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# *Media News*

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• **Journalism and Democracy**

• **Media in Transition**

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## **Instead of an Editorial**

### **Human Rights from the Journalist Point of View**

The world has just commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite essential reproaches related to general formulations, this is still an epochal document, which has passed all political storms and tempests, dramatic changes in the world, misunderstanding, incorrect interpretation, politicization and political instrumentalization, but survived the test of time. It is understandable that we are interested most of all in Article 19, which speaks about the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right deals with pursuit, acceptance and dissemination of information and ideas, " through any media and regardless of frontiers ".

Academic disputes are still going on as to whether freedom of expression, or freedom of the press – is a derived or an authentic, natural right? Many experts and authorities maintain that freedom of expression is the corner stone of all other rights. Without explicitly choosing one or the other, it is best to accept, conditionally speaking, a middle solution, and interpret freedom of opinion and expression as a civilization legacy, imperative in democratic society.

Has this civilization legacy taken root in Bosnia-Herzegovina today? Or, is it at least respected?

The shortest answer would be – "Yes", with a large – "But". Formally, at least according to the letter of the law, citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina enjoy freedom of opinion and expression. It is another question what the factual conditions are for exercising that right. What kind of media product is offered, in view of the many limiting factors that journalists encounter in everyday work: freedom of movement, equal access to sources of information, intimidation of journalists... There are still cases of arbitrary arrest of journalists, filing of private suits supported by the entire political establishment, and even detention, private interrogation, confiscation of recorded and other material, etc. The police do not always behave in a professional manner in situations when journalists need to be protected. Representatives of the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina have noticed that and are preparing special training for policemen, as well as guidelines, in line with European standards and experiences, on how to help or protect journalists.

This is one dimension of problems concerning media rights and freedoms. There is, however, another dimension, no less important, in the sphere of journalist responsibility for the written or uttered public word. This is by no means only a local problem, although it has specific weight in this region bearing in mind our tragic experiences and the role of the media in the past war and after it. In that context, it is necessary to mention another article 19, which also regulates the issue of media expression, but related to its restriction. That is Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

For many of our colleagues and media researchers in the world, this article is simply a betrayal of the letter and spirit of the Declaration, because in its second paragraph it imposes numerous restrictions on the freedom of information on the part of the state. However, taught by our bitter experiences, we do not wish to be so critical of this second article 19. After all, the world has accepted, reinforced and institutionalized through its instruments the thesis that freedom of opinion is absolute, but freedom of expression is restricted. That must be accepted here as well, because the local legal framework requires it by agreeing to the fact that all important international instruments have precedence over local legislation. It is precisely in this context that the international community's role in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the field of the media should be viewed. They are here to help media transformation as part of the process of transforming society as a whole. (D.B.)



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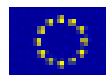
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### RTV BiH Steering Board Proposes:

## RTV BiH Remains – Federal Television Should Also Be Established

Based on its mandate from the Memorandum on Understanding for Restructuring Radio-Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Provisional Steering Board of Radio-Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina, at a session held December 7, 1998, defined a concept of organizing public radio-television in Bosnia-Herzegovina and a discussion version of the Law on Radio-Television of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

These documents propose the establishment of a Radio-Television of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a Radio-Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina and a public corporation for telecommunications of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

According to the proposal, Radio-Television of the BiH Federation should be organized as a single media institution for producing and broadcasting radio and television program in the entire territory of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Broadcasting should be carried out via two complementary channels, or networks. Programs should respect historic, national, language, cultural, religious, economic-social and regional differences between the peoples and citizens living in the BiH Federation, respecting both the particular and the common. Programming should focus on issues from the Federation and cooperation should be established with cantonal RTV stations.

