

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 9/8/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: How much did the Federation Administration cost tax payers – 225.7 million KM spent in the first six months of the year

Dnevni Avaz: General Dudakovic for Avaz – Construction of military facilities is a failure

Jutarnje Novine: Mikerevic against financing of the lawsuit for aggression on BiH; OSCE supports the Election Commission's decision on ballots printing; Interview with Celhia de Lavarene, special advisor for UN affairs in BiH – Police and judiciary are corrupted

Dnevni List: The BiH Ministry for Civil Affairs and Communication decides – New BiH passport as of November

Vecernji List: What are social conditions in which three peoples in BiH live – Croats live the best

Glas Srpski: Kotorsko continues construction

Nezavisne Novine: Following accusations for “big robbery” in the RS oil industry – request for the mortgage came from the Refinery

Euro Blic: Prosecutor's Office on BiH level; Payment of pensions sets directors at odds; Joint project in energy industry

FRY Nacional: Serbia and RS should become a single market space

Slobodna Bosna: Reis Ceric – a lawyer of the Bosniak mafia

BH Dani: The state called “Zeljo” – Blue train for Europe (referring to the recent success of the Sarajevo soccer team)

BiH Council of Ministers adopts Annex to the contract on Kostajnica border crossing, reject proposal for financing lawsuit against FRY

The BiH Council of Ministers on Thursday adopted an annex to an agreement on locations for border crossings which was initialed on 6 August by state commissions for BiH and Croatia borders referring to the border crossing between the two countries between Srpska [Bosanska] **Kostajnica** and Hrvatska Kostajnica, the chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, **Dragan Mikerevic**, told journalists following the session of the Council. He said that *"the adoption of this annex gave an opportunity to the citizens of both Kostajnicas to enjoy their rights and rights to their private property."* According to him, by adopting the decision the BiH Council of Ministers also facilitated the functioning of relevant services at the temporary border crossing and unhindered crossing of passengers and passenger vehicles. *"At the moment we are unable to open the border crossing for other purposes, such as freight traffic,"* Mikerevic said, adding that the Council of Ministers noted it was pleased with the readiness of the government of the Republic of Croatia to regulate the final solution for this border crossing in a special protocol. He went on to say that it was concluded that in the next 15 days expert groups of the two countries should start drafting a final solution, provided that the deadline should not be longer than six months. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 6, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 2)

At a session in Sarajevo on Thursday, the BiH Council of Ministers rejected a request by the BiH Presidency for the BiH **lawsuit against FRY** with the International Court of Justice to be financed from the budgetary reserves to the tune of 95,000 euros. The chairman of the Council, **Dragan Mikerevic**, told a news conference after the session that the Presidency's request did not receive the required number of votes, adding that three ministers voted in favour and he was against it. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3 under title "Mikerevic against financing of the Hague agent", **Dnevni Avaz**, p 4, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 3, announced on the front page)

HR's activities, reactions to the HR's decisions

"If BiH institutions are not ready to adequately finance the State Border Service (SBS), all arguments for relaxing the visa system in BiH will fall through," High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** said on Thursday. Ashdown held talks today with BiH Council of Ministers chairman **Dragan Mikerevic**, Foreign Minister **Zlatko Lagumdzija** and Treasury Minister **Ante Domazet**. Mikerevic said that the **SBS** was among several institutions which still had not come up with a financial plan for the period until the end of this year. It was agreed at the meeting that the Council of Ministers should react promptly to challenges with regard to the DGS as relaxation of the visa system in BiH had been planned for next year. *"Beside covering the whole of the border, the Council of Ministers should also come up with a security policy and a policy on curbing illegal trade and immigration,"* Mikerevic said. He added that BiH will be able to find an appropriate solution within the next two weeks. Ashdown said that he could hardly see that any progress had been made at all with regard to the issue. *"Money does not grow on trees either in BiH or in the international community. We have to make some difficult and important decisions and that is a priority,"* Ashdown said. According to him, the capability of BiH to totally introduce the rule of law and gain the international community's trust is in its capability to control its borders. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 8, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 2)

*"The **High Representative** will on Friday at the Office of the High Representative open a working meeting with senior Entity officials, including Federation Acting Finance Minister **Sefika Hafizovic** and the Republika Srpska Finance Minister **Simeun Vilendecic**. The aim of the meeting is to resolve important issues with regard the single economic space in Bosnia and Herzegovina through effective implementation of the Excise Tax Allocation Mechanism,"* OHR Spokesman **Oleg Milisic** told journalists in Sarajevo on Thursday. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 6)

Nezavisne Novine (p 6) reports that the decisions made by the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, with regards to the reform of judicial system in BiH caused different reactions amongst

