

OHR Media Morning Brief, 28 February, 2003

Oslobodjenje	Retirement packages on Saturday, pensions on Monday; Biljana Plavsic gets 11 years in prison; Hays – revisions in Mostar and Sarajevo are next; Sweden as El Dorado
Dnevni Avaz	From today pensions for invalids, tomorrow the pay off of other pensions; FTV raised 180,000 charges for unpaid subscriptions; Plavsic sentenced to 11 years in prison; A Federation policeman ensured transport of drugs from Vojkovici;
Dnevni List	Interview with Head of the Federation Pension Fund (MIO) Marko Matic: Increase of pensions will be conditioned by MIO reforms
Vecernji List	Biljana Plavsic sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment
Slobodna Dalmacija	Members of Rojs' Engineers' Unit demand at court salaries for 5 years; Jelavic, Prce and Medic gave 6,2 million KM for housing loans
Glas Srpski	Successful start of the police action 'Automobile' – thieves with flat tyres; Plavsic sentenced to 11 years
Nezavisne Novine	The Hague Tribunal pass verdict against former RS President – Biljana Plavsic sentenced to 11 eleven years of imprisonment; Svetozar Acimovic, dismissed Director of the RS EP – Ivanic gave an assent for contract with the EFT; Special Audit Service continues audit of public sector – Audit of three telecom operators in BiH commence
FRY Nacional	Biljana Plavsic sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment
Blic	11 years for confession; OHR – Bijeljina does not care about returnees' needs; Ashdown regulates tenders
Vecernje Novosti	11 years for Plavsic

