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# Media News

Prepared by the  
*SAFAX News Agency* Sarajevo  
<http://www.mp-institu.com/>

• **Journalism and Democracy**

• **Media in Transition**

No 22, Vol I,

Sarajevo, December 28th. 1998 godine



*On the Threshold of a New Century*

Listen with your ears!  
Look with your eyes!  
Think with your head!

# Good luck in 1999!

## The Madrid Conference

### The Media in Madrid Conference Documents

The recent Madrid Conference of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) for Bosnia-Herzegovina focused very much on the media and their role in democratization of society.

Continuing the practice from earlier conferences – Sintra, Bonn, Luxembourg – this latest conference in Madrid also formulated a Declaration, with quite a lot of general (16) paragraphs. However, the Annex, given in 10 chapters, in a pregnant and unequivocal way defined and outlined obligations, bearers and dynamics of tasks and priorities in the next two years, which are seen as the key years for self-sustainable peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Media News* brings to you the original text of the part of the Annex to the Madrid Declaration of the Peace Implementation Council - **Media Reform**, within the Chapter V. **Democratization**, with our translation from English for Bosnian readers.

#### Media Reform

18. A politically-controlled media helped to start the war. A free and open media will help to keep the peace. Media reform is therefore vital to the creation of self-sustaining peace.

19. The Council regards the successful development of a more pluralistic media in BiH as one of the most encouraging developments of the last year. Political control of the media in both entities has been dramatically reduced; and the creation of an open, free media environment based on professional journalistic standards is well underway.

20. The Council warmly congratulates the High Representative for the pivotal role he has played in the process, by driving through reforms which have removed direct political control of the main television networks and prepared the ground for genuine public service broadcasting. The Council also congratulates the OSCE for its role in



**Media News-** all the media news of BH collected in one place.

Issued every second Monday in English and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian. Texts by local author are published in whatever variant is appropriate to the author.

Published by **Media plan - Safax**

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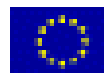
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this process through the efforts of the Media Experts Commission (MEC) over the last two years. The Council welcomes the successful establishment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC), in accordance with the Bonn PIC Conclusions, and subsequent deliberations and rulings issued by the IMC. The Council recognises the authority of the IMC to impose sanctions, ranging from warnings to the closing down of broadcasters, in accordance with the IMC Broadcasting Code of Practice.

The Council calls on member states to fully support the transfer of MEC responsibilities from the OSCE to the IMC and to provide appropriate financial, technical and personnel support.

21. The Council supports the reform of public broadcasting pursued by the High Representative. In 1999, it calls for:

- the adoption of legislation in both Entities which enshrines the principles of editorial independence, religious tolerance and financial transparency in all media sponsored by public funds. Such legislation must contain provisions designed to prevent any political party from exerting significant control over public broadcasting and to ensure public broadcasters attempt to address the interests of all the constituent peoples in current affairs programming;

- Establishment of a joint inter-Entity Annex 9 Public Corporation for Broadcasting and Transmission incorporating the public transmission and relay systems in both Entities.

22. The Council believes that a robust public broadcasting sector is an important element of democratic development. It calls for donor governments to continue to provide assistance and expertise towards this goal. But the Council believes that the authorities in both Entities must bear the primary responsibility for subsidising public broadcasting in a transparent manner through permanent funding mechanisms, and urges them to fulfil this responsibility.

23. The Council considers the work of the IMC crucial for building a legal foundation for the media in line with best international practice. It calls on Entity, cantonal and municipal governments to co-operate with the IMC and provide information required by the commission as it builds a transparent licensing procedure for broadcasters.

24. The Council supports the role of the IMC, together with Council of Europe, in shaping media legislation in BiH, including the review of existing legislation, in full consultation with media professionals, with the aim of upholding and protecting media freedom and the public's right to know. It welcomes the MEC's decision in September regarding the activities of Croatian Radio Television (HRT) in BiH and acknowledges the key work of the OSCE and the MEC in this area.

The Council:

- requires all authorities in BiH to respect and uphold media freedom;
- supports efforts by the High Representative, the OSCE and the IMC to protect and promote media freedom;
- affirms the IMC's responsibility for the organisation of the frequency spectrum, including the assignment of broadcast frequencies, and the need for the bodies set up under the Telecommunications Law to co-operate with it;
- calls for the adoption of Freedom of Information legislation in BiH which would grant the public the right of access to information held by governmental authorities;
- calls for the establishment of an integrated Federation television network fully enfranchising all communities and supported by transparent funding. The High Representative shall appoint an international supervisor to oversee the establishment of the network;

- demands that Croatian Radio Television (HRT) in Croatia and Radio Television Serbia (RTS) in FRY respect international norms of broadcasting, the laws of the BiH and IMC Code of Practice and subsequent rulings. Any access to the media market in BiH must be arranged through proper business agreements in line with BiH law. The Council reminds signatories of the Peace Agreement that the High Representative retains the authority to curtail or suspend any media within BiH which threatens the implementation of the Peace Agreement;

- supports efforts by the IMC and the OSCE, in consultation with the High Representative, to draft clear electoral rules requiring the media to offer equitable access to political parties and candidates;

- requests the IMC announce by the end of 1999 a tentative date after which its international supervisory element would be withdrawn as foreseen in the Bonn PIC Conclusions.