BiH political parties and that BiH lawyers see these decisions as crucial in the fight against crime and corruption in BiH. Here are some comments: **Vlado Adamovic**, Deputy Chairman of the BiH Supreme Court: *"Judicial systems of RS and BiH Federation were completely separated and with these decisions, the unity of the judicial system will be reached. I suppose that there will be some obstructions at the beginning, however, I believe that those who want BiH to exist, will support these decisions."*; **Jovan Spaic**, Acting Prosecutor of RS: *"These decisions are absolutely in line with the reform of judicial system in BiH, on which the High Representative insists. I believe that progress will be reached with these decisions."*; **Marinko Jurcevic**, BiH Federation Prosecutor: *"I strongly support decisions of the High Representative. I believe that the country and judicial institutions will benefit from it. I have already developed good cooperation with my colleagues from RS and Brcko District and I believe that they will also support these decisions. With the application of these decisions, the fight against crime and corruption will be more efficient."*; **Mladjen Mandic**, RS Deputy Justice Minister: *"If the Court of BiH is already established, it is quite normal to establish the Prosecutorial Office on BiH level."*; **Haris Silajdzic**, founder of Party for BiH: *"The establishment of a single judicial system will enable BiH to be an equal partner to its neighboring countries and other European countries. There are no democracy, normal relations, investments and there are no jobs without the rule of law – all that is connected."*; **Momcilo Novakovic**, high official of the SDS: *"Some of these decisions were not in the parliamentary procedure, The decisions made are not in the spirit of democracy and parliamentary procedure and I believe that nothing good can come out of it. The decisions had to be forwarded to the Parliament in order to reach solutions that are satisfactory to all three peoples."*; **Sejfudin Tokic**, Vice President of SDP: *"I support decisions of the High Representative due to the fact that with creation of judicial institutions and Prosecutorial Office, the BiH is getting*

*shapes of a normal European country, which is ready to take over its obligations.”; **Rajko Vasic**, SNSD Spokesman: “I believe that decisions of the High Representative can be very dangerous for BiH, rather than useful.”; **Barisa Colak**, Acting President of HDZ: “I believe that there will be obstructions. However, I am convinced that these decisions will be accepted at the end, as all other decisions made before.”*

*“The **Party for BiH** welcomes the Wednesday’s HR’s decision establishing the judiciary and prosecutorial office at the state level. This reform of the judicial system establishes the principle of the application of the European standards in the organization of the state,” the party said in a press release (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 8)*

*“The **SDP BiH** is unpleasantly surprised with the HR’s decision on the appointment of the members of the High Judicial Councils for the Federation and RS. Such the selection of the members of the councils fully expresses a concept of the ethnic exclusivity of the BiH entities,” the party said in a press release. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Oslobodjenje**, p 3)*

Oslobodjenje (p 2 by Zija Dizdarevic) and **Dnevni Avaz** (p 3 by Husein Orahovac) published editorial supporting the judicial system related HR’s decisions as well as his efforts to establish the rule of law in BiH.

Vecernji List (page 7), **Dnevni List** (p 7) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (p 19) carry a brief reportage about the High Representative Paddy Ashdown visiting wine producers from Herzegovina. Leaders of Association of Wine Producers from Herzegovina stated that the HR promised to engage in removing barriers on BiH and foreign market of wine after the October elections.

Vecernji list (page 2) reports that The Office of Mostar Deputy mayor released that **Neven Tomic** was not informed on the meeting with **Paddy Ashdown**, the High Representative in BiH,

who on Wednesday met only with the Bosniak city leader **Hamdija Jahic**. Mayor Jahic stated he had returned from leave in order to meet Ashdown saying Tomic was still on leave. The High Representative himself stated to journalists that he met Jahic at Jahic's personal request. Unnamed OHR official confirmed for Vecernji list that Hamdija Jahic, in the form of a letter, requested to meet the High Representative.

*"The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, is an honest man at least because, in private talks with the BiH politicians, he made it clear he would do his best in fighting organized crime except in case of the Mostar Aluminum Company," Senad Pecanin wrote in the this week's **BH Dani** opening editorial.*

More over, in Bosnian Barometer (pages where the Editorial Staff of the magazine assesses moves by the politicians and institutions in the past week), **Dani** gave two black dots to **Ashdown** (very bad move) due to his statement from a recent interview for a Vienna newspaper in which he had said that *"there are also people in BiH who are prepared to forget the past and turn to the future."* The magazine, however, wonders whether it is possible to build future on the basis of forgetting favored by the High representative?