Radio-Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina should produce and broadcast program on one (existing) or several radio and television networks for the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The primary task of its programming should be to cover the work of the common bodies of Bosnia-Herzegovina, all relevant events in the country, Europe and the world, to act as a factor of integration, to develop its own quality production and co-production with foreign partners and to promote world RTV production. RTV BiH should remain a member of EBU, where it should represent the rights and interests of all public RTV stations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The entity RTV stations should not have membership in EBU. The structure of journalists, editors and management of Radio-Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina should be nationally balanced.

With the aim of complete reintegration of the entire RTV program broadcasting infrastructure in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the establishment of a Public Telecommunications Corporation of Bosnia-Herzegovina is proposed. The corporation's infrastructure should cover the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, offering signal transmission and broadcasting to all public and commercial radio and television stations and tele-companies, as well as cable and satellite program distribution services. An agency for allocating broadcasting licenses to potential broadcasters in Bosnia-Herzegovina should operate within the Corporation, after the end of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) mandate. (From the RTV BiH Public Relations Department)

### Dragan Gašić, International Administrator for Serb Radio and Television (SRT):

## **This TV Will Not Be Single-National**

Continuing the discussion on how to transform state RTV networks into public services, in this issue we bring an interview with Mr. Dragan Gašić, international administrator for Serb Radio and Television (SRT). We present in full his assessment of the present state in this media organization, and the courses and ways of its transformation.

The international community's High Representative Carlos Westendorp signed on December 13 last year with the then Republika Srpska President Biljana Plavšić, Prime Minister Milorad Dodik and Information Minister Rajko Vasić an Agreement on Provisional Arrangements for SRT, giving the High Representative the authority to appoint an international administrator. In February this year, the High Representative named Dragan Gašić, an Austrian national, to the post of international administrator for SRT. Gašić is a former journalist and doctor of journalism. His former post was spokesman for the European Union and OHR offices in Mostar.

Gašić was born in the former Yugoslavia (Zagreb) and he speaks the local languages fluently, which makes easier his very complex job and engagement in transforming the state national television into a public television, accessible to all.

*Mr. Gašić, it is visible that since your arrival at the post of international administrator for SRT, this state TV has abandoned its previous practice of using inflammatory words, or words of hatred and war-mongering. Would you please evaluate the present situation at the state television?*

**SRT is not a state television. It is a public television, because the term “state” suggests too much that the TV works for the state, the Government, the president and political parties.**

*Still, you will agree that Serb Radio and Television is still a state television in the formal-legal sense?*

**It is undergoing transformation, and it is on the right path to becoming a public television due to the fact that the RS Government, under the Agreement on Provisional Measures, cannot appoint the general director, which is in the jurisdiction of the Steering Board which, true, is appointed by the RS National Assembly.**

**We are working on turning it into a public TV, which will be accessible to all – to all people, all parties and all political options. In Germany and Austria, for instance, you have the phrase “public-legal TV,” which is a construction. It does not mean that it is not a state TV under the control of state institutions, but it is not a state TV in the sense that it is accessible only to the state. We are now in a transformation phase, which requires a lot of work and persistence, entailing first of all changes in media legislation. Now we are using provisional measures – arrangements, which are in effect in the place of laws, until laws are passed.**

**I will not say anything negative about SRT, which is now accessible to all citizens and all political options.**

*This latest conclusion inevitably leads to the next question. Namely, you claim that SRT is a public television and, among other things, accessible to everyone. In terms of its staffing component, and by that I mean its present national composition, will members of minority peoples find their place in the state television?*

**First of all, the employment criterion is professionalism, and national background must never be a criterion. The RS should be and will be a multinational environment – entity. That will reflect on the TV as well. According to the new SRT job classification, there are 127 available positions. An internal competition has been announced for those who want to stay. Many did not want to stay and are "waiting." People must learn to move more. In Pale many did not accept the new job classification. What is absolutely clear is that SRT will not have a single-national staffing structure. The real situation right now is that SRT does have a single-national structure, but that will not remain so, and it will especially not be a policy.**

