the alleged illegal payment of overdue pensions. The daily claims to be in possession of a document that shows that the Federation government did give the consent to the MIO-PIO and said that there was nothing wrong or illegal about it because the government allegedly acted on basis of a recommendation coming from the IMF. The Financial Police apparently spent some two hours in the MIO-PIO premises and had access to all the documents. Moreover, the daily says that the Director of MIO-PIO, Marko Matic, confirms that the payment was done according to the Federation government's decision, which was reached by consensus.</p>
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