OSCE supports BiH Election Commission's decision on ballots printing

"The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina rejects the unfounded criticism of the Union of Graphic Workers regarding the decision of the Election Commission to award ballot printing for the upcoming elections to an international firm. The decision was taken unanimously after thorough consideration of all bids. The only criterion for assigning the task to Allami from Hungary was the quality of the services offered. It was critical to find an immediate solution after the Election Commission rejected the Zrinksi Company request for more money, when it had already been awarded the printing contract. Otherwise election timelines, including Election Day itself, would have been seriously

jeopardized," OSCE Spokesperson **Urdur Gunnarsdottir** said at a press conference in Sarajevo on Thursday. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 8, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 7, announced on the front page, **Glas Srpski**, p 9, **Blic**, p 11)

Federation: administration cost tax payers 225.7 million KM in the first six months of the year, status of 750 Croat defenders

Oslobodjenje reports on the front-page (continued on the p 6) that, according to a report published by the Federation Finance Ministry on Wednesday, the Federation administration cost 225.7 million KM tax payers in the first six months of the year.

Vecernji list (page 2) reports that the Main HQ for the protection of the retired members of the Croat component of the FBiH Army accused the FBiH Defense Minister **Mijo Anic** of tricking the trust, despite previous promises, of **750** defenders whose status, before he took office, was resolved through presidential retirements. They also claim that their meeting with the former BiH Presidency member, **Kresimir Zubak**, who signed the biggest number of presidential retirements, failed to take place although the appointment had been made for August 6.

*"The BiH Federation Defense Minister, Mijo Anic, and his associates have misinformed the public by their statements on the contents of the paper signed for the purpose of export of 50,000 riffles by Ferid Buljuubasic. **Slobodna Bosna** has determined this after looking into original documentation on the transaction presented to it by the Intrade Company," Senad Slatina wrote in this weeks edition of the magazine. He added that the magazine had also come to the new information and evidence on the affair related to the sale of the weapons to Israel/Cameroon leading to the conclusion that the military equipment had never ended in Cameroon but that final buyer had always been Israel.*

Under title "Government accepted existing ownership structure"

Vecernji List (page 3, by Gorden Knezovic) carries article about decision of Federation Government to agree on final and binding arbitration of the ownership structure of 'Aluminij'. The daily says that the reason for such decision is pressure from international representatives and business partners – 'Glencore International' and 'Daimler Chrysler'. *"Daimler Chrysler offered to Federation Government to invest in collapsed chemical industry in Tuzla, to buy electric energy and to open new factory of electrolysis in Mostar"*, says the article and adds that in case of inconvenient arbitration decision workers threat to stop the production and 'freeze' the machines for electrolysis.

RS: Kotorsko case – construction can continue; Ivanic meets with Djindjic; pensions payment

The District Court in Dobož decided that the Serb refugees settled in Kotorsko can continue with construction of the houses at the locations Trnovo Polje I and II (**Glas Srpski**, cover page, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3). District Court in Dobož accepted the complaints lodged by the Serb refugees, Dobož municipality and "Bosnakop".

"Bosniaks and Croats who used to live in what nowadays is called Republika Srpska now hardly possess there an amount of land needed to fill a flowerpot. Their land, houses, businesses are almost not at all in the possession of their real owners. RS administrative workers have changed land books, regulation plans and, now, they are building new houses on someone else's, private property. And OHR is watching (monitoring)..." Snjezana Mulic-Busatlija wrote in an article on the issue published in this week's **Dani**.

Glas Srpski (p 3) and **Nezavisne Novine** (p 7) report that the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, met on Thursday in Belgrade with the Prime Minister of Serbia, **Zoran Djindjic**. Ivanic and Djindjic discussed the improvement of the trade cooperation and creation of a single economic space. (**FRY Nacional**, p 6, and **Oslobodjenje**, p 3, also reported on the meeting)

Director of *Srpske Poste* **Milutin Pejic** on Thursday sent an open letter to RS PIO Fund Director **Ostoja Kremenovic** accusing him that he has decided that in the future the pensions will be paid through banks without prior agreement with *Srpske Poste*. The letter asks Kremenovic to explain his decision. Director of RS PIO Fund Ostoja Kremenovic rejects accusations from the letter, noting that *"the open letter of Milutin Pejic is not a way in which business associates cooperate"*. (**Blic** p 10)

Slobodna Bosna published an article on the Mustafa Cerić's alleged involvement in illegal financial transactions during the war

This weeks **Slobodna Bosna** published an article (signed by Editor-in-Chief Senad Avdic) reacting to the recent statement made by the Head of the BiH Islamic Community, **Mustafa Cerić**, according to which *"the Bosniaks are tried nowadays only because they are Bosniaks."* Avdic claims that Cerić is actually afraid of the possible court's proceeding against **Hasan Čengić**, since it would prove existence of the private funds of \$hundreds of millions and illegal financial transactions during the war.

"The latest issue of Slobodna Bosna, which is anyway full of politically ordered misinformation, carries a story entitled: 'Reis Cerić – lawyer of the Bosniak mafia,' in which it, on several pages and in a sensationalistic manner, unveils the alleged criminal activities of certain wartime leaders. Not denying the right of every media to write critically about the public personalities, one should note that the magazine is famous by its constant criminalizing each successful Bosniak, without proper argumentation, regardless of whether its is about a businessman, intellectual or politician," **Dnevni Avaz** (p 3) said in an article of reaction to the Slobodna Bosna story.