*Regarding education of staff, which is undoubtedly needed, should the international community, in your opinion, support a long-term strategy of staffing, technical and organizational restructuring and transformation, or are short-term financial injections that have been used so far sufficient?*

**Both forms of support are undoubtedly necessary. SRT journalists and workers, what they have become now, have become during the war. A staffing deficit is present here. Some things can be repaired with short-term work, but resolving most of these problems requires long-term engagement. There are not enough professional journalists, according to the Western form of professionalism. Journalists must be critical, not hold the microphone for others. Short-term measures improve the present situation, and long-term measures improve the overall situation. The problem is that journalists work for foreign organizations because they get more money there. Some have left, others were expelled, and some have simply – fled. The situation with journalists is the same as with all other people: there are many different things...**

*What cooperation is there between SRT and the Independent Media Commission (IMC)?*

**We are still in the start. Is it because SRT has improved so much, or because the Commission has not started to fully function, that is a different question. People will be people, they would certainly have complained to the Commission by now. In normal Western circumstances, that happens every day. You know what happened with Šešelj in Banja Luka. I said at that time: "You cannot broadcast everything he said just because he said it. Tomorrow someone will say kill this man or that man...!"**

**If someone complains that SRT is warmongering or manipulative and addresses the IMC, they will then ask for a tape with the disputed material, which is then analyzed.**

*Can you please evaluate the importance of establishing a unified RTV network at the level of Bosnia-Herzegovina, regardless of the fact that the Dayton Agreement is decisive regarding jurisdiction in the field of information, and allocates it to the entities.*

**I do not wish to speak about a unified network. Cooperation is necessary and any coordination is useful. It is necessary to create a coordination body for radio and TV stations. It does not have to be only SRT and RTV BiH. It may also be OBN. The necessity of establishing such a body is especially clear when it comes to buying rights for broadcasting sports events.**

**I am against pushing someone into cooperation. That should be done on a voluntary basis and it should expand slowly and gradually. Coordination and cooperation are necessary and cannot be done without. To what degree they will be**

**present depends on those who make agreements. It is unimportant what something will be called. Let us leave that to the future, but as everything is improving, that will certainly improve as well.**

(Interview made by: Sunita Šukalo, *SAFAX*, Banja Luka)

## **RTV Frequencies**

### **Issuing of Licenses Starts**

After three months of research and preparation, the Independent Media Commission (IMC) started on December 9 to issue licenses to radio and TV organizations in the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The licenses will have the form of a binding agreement with the Independent Media Commission. They will replace all present licenses in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Announcing the start of the process, Robert Gillette, Deputy Director General and head of the Independent Media Commission's Licensing Department, said that Bosnia-Herzegovina has competent people who can manage the frequency spectrum, but they are not coordinating their work. International copyright regulations are also not implemented effectively in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

### **Requests by February 28**

All present and future radio and TV organizations are asked to submit a license request to the Commission. Existing radio and TV organizations must submit the request by February 28, 1999. If they fail to do so, they will be proclaimed illegal.

The IMC plans to start issuing temporary six-month licenses at the beginning of next year. During the next six months, the IMC will cooperate with experts in Bosnia-Herzegovina in frequency management in order to develop a plan for managing frequencies in the territory of the whole country. In addition, the plan is supposed to determine special channels, for instance for present and future public and commercial program broadcasting at entity and state level. When the plan is adopted, probably in mid-1999, the IMC will issue long-term licenses. Right now, the IMC plans to issue two- to five-year licenses using the principle of random selection (lottery). This means that all radio and program broadcasting licenses will not expire at the same time in three, four or five years.

The IMC will charge financial compensation for requesting the license, but not in the first six months of 1999.

All present and future rules issued by the IMC will be subject to comments and discussion among all radio and TV organizations and the general public.

### **Conditions**

The IMC will issue working licenses to organizations and individuals without discrimination and regardless of ethnic identity, sex, political, religious or cultural determination. Exceptionally licenses for work will not be issued to individuals serving a sentence pronounced by the International War Crimes Court or those indicted by the International Court, who did not respond to a court order to appear before the court. This

exception also refers to organizations or individuals controlled by the above mentioned individuals.