Economic Affairs

<p>RS Elektroprivreda Steering Board dismissed</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 2 'Members of the Steering and Supervisory Board removed' – the RS government dismissed yesterday members of the RS Elektroprivreda Steering Board, and would soon start a procedure for the appointment of new members. RS PM Dragan Mikerevic announced the news. He added the government would appoint in the next 24 hrs a person to perform duties of acting general director, and that all activities related to the issuing of new tenders would be halted. Svetozar Acimovic, removed RS Elektroprivreda Director, said the sale of the electric supplies was being conducted in accordance with the European standards. Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 'The government removes RS EP leadership' – the RS government yesterday removed all members of the Steering and Supervisory Board from their positions, announcing that the Acting Director of RSEP would be appointed in 24 hours time.</p> <p>Dragan Mikerevic, RS PM, stressed after yesterday's session of the RS government that the Acting Director of the RS EP would remove deputy and assistants to the former director, and then select a team of experts. Furthermore, the RS government tasked the RS Interior Ministry and the RS Ministry of Finance to investigate the allegations in Audit Report. "We expect that these measures would be efficient enough to prevent new damages," said Mikerevic.</p> <p>Nikola Spiric, SNSD delegate at the BiH HoR, is of the view that the RS government and the RS EP are to bear full responsibility for the criminal activities inside the electro-energetic system of RS. Milenko Stanic, an SDS delegate, stressed that it was necessary to establish the responsibility of all those involved in the affair, stressing that the remarks and objections made by the RS EP should also be considered.</p> <p>Drago Kalabic, a DNS delegate, said that 'it was a logical thing to arrest persons involved in a theft worth millions the very moment the report was publicised'.</p> <p>NN inset carries a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Julian Braithwaite, who said that the measures undertaken by the government represent a good start, but the OHR expects to see the end of the investigation be even more successful. He also expressed the expectation of the OHR that all those responsible for the theft would be penalised.</p>
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<p>CRO press on RS Elektroprivreda</p>	<p>Commenting on the RS Elektroprivreda report that shook the entity, Vecernji List on pg. 3 entitled 'Replacement of the management' quotes RS Public Attorney Jovan Spajic as saying that he will study the report and see whether there are grounds for conducting an investigation against the responsible persons. The daily says that, according to the announcement from the international community, it is certain that the RS Elektroprivreda-related scandal will not stop at just replacing the company's management, but will be used for new pressures onto the RS authorities because of the privatization of majority capital in the electric power supply system of the RS. Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 17 'We do not rob citizens' – a reaction by Milan Bogicevic, RS Minister of Industry, Energy and Development, which has been already reported in other media (for more info see yesterday's Media Round-Up).</p>
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<p>Further reactions to RS Elektroprivreda</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 2, Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Help is not a theft' – Svetozar Acimovic, former RS EP Director, yesterday stated that the then RS Premier, Mladen Ivanic, gave an assent for the signing of a contract with the EFT on the delivery of electricity surplus in 2002. At a press conference in Banja Luka he said that reports on the RS EP performance were always prepared and placed at the table during the government sessions, stressing that he had always respected the government decisions. Responding to a question as to whether he feels betrayed because the RS government yesterday removed the entire RS EP Steering Board from the office, Acimovic said he does not know why all of that is going on. "I suppose PM Mikerevic should have phoned me and explained the reasons why he would do that."</p> <p>Mirko Mijatovic, former Assistant Director at the RS EP, said that four firms responded the tender for electricity export for the last year, and the EFT was selected as the best of all four bidders. "Even if it were the truth that the EFT had held the monopoly status in the region, we could not have had any impact on that," concluded Mijatovic.</p> <p>Bosko Lemez, former President of the RS EP Steering Board, denied accusations by HR Paddy Ashdown, that 'the EP RS records a loss of 166 million-KM, owing to the conflict of interest, theft and negligence'.</p>
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<p>BiH and HZ Elektroprivreda</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg. 1 and 3 – the FBiH Trade Union from the field of electric power supply has warned that the way in which the FBiH government intends to restructure the Elektroprivreda BiH and Elektroprivreda Herceg-Bosnia does not aim at either more efficient work or at successful privatization of the most profitable branch, but at the realization of political goals of the ruling parties. Contrary to the Union, the management of the Elektroprivreda BiH (EP BiH) is of the view that the FBiH government's program of restructuring will, in the long run, have positive effects. Emir Aganovic, EP BiH Director, believes that the goal of the government's program, by which separate companies would be formed out of electric power plants, thermo-electric plants and transmission systems, is the creation of competition that would enable progress of successful companies, reduction of production costs and lower prices. Mensud Krljes, Trade Union President, is quoted as saying that the mentioned program of restructuring would leave 50,000 workers jobless and he proposes Slovenian model of restructuring, which proved to be very successful. Instead of separate companies, the Union is in favor of creating a holding.</p>
<p>Milisic on telecommunications</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'The telecommunication market still not liberalised' – a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Oleg Milisic, at yesterday's press conf in Sarajevo related to the liberalisation of the telecommunication market. He denied claims by certain reps from telecommunication business that the market has been liberalised. Especially commented on the recent statements by General Director of Mobilna Srpska (MOBIS), Bozidar Janackovic, who said his firm was already using the benefits of the liberalisation. Milisic said that Janackovic's company was only partially using the advantages of the liberalisation. Oslobođenje pg. 5 'The telecommunication market in BiH not liberalised' – Milisic's statement that when the telecommunication market in BiH was totally liberalised then the MOBIS, as well as other companies, would be in a position to offer to their users even better services.</p>

<p>Telecom operators audit</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 3 – NN learnt that the Public Sector Special Audit Service, which was established by HR Paddy Ashdown has commenced with the control of dealings and transactions at RS Telekom, BH Telekom and HPT Mostar. The aim of the investigation is to establish whether any of the three operators performed non-restricted spending of resources belonging to citizens.</p> <p>Milenko Tomic, Deputy Director General at the RS Telekom, confirmed that the Audit Team, led by Special Auditor, Ellen Ralph, entered the premises of the RS Telekom a couple of days ago where they were conducting the audit.</p> <p>Urdur Gunarsdottir, OSCE Spokesperson, told NN that the audit at public firms continues, but she did not want to speak of any investigation details.</p> <p>According to Dragan Mikerevic, RS PM, the audit is aimed at observing any symptom of something being wrong. "The audits of this kind will be performed at other public sector firms, such as Naphtha industry, Srpske Sume and telecommunication," said Mikerevic.</p>
<p>Bulldozer Commission</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 9 'Fifty propositions for more efficient business' – statements by Bulldozer Commission Co-ordinator, Benjamin Herzberg, related to the scope of the work of the Commission. "We want reps in the parliament to be addressed by businessmen and talk about problems they have and present suggestion how to remove them. That would represent the realisation of one of the ideas that led to the establishment of the Commission and that is the communication between businessmen and politicians," said Herzberg. He added that the other idea was to constitute the Commission as a local body that would continue the process of the reform implementation. An insert with the article entitled 'Ashdown and Terzic in bulldozer' – informs that HR Ashdown and CoM Chair Terzic will probably take a ride around Sarajevo in a bulldozer on Monday. The symbolic being that the Commission is starting with the practical work after they identified a set of problems businessmen needed to solve.</p>