Vecernji List (page 5) adds that the resignation of the FBiH Supreme Court's investigative judge, **Jasminka Putica**, may be

connected to the statement of leader of the Islamic Community in BiH, **Mustafa Ceric**, who stated he could not sleep well because suspects in Pogorelica case, **Bakir Alispahic** and **Hamid Bahto** are in prison and called upon Bosniaks to raise their voice against these political processes. Thus reis Ceric joined the SDA pre-election campaign that labeled the processes as revenge against the SDP and it is assumed judge Putica was, following Ceric's statement, subject to pressures.

Pre-election news

In an interview to **Nezavisne Novine** (p 7), the Director of the Balkans initiative at the US Peace Institute, **Daniel Server**, said that it quite obvious that national forces in BiH are loosing their strength. The daily quotes Server as saying: *"People have turned their backs to those who brought such catastrophe to their country and now support those who know that all citizens need jobs, growth of the economy and social security. Integration, not separation, is the best way to achieve this."*

Vecernji List (page2): The pre-election research of the mood of public in BiH, conducted by the **National Democratic Institute** from Washington, still shows great popularity of national parties. Among Croats, 46% of interviewees opted for the **HDZ** followed by the SDP with 8%, NHI with 5% and NSRZB and HSP who are given 4% of the votes. Other parties among the Croats do not have enough respect to go over the pre-election threshold. Among Serbs, as expected, the **SDS** leads with 28% and **SDA** leads among Bosniaks with 27% and this party has thus taken lead from the SDP which, according to the research, has 24% of votes. It is interesting that the very radical Party for BiH has only 12% of followers among the Bosniaks. The SDP however still has the least support among Serbs but is nevertheless the only party in BiH with a certain degree of support among all the three peoples.

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 16) reported that delegation of the HDZ led by its acting President **Barisa Colak**, visited Siroki

Brijeg where they had talks with the representatives of the Western-Herzegovina Canton at the forthcoming elections in BiH as well as on the problems related to the functioning of the executive and legislative power from the municipal to the state level. *"HDZ BiH is expecting at least same results as on the previous elections, I f not even better. Our surveys, as well as those done by the international organizations, show that HDZ, namely our coalition, will get a great support of the Croatian voters, while other Croatian parties will struggle to get over the election threshold"*, Colak declared.

Mladjan Zaric of the Party of Democratic Progress (**PDP**) said that the RS Government displayed decisiveness and the will to fight crime and corruption. Zaric said that among those who call for a fight against crime and corruption, there are those whose appeals represent only electioneering. He rejected the accusations that the RS Government does not have support of the international community and that pensioners will not receive their pensions by the end of year. (**FRY Nacional** p 11)

Arizona Market

On Wednesday afternoon the Brcko District Police with assistance of many special police's members placed the traffic signs at the Arizona market, but they removed them in the evening because they were written only in Cyrillic alphabet. Landowners at Arizona market think this was an attempt of the authority to frighten them and to prevent their intentions to protect private property. (**Oslobodjenje** p7)

However, the landowners were shocked by number of special police's members who were engaged during placing of traffic signs (which forbid parking on private parking lots that are situated along the road at Arizona market). *"We are wondering do we really represent such a danger/threat that so many policemen had to be employed,"* the landowners ask, warning that if the aim was to frighten them then it failed. (**Dnevni List** p 5)

President of the HSS, **Ilija Simic**, has sent a letter to High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** and Brcko Supervisor **Henry Clarke** asking them to reconsider the issue of land expropriation at Arizona market. Simic thinks that is “a hot” political issue which might become a dangerous security issue. (FENA)

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Thursday, 1900)

- BiH Council of Ministers accepts Annex to the Contract on Kostajnica Border Crossing
- BiH Presidency to discuss on Friday realization of its Kostajnica border crossing-related conclusions
- BiH Council of Ministers rejects BiH Presidency's proposal for financing the lawsuit against FRY

FTV 1 (1930)

- BiH Council of Ministers rejects Presidency's proposal for financing the lawsuit against FRY
- BiH is the only state in Europe not having proper law on quality of liquid fuels
- BiH Federation Prime Minister Alija Behmen accompanied with Malaysian Ambassador to BiH visits Srebrenica

RTRS (1930)

- BiH Council of Ministers did not accept the Presidency's proposal for financing of the lawsuit against Yugoslavia
- Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic and RS' Mladen Ivanic met in Belgrade to discuss improvement of trade relations
- COMSFOR John Sylvester fiercely condemned a retired BiH Army General Rasim Delic's statement in which he called on Bosniaks to keep their weapons