The IMC also determines the standards that those who submit a request must adhere to:

- ❑ level of technical and managing competence,
- ❑ conduct in accordance with the IMC's Broadcasting Code and generally accepted European standards.

Licenses for work will be issued to individuals or private commercial and non-commercial organizations registered in Bosnia-Herzegovina pursuant to relevant legal regulations; or to appropriately authorized municipal, cantonal, entity or state governmental organizations or legally established public corporations.

Licenses will be issued only to those organizations that operate pursuant to the relevant legal regulations related to foreign ownership.

The IMC reserves the authority, in consultation with the authorities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Office of the High Representative, to issue or refuse to issue a license for work, based on a discretionary evaluation, to a legally registered organization or individual, whom the IMC maintains is controlled by a foreign government. The IMC will make this decision pursuant to the aims and rules of the Dayton Agreement.

## **OSCE Media Experts Commission Final Report**

### **Book – Dedicated to Killed Colleagues**

At the beginning of this month the OSCE Media Experts Commission announced its Final Report. The introduction to this large book (123 pages) says that it is the most comprehensive document on the media and the election process published in Bosnia-Herzegovina this year. We add that this document is among the most comprehensive reviews of the work of Bosnian-Herzegovinian media published in this region since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Although the report says that it is a result of teamwork, still Tanya L. Domi, the last chair of the Media Experts Commission (MEC), has stamped a deep personal impression on it. She was probably helped by the overall political environment, as well as by the unusually big engagement of the international community in local media. There is also a psychological aspect that should not be ignored, which is challenging and motivating in other similar situations as well, especially for professionals. Namely, her chairmanship over the Commission almost coincided with the establishment of another commission -- Independent Media Commission (IMC) – which was an announcement that the Media Experts Commission would gradually disappear and transfer some of its responsibilities to the IMC.

### **The Dead are not Divided**

A little unusual for local reports, this Final Report begins with a list of killed colleagues (Richard Holbrooke dedicated his book "To End A War" to three of his compatriots killed on Mt. Igman, "who did not reach Dayton") in the past war. This is the first time that in one place at least the dead are not divided. They are mixed and listed in chronological order of when they died in the line of duty. Hence, we will present the first page of the Final Report in full:

"This report is dedicated to all the hardworking and courageous journalists who were killed in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war(1992-1995).

## **1992**

Kjašif Smajlović, killed on April 9, 1992 in Zvornik; Goran Simić, killed on May 6, 1992 in Sarajevo; Jordi Pujoi Puente, killed on May 17, 1992 in Sarajevo; Salko Hondo, killed on June 6, 1992 in Sarajevo; Vojko Musi, killed on June 15, 1992 in Sarajevo; Ivo Štandeker, killed on June 16, 1992 in Sarajevo; Vladislav Srndović, killed in June 1992 near Gorazde; Saša Lazarević, killed in June 1992 in Sarajevo; Branko Tešanović, killed on July 22, 1992 in Sarajevo; David Kaplan, killed on August 13, 1992 in Sarajevo; Mevludin Rovčanin, killed on August 16, 1992 in Sarajevo; Georg Friedrich Pfuhl, killed on September 19, 1992 in Mostar; Alojz Krivograd, reported missing in September 1992 somewhere in Western Herzegovina; Željko Filipović, killed on October 14, 1992 in Sarajevo; Tihomir Tunković, killed on November 1, 1992 near the town of Turbe; Bego Šabanović, killed on November 3, 1992 in Sarajevo; Dušan Tešić, killed on November 23, 1992 near Brčko; Ljubo Kerkez, killed in December 1992 near Sarajevo; Haris Karadža, killed in 1992; Kruno Marinović, killed in 1992; Bajram Zejnuni, killed in 1992 in Sarajevo.