PDHR Hays	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3 – an excerpt from an interview with PDHR Donald Hays, which will be fully reported in the daily on Saturday. “The revision of the Mostar Elektroprivreda should be completed by mid-next week and for the Federation probably in two weeks,” said Hays. The revisions to be conducted by the same team that conducted the first one in the RS Elektroprivreda. “My feeling is that will have equally same problems with the coming two revisions as we did with the one in the RS. Because it seems to me that in this region the conflict of interests is a very foreign concept.”</p>
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Political Affairs	
Tihic on new FOSS Director	<p>Avaz pg. 2 ‘No obstacles for Kikic to be appointed as FOSS Director’ – Sulejman Tihic on the appointment of Sead Kikic as FOSS Director. “We expect the appointment to be made at the next session of the Federation government. We think the situation in the service is very critical because it has not had a director for months,” said Tihic. He further explained that the post was vacant and therefore does not fall under an agreement the ruling Federation parties reached recently with HR Ashdown. “In the agreement with the OHR we stated we will not conduct personnel removals and then appoint new people to the posts until the Law on Public Service was adopted. The agreement however does not include the vacant seats, and I emphasised that during the talks with the OHR.”</p>

<p>CoM session</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 2 'Prepare for the arrival of BiH citizens from Sweden and Denmark' – yesterday's session of the CoM. Barisa Colak, Security Minister and a member of the Inter-Resource Group in charge of establishing the final price of the new ID, said the CIPS project was not discussed at the session and could not say when it would be. The CoM adopted suggestion on the agreement on border traffic and cooperation between BiH and Croatia, as well as about free trade between BiH and Bulgaria. Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'CoM on border traffic between BiH and Croatia' – the Com requested from the State Commission for establishing borders to speed up activities related to the closing of an agreement on border traffic with Serbia and Montenegro.</p>
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FBiH HoP	<p>Avaz pg. 8 'Serb delegates suggesting the awarding of mandates in the Parliament to citizens' – yesterday's session of the Federation House of Peoples (HoR). Reps did not find a solution to the problem of filling the Serb caucus. A report presented by the Commission, which was suppose to make suggestions as to how to solve the issue, was listened to but not assessed as satisfactory. Instead, delegates agreed that the only way to resolve the problem was to make changes to the FBiH Constitution. The suggestion will therefore be forwarded to authorized institutions, meaning those who could suggest amendments to the Constitution, as well as to the OHR. Oslobodjenje pg. 8 'Without a solution for filling the Serb caucus' – sixteen delegates signed a request to be forwarded to the Constitutional Court. The request refers to examining the constitutionality of three Bosniaks on leading posts in the Federation.</p>
OHR Brcko	<p>Avaz pg. 10 'Ann announcement of disobedience a hostile statement' – a comment from the OHR Brcko to the recent announcement by the 'Ravne' Association of citizens disobedience towards certain parts of the Brcko government. Suzana Pejdic, OHR Brcko Spokesperson, said they were sorry that private landowners at the Arizona market decided to make such a hostile statement.</p>

Commentary in Oslobodjenje	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'East and West' by <u>Hamza Baksic</u> – a commentary on the unification of Mostar. Basically saying that there would be no unification of Mostar until the ruling two parties (HDZ and SDA) show political will to realize the idea. Also, the unification, according to Baksic, will not be possible until the IC 'clearly stands behind certain rules of the game'.</p>
Potocari donation	<p>Avaz pg. 2 'From the Potocari memorial centre requests for checking the validity of donation' – following a donation by the Herzeg-Bosna Elektroprivreda (EPHB) for the Potocari memorial, worth 50,000KM, heads of the project requested that the validity of the donation be checked before they accepted it. According to Avaz's sources close to the Memorial Centar Main Board, this is being done to exclude the possibility that this was an attempt to buy the public trust before a revision of the EPHB was announced.</p>