25. The Council recognises that journalists' ethics and professional standards are mainly matter for journalists and calls on the profession in BiH to become actively involved in the establishment of self-regulatory mechanisms. It:

- calls for evaluation of the possibilities of establishing a Press Complaints Council or similar body which would be composed of journalists and respect citizens in BiH as well as one or more international representatives with legal or media expertise. The precise authority and composition of the Council shall be agreed following further discussion within the journalistic community under the auspices of the IMC and in consultation with the OSCE and the High Representative. The discussions begun in October 1998 by the main journalists associations of BiH under the auspices of the IMC should continue;

- also notes need for co-operation of work on the general legislative process in the creation of the supporting legal framework necessary to allow journalists to work professionally, independently and with security. In this regard, the Council refers specifically to judicial reform and the development of employment and labor law. The Council expresses concern regarding the detention of media representatives in BiH and calls for the adoption of legislation to protect journalists' freedom of expression and movement.

26. The Council believes that a stable peace must be built on the basis of reconciliation and co-existence among the constituent peoples of BiH. It therefore welcomes the High Representative's efforts to promote tolerance and educate the public about the peace process through the public service information campaign. The Council calls on donors to provide continued support for a public service campaign designed to promote tolerance and civic principles in BiH.

27. The Council believes international assistance for media outlets in BiH has been invaluable in the promotion of pluralism and in promoting dialogue and co-existence among the constituent peoples. Continued assistance will be vital to protect the progress made thus far and to extend press freedom outside of the main population centres. It calls for stricter criteria in allocating such future assistance, to ensure that funds are donated only to those media outlets which display a certain level of journalistic professionalism and, as much as possible, address the interests of all three constituent peoples, along with others. Recipients of assistance should be required to produce and implement commercial plans with the aim of creating self-sustaining media enterprises. The Council urges donor governments to focus assistance on training and education for journalists, including aid for permanent training centres recently established by the international community.

28. The Council is encouraged by the development of the Open Broadcast Network which has expanded its geographical coverage, increased the role of the BiH management and delivered informed programming free of nationalist dogma. The Council calls for

continued support by donor governments to OBN, which remains the only neutral cross-Entity broadcast network. This support will be vital in consolidating open and pluralistic media and should be sustained until such time as public service broadcasting is legally and financially secure and firmly established.

29. The Council supports the continued operation of Radio FERN and encourages donors to sustain financial assistance for the network until it becomes fully constituted within an appropriate indigenous BiH commercial or public service broadcasting.

## **Transformation of State RTV (3)**

### **What the Law on Federal RTV Stipulates**

We have already reported that the Provisional Steering Board of Radio-Television BiH (RTV BiH) put into procedure a Draft Law on Radio-Television of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The draft law has received support from the Office of the High Representative to Bosnia-Herzegovina and the law is expected to be deliberated by the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina very soon.

We bring to you a review of the most important paragraphs from the draft law.

#### **Complementary, not National Channels**

The Federal RTV, with the status of a shareholding company, shall be founded “for the sake of fulfilling the rights of citizens, peoples and minorities in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.” Initial capital shall be fully provided by the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Until the final transformation of the present Public Enterprise RTV BiH, the federal RTV shall, on the basis of a contract, use resources and business premises that are presently owned by the public enterprise.

The new television’s program shall be broadcast equally in the languages that are in official use in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but certain program content may be broadcast in the languages used by the minorities that live in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as in foreign languages. The BiH Federation RTV shall broadcast program on two television channels that shall be equally accessible to users in the entire territory of the Federation. Programs shall be complementary on both channels and shall serve to offer to the public as much content as possible. The names and logotypes of the channels shall not contain national characteristics and shall not be nationally determined. Correspondent networks shall be common for both channels.

#### **Protection of Underage Viewers**

At least one fourth of programming broadcast during the day shall consist of programs made in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. News broadcasts shall be impartial, comprehensive and independent of anyone’s influence, and commentaries shall be clearly separated from news. Content with negative influence on minors shall not be broadcast between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m.

The law stipulates the RTV BiH’s responsibility to provide a scientifically-based research of program ratings.

The Federal RTV shall be authorized to broadcast sessions of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina based on its own assessment of programming needs.

It may also allow bodies of state governance and the international community at their request to broadcast statements, but with reasonable duration befitting circumstances. It may also allow program broadcasting at the request of political parties in the election campaign, or of religious communities on the occasion of religious holidays and services, in which the costs of production and responsibility for such programs shall be borne by those who request them.