## **1993**

Miloš Vulović, killed on January 30, 1993 in Ilidža; Vladislav Srndović, killed on January 30, 1993 in Sarajevo; Ranko Šipovac, killed on February 2, 1993 in Sarajevo; Željko Ružičić, killed on February 3, 1993 in Sarajevo; Guido Puletti, killed on the end of May 1993 on the road between Gornji Vakuf and Travnik ; Ranko Elez, killed on June 8, 1993 near Foča; Sead Sarić, killed on December 25, 1993 in Sarajevo; Amir Begić, killed on December 25 in Sarajevo; Damijan Ramić, killed in Sarajevo in 1993; Suvad Alić, killed in 1993; Senad Sarić, killed in 1993.

## **1994**

John Hasek, sustained injuries in June 1993 in Western Bosnia. He died in a hospital in Prague on January 1, 1994; Marco Luchetta, killed on January 28, 1994 in Mostar; Alessandro Ota, killed on January 28, 1994 in Mostar; Dario D'Angelo, killed on January 28, 1994 in Mostar; Brian Briton, killed in 1994; William Francis Tomašić, killed in 1994; Mohamed Husein Navab, killed in 1994; Sead Sarić, killed in 1994.

## **1995**

Karim Zaimović, killed in 1995; Saša Kolevski, killed in 1995; Goran Pejčinović, killed in 1995; Jadranko Božanović, killed in 1995.

## **Priority: New Laws and Education**

If we overlook remarks concerning inadequate translation (for instance, "punish" instead of "discipline", page 10), or unharmonized language variants, slight grammar and technical errors, this document that is offered to the public deserves all compliments. The report is not written in dry and bureaucratic, but live and non-conventional language.

It first gives a genesis of the appearance and work of the Media Experts Commission. It explains its mandate – (1) to protect and promote media freedom and (2) to enable

equitable access to the media to opposition parties during the electoral process. This year the Commission and its Sub-Commissions reviewed altogether 201 cases, of which six were referred to the Election Appeals Sub-Commission (EASC), which resulted in 13 candidates being removed from candidate lists.

The Report contains some interesting appendices, of which, in our view, only one is disputable – Number 12: "Selected Media Glossary", which contains basic information about 10 media. The criteria of selection are unclear. If only so-called state electronic media are included, why then Channel S, Radio St. John or *Ljiljan* magazine? If only punished media were "chosen," why are RTV BiH, OBN or Radio FERN on the list?

The general evaluation is that most media adhered to the Provisional Election Commission (PEC) Rules and Regulations, which enabled considerable improvement in the overall media environment compared to that in the previous year and in 1996, when most political parties did not have access to media controlled by the ruling parties during the election campaign.

Recommendations for Future Media Work in Bosnia-Herzegovina (9) also draws attention. In our opinion, the most important recommendations are: restructuring and reforming media pursuant to new media legislation, protection of journalists and education of journalists.

Finally, something about the statement given by Tanya L. Domi during the Final Report's promotion. Pointing out the still frequent arbitrary detention of journalists, she suggested that the Independent Media Commission seriously consider accepting the American formula of journalist protection, which has been confirmed in practice in the United States and which, with certain modifications, could function here. It is a set of so-called reporter shield laws on protection of journalists from police and other abuse. (D.B.)

## **Neum 98 – "Media in Democratic Society" (2)**

### **Public RTV – Issue of "High Political Risk"**

As we have announced, in the next several issues of Media News we will present excerpts from reports read at the conference "Media in Democratic Society," held in Neum on November 19-20. In this issue we present excerpts from a report by Rade Budalić, RTV BiH editor and Media Plan expert associate.

#### **Against Monopoly in Frequency Allocation**

It is a known fact that ground frequencies are a limited natural resource affected by changes in society and the state. They must be protected by international, but also by local frequency plans. The most important resource are certainly frequencies for national (state) coverage. In accordance with international plans, Bosnia-Herzegovina has frequencies for three television and four radio coverages of state territory. A second level are frequencies for local coverage, which can conditionally be divided into coverage of small, medium and high zones.