<p>Tihic with Mostar Mayor</p>	<p>Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 'Functioning of the City Administration endangered' – a BiH Presidency member Sulejman Tihic yesterday met with Hamdija Jahic, Mayor of Mostar, and with Zijad Hadziomerovic, Head of Mostar Old Town municipality. The discussion was focused on the current situation in Mostar, i.e. the future unification of the city. Jahic particularly referred to the difficult economic situation that Mostar and its City Administration have been facing. One of the biggest problems in Mostar lately is the decision by the Elektroprivreda BiH and Elektroprivreda Herzeg-Bosna to suspend the payment of funds into the City budget. Tihic supported efforts by the City Administration of Mostar in order for the mentioned payment to continue as otherwise the financing of even the basic functions in Mostar would be seriously jeopardized. He also said it was high time Mostar became unified. Tihic also informed his guests on the announcement of Daymler Chrysler company to open an aluminum-processing factory in Mostar.</p>
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**Investigation
against
Jelavic, Prce
and Medic**

Vecernji List pg. 12 'BiH: Investigation against Jelavic and Prce' and Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1 and 15 – on the information that the Sarajevo Prosecutor's Office demanded launching of an investigation against former Croat member of the BiH Presidency Ante Jelavic and his associates Miroslav Prce and Ivan Medic due to suspicion that they were re-directing the money that Croatia was sending for HVO soldiers' salaries for housing loans through the Hercegovacka Bank. VL pg. 1 and 3 by Zoran Kresic 'Processes on the eve of Hercegovacka Bank sale' – on the same issue. According to an anonymous source from the Sarajevo Prosecutor's Office the request for launching of the investigation against Jelavic, Prce and Medic will most probably end up as the investigation since there is no legal ground for issuing of a bill of indictment. VL also says that the sale of the Hercegovacka Bank is expected and, according to the author, the processing of former Croat officials in BiH should serve as a media curtain for the robbery of the century. "It is indicative that competent Sarajevo judicial bodies continue to process the Hercegovacka Bank case and they do not deal, for instance, with the Pakistani loan amounting to 20 million KM for which it was not revealed as to where it ended up, but which will be paid off by BiH citizens." SD carries a similar comment. "And while Hercegovacka Bank has been a topic of domestic media for three years already, it is interesting that no one from media raised the question as to where millions of dollars that came to BiH from Islamic countries ended up."

Property Affairs

OHR and OSCE on property laws

Avaz pg. 8 'The IC is not the one to finalize Annex 7' – the OSCE and OHR on the implementation of property laws and its relation to the full implementation of Annex 7. Urdur Gunarsdotir, OSCE Spokeswoman, spoke on behalf of agencies involved in the PLIP project. Said the implementation of the property laws was the first and foremost step, but one of many elements that support the sustainable return. Milisic stated the IC was not the one to proclaim the finalization of the return project.

Kotorsko

Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Double standards of the IC' – Bosniaks from Kotorsko local community, near Doboј, wrote again to reis Ceric. They wrote they were bitter and angry at the IC and HR because they implement double standards for the same issue only when it comes to the rights of Bosniaks from kotorsko. To support their claim they gave an example of Bocinja where temporary occupiers were thrown out of the houses with transporters and helicopters. Kotorsko Bosniaks think the same should be done in their case. They asked reis Ceric to do everything in his power to influence on the Bih authorities, media, the IC and OHR to undo this injustice.

Refugee Affairs

Minority returns in Bijeljina	<p>Dnevni List pg. 7 'Stop discrimination over minorities' – a statement by OHR Spokesperson, Oleg Milisic, at a press conference yesterday. "On Tuesday, Senior Deputy High Representative Enver Gerhard Schroembergns sent a letter to Bijeljina Mayor, Dragomir Ljubojevic, calling for an immediate and verifiable change in the municipality's unacceptable attitude towards minority returns." According to Milisic, the municipality leadership has shown a low level of co-operation when it came to improving the position of non-Serb citizens.</p>
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