Present regulations for utilizing these resources are hardly feasible because they give public RTV stations monopoly over all other broadcasters. We will give two examples. The law gives Serb Radio-Television at its disposal the entire frequency spectrum (three television and four radio coverages) for the whole territory of this entity, although this resource cannot be used entirely.

The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina at the end of 1995 adopted regulations on charging payment for usage of frequencies, which defines that commercial stations "may have one broadcasting point at the most." What is recognizable here is an attempt to prevent private and commercial stations from linking into networks and to raise a barrier for large-scale foreign capital to be invested in commercial media systems.

Distribution of frequencies, or allocation of broadcasting concessions, must be based on transparent and harmonized legal regulations. That is of crucial significance from the viewpoint of shaping the entire radio-diffusion system, but also all of its parts: public, commercial and civil sectors. Frequencies must be allocated in competitions, and all potential users – regardless of the nature of ownership – must be in equal position. The bigger the covered zone and population, the more demanding the concessions must be in relation to program, equipment, etc. Licensing criteria must take into account the public interest in spreading a pluralism of views, ethnic and cultural diversity. That is the essence of broadcasting regulations in most European countries. Recommendations issued by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe state that "licenses must be allocated by a body that is independent of the government," which has not been the case so far in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

## **Piracy Stimulates Chaotic Media Development**

Due to a lack of clear broadcasting regulations, local RTV stations in certain parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina are founded in an almost chaotic manner. A strong stimulant for hypertrophied development of local electronic media is piracy – internal and external. Three years after the war some stations are working without valid license and without clear conditions regarding programming. However, that is not their fault only, because in the present circumstances it is often not clear how they can legally exercise their rights. On the other hand, external piracy – or unauthorized usage of others' programs – is still "baby food" without which some broadcasters would hardly be able to survive. Excessive dependency of TV stations on foreign production is also noticeable. The consequence of that is a lack of their own program identity. For local broadcasters another pronounced problem is related to ownership structure. Certain stations are in an abyss between their desire to gain ownership independence and the intention of the local authorities to "support" them and put them under their control.

The so-called civil sector is still an almost unknown category here, although it is taking deep root in Europe. The civil sector are so-called local broadcasters that promote certain cultural and social values, or "basic forms of civil society." RTV stations in the civil sector are usually formed as public foundations and on that basis use various subsidies, such as fiscal benefits, advantage in receiving frequencies, etc. Frequency distribution criteria must envision the appearance of this group of broadcasters.

## **Harmonizing Local Laws With International Standards**

How to define the new "Dayton" configuration of public radio-television at entity and state level and use it in the service of national reconciliation, democratic, free flow of information, protection of human rights and freedoms? – is an issue of high "political risk." The present RTV BiH is operating under a pre-war law that is being applied selectively. The High Representative's Memorandum on RTVBiH is actually some sort of project task in the field of profiling the entire sphere of public radio-television, because it must be viewed as a whole. The field of public radio-television should consist of three media subjects: two at entity level and one at state level.

In searching for an optimum and really applicable model, we cannot put stress only on national, political and "patriotic" reasons, and neglect technical-technological, economic, media reasons. In terms of the status position and program structure of public RTV stations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, several solutions may be implemented, with different degrees of quality, depending on political will and available material resources.

Harmonization of local regulations with valid international standards is the only possible course in building a coherent radio-diffusion system in Bosnia-Herzegovina and its entities. Just by accepting that a lot of work is done. The first step in that direction was made by passing the Radio and Television Program Editing Code by the Independent Media Commission (IMC). All stations in Bosnia-Herzegovina are obliged to apply it under the threat of sanctions. According to its content, the Code is actually a summary of international programming standards, adapted to the present circumstances in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

## The Monitor's Eye

### **Radio FERN – Praiseworthy Editorial Move**

On Friday, December 4, FERN launched a half-hour program "Mother Earth" dedicated to acute environment protection problems. We do not need to point out the need for such programs, bearing in mind the new, war-caused degradation of man's natural environment, especially soil, in which millions of mines have been planted. In addition to that, we have uncontrolled wood cutting, uncontrolled incineration of medicines, suspicious waste dumping, etc.

Ljiljana Zurovac, editor and host of "Mother Earth" program, believes that the initial cycle of 12 broadcasts will be extended and turn into regular program.

### **The Power of the Front-Page**

Positive changes are noticeable in the editing and layout of *Oslobodjenje's* front-page, although the manner in which it is done suggests that this daily may be turning into a tabloid. An excellent illustration of a professionally made front-page is the December 5 issue, where most space was given to Jacques Klein (his report in Garmisch Partenkirchen), whose essence was presented in the headline across all five columns: "BiH bureaucracy prolongs war." It is indicative that the other daily newspapers in Bosnia-Herzegovina did not feature Jacques Klein on their front-pages.

### **Ignoring Human Rights Day**

The *Dnevni avaz* of December 10 absolutely ignored a date that all mankind commemorated, in this or that way. All local media – press, radio and television – as befits the nature of their media expression, marked on that day the 50th anniversary of the passage of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It remains unclear whether this was carelessness, a professional error, or something else?

( Media Plan Monitoring Center )

### Radio BOBAR

As an integral part of a company of the same name, Bijeljina-based Radio Bobar began experimental programming on November 26. Program is broadcast on frequencies 96.6; 100.9; 107.3 and 107.5 MHz, and can be heard in the wider areas of Semberija, Majeвица, Podrinje, Mačva, Srem, Birač and Posavina. Radio Bobar's editor-in-chief is Zoran Milošević.

Program is broadcast via a 300-watt transmitter from the center of Bijeljina and a 1-kW transmitter located on the Udrigovo point. Two more transmitters with more power are planned to be installed on the Žep and Trebević points, for which the "Bobar" company has already received a permit. The new radio carries Serb Radio-Television news program, and it has announced that it will re-broadcast Radio Free Europe (RFE) program. According to the company president, Gavriilo-Bato Bobar, a well-known businessman, the radio will be in the service of the economy, and will also inform listeners also about activities in the "Bobar" company, which has a developed network in insurance, tourism, traffic, trade and other business branches in the Republika Srpska. (Safax)

## News Flash

### Symposium "Democracy – Media in Multinational Environments"

The Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina organized for the fourth time an international symposium called "Democracy – Media in Multinational Environments." The sub-topic of this year's meeting of 50 or so scientific workers, officials from the media and other institutions, were new communication systems in Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a comparative review of the situation in the rest of the world.

During two days of work (November 28-29), participants in the symposium read some 20 reports, which were discussed thoroughly, at moments even with polemics. Most attention was drawn by the dilemma as to whether new communication technologies, primarily the Internet, will endanger, and maybe even do away with classical media such as the press.

The general assessment of the meeting is that "old" media are threatened in a way, but that, at least in the foreseeable future, they will remain the dominant manner of communication, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The participants also pointed out the advantages that new communication systems have over classical media, and even possibilities of using them along with the traditional way of work.

The symposium was organized under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Edhem Bičakčić, and the opening was also attended by Elisabeth Rehn, the United Nations secretary-general's special envoy for human rights.

All reports read by the participants will be published in a collection of works expected next year. (BH PRESS).

## **BBC School of Journalists' Seventh Generation**

The seventh generation of the BBC School of Journalism, which comprises 18 journalists from all over Bosnia-Herzegovina and is organized by the Soros Media Center, was promoted on December 4.

The school is a joint project by the Soros Media Center, the British *Know-How Fund* and the BBC, and it began working on June 24, 1996. It is managed by BBC journalists and is composed of two separate courses, television and radio.

Diplomas were awarded to students by the director of the Sarajevo-based Soros Media Center, Boro Kontić, and British Ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina Graham Hand, who said the school's aim is to provide quality staff, capable of responding to all tasks in contemporary electronic media journalism.

A total of 101 journalists successfully completed the school so far.

## **Association of Croat Journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina**

The Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina held its inaugural assembly on December 5 in Mostar.

The assembly was opened by Tihomir Begić, president of the Initiative Committee for establishing the association.

Ilko Barbarić, HRT journalist, was appointed Assembly president, Miljenko Karačić, editor of HRT's studio in Široki Brijeg, was appointed Association president, while Zvonimir Čilić, head of the Slobodna BiH bureau in Vitez, Nada Koturić, a journalist from Orašje, and Friar Iko Skoko, lecturer at the Journalism Studies Center of the University of Mostar, were named Association vice-presidents.

Zdravko Nikić, editor-in-chief of the news agency Habena, was elected with majority of votes for president of the association's Supervisory Committee.

According to a Slobodna BiH article, during the inaugural session journalists expressed the need to establish such an association, saying that Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina have the right to their own national channel and other media. Tihomir Begić announced that the Association of Croat Journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina is soon expected to become a member of the International Federation of Journalists.

Letters of support from Robert Gillette, IMC deputy director, and Simon Haselock, deputy High Representative to Bosnia-Herzegovina, were read during the session.

## **RTV BiH Channel Two**

RTV BiH began broadcasting experimental program on its Channel Two on December 5 on the 52nd channel. For now only viewers from the Canton of Sarajevo are able to watch the program, and viewers from the Tuzla-Podrinje and Zenica-Doboj Canton will be able to watch it later on.

## **Against RTV BiH Transformation According to National Criteria**

Four non-governmental organizations, SGV – Civic Movement for Equality, Croat National Council, Circle of Independent Intellectuals 99 and Council of the Bosniak Intellectuals' Congress, expressed disagreement with dividing RTV BiH under a national key.

In a joint letter sent to the Office of the High Representative and the RTV BiH Steering Board, they said that this organization does need to be transformed, but in seeking a solution for its organization, it is necessary to proceed from the role of public radio-television in democratic European countries, which must ensure a high level of professionalism and journalist ethics.

The letter states that the aim of the forthcoming transformation must be openness and unification of the entire information space in Bosnia-Herzegovina, accessibility to information for all citizens, which is a fundamental human right based on the European Convention on Human Rights.

### **Radio Network**

Sarajevo, Trieste and Vienna, with the help of the local stations: Sarajevo-based 202, Trieste's RAI and Radio 1476 from Vienna, will be linked in a media network called Interreg lic – radio project.

The Sarajevo daily *Oslobodjenje* wrote on December 1 that Radio 1476's news program is broadcast in the Bosnian language on medium waves, frequency 1476 KHz, as well as over the Internet.

Vienna's radio 1476 also began broadcasting on December 4 a 15-minute program intended for refugees and displaced persons.

Rainer Rosenberg, president of Austria's state television ORF, told a news conference in Sarajevo on November 30 that this exchange of program will enable additional education in radio and Internet journalism. A three-month course is underway at Vienna's Politcollege.

The courses are financed by the European Union, which has supported the project.

### **Radio Srbinje, not Radio Serb Sarajevo ( *Errata* )**

We received a correction from Radio Srbinje regarding our article on awards given at the Festival of Radio Stations in Prijedor (issue 20 of November 30, 1998). According to our colleagues, the winner of second award in the category of news-political programs is not Radio Serb Sarajevo, but Radio Srbinje.

At our request we received information from the festival organizers that Radio Serb Sarajevo was given second award in the category of special programs (I award – Radio Prijedor).

We apologize to our colleagues, but we wish to add that we carried this information from *Dnevne nezavisne novine* (November 23, 1998).

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