## **Economic Propaganda Restrictions**

Economic propaganda in the program shall be clearly separated from other content and shall not be longer than 12 minutes in one hour of programming, nor more than 15 percent of total daily programming. There are no restrictions in broadcasting propaganda messages after the completion of daily programming.

## **Authorities of the F BiH RTV Council**

The bodies of F BiH RTV shall be Council of RTV BiH, Supervisory Committee and Director General. The Council, among other things, shall define program policy, ensure appropriate national composition of employees, pass the Statute and codes, decide on program schedule, pass the financial plan, appoint members of the Supervisory Committee and the Director General. One third of the members of the Council shall be deputies in the parliament, and the rest shall be prominent public workers and a representative of the syndicate. Members of the Council shall be appointed and dismissed by the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation with 3/4 of all votes. Members of the Council shall not be members of the government. In the Council each canton is represented with one representative with permanent residence in that canton.

Editors-in-chief of the television and radio are appointed by the director general.

## **Subscription – Main Source of Financing**

The new radio television shall be financed from subscription, economic propaganda, sponsorship agreements, donations and from giving various services. If this income is insufficient, there shall also be a possibility of financing from the budget. (This review was made on the basis of the text that was sent into legal procedure by the Provisional Steering Board of RTV BiH on December 9, 1998).

## **Interview**

### **Tomaž Perovič, International Advisor for RTV BiH:**

## **There are Enough Professionals at RTV BiH**

Just before the end of this year, Tomaž Perovič left Sarajevo. He is an eminent television professional from Slovenia and one of the key persons of Slovenia's POP Television, who was engaged six months ago by the Office of the High Representative to encourage and supervise the transformation of Radio-Television Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here is a short interview we made with him on that occasion.

*I would appreciate it if you would answer a couple of questions for Media News before leaving.*

*During your mandate in Sarajevo, you did not maintain a high profile. Still, in that period major changes took place at RTV BiH. What, in your opinion, is the most important thing that happened during your time in this organization?*

**The step that I consider to be of key importance is the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Restructuring RTV BiH in July of this year, the document that established the new RTV BiH management. Very soon the director general, Mirsad Purivatra, promoted a new business policy. All these changes had an impact on restoring enthusiasm among employees in this house – and therefore created preconditions for better quality programming. Very soon a change in the news program ensued, a correspondent network in the country and abroad was established, a new visual identity was created through scenography and computer graphics. Meanwhile, the Steering Board worked actively on making the first law that will start the complicated process of restructuring public media in Bosnia-Herzegovina.**

*The draft law on federal RTV has been sent to the government. There has been a lot of discussion and misunderstanding in the public concerning the two channels, whether they are national, language, complementary... How do you view the chances that the federal TV has in creating a balance between the general interests of viewers in good programming and the legitimate rights of ethnic communities to satisfy through public television their national, religious and cultural needs?*

**The federal television must certainly satisfy the affinities of both constituent peoples in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, I believe that viewers will be satisfied in the best way by a professional manner of information, and a contemporary and attractive television program. Therefore, our primary aim is to achieve such content that will suit viewers. We will protect the legitimate rights of the constituent peoples by having balanced language usage, and balanced treatment of historic, national, cultural, religious, economic, social and regional differences, through two channels of public television, which will not be influenced by parties or any other political subjects.**

*Have you acquired the impression that it is possible to find a solution for establishing a so-called umbrella radio television in Bosnia-Herzegovina. How do you think it is possible to reconcile two opposing stands that are now present: one that everything ends in the entities and the other that there must be a central television with a central program for the entire country?*

**The Madrid Conference Declaration underlined the need to form a Public Broadcasting Corporation. In addition, one of the priorities in Madrid were other common institutions. Some media organization must follow the work of those institutions, and that, so-called umbrella television must represent the state also in relation to the international community.**

*Everyone, including me, when asking questions, always speak only about television. What about the radio?*

**Everything that we speak about refers also to the radio. The letters RTV stand for two different electronic media, and the fact that many associate it with television only is, unfortunately, a consequence of the specific understanding of the role of television. It is usually considered that the radio is a daytime medium, and television an evening medium, that is to say that people watch television in moments of relaxation, when they can fully concentrate on it. Therefore, information uttered on television has a certain weight to it, which, of course, is a great injustice for radio.**

*Even though you held a bleak administrative post – "supervisor", you are still a prominent professional. In what way were you the "supervisor" for Sarajevo RTV?*

**I must correct you: my function was never supervisor. I am International Advisor for RTV BiH. And now you will probably ask me what this advisorship consisted of. Sometimes people who are inside cannot see things for what they really are. We from the outside, I emphasize – sometimes, can see them better. My advantage is that I understand the language, I understand the relation and consequences of the latest events, but I did not feel directly on my own skin the tragedy of those historic processes. Therefore I was able to draw the attention of the responsible people to all those omissions – and believe me, most of them were made subconsciously – that were not in line with the professional standards of television journalism. Since I am a journalist myself, I did not only point out the omissions, I also offered solutions.**

*Precisely because you are a professional, we have the right to ask you to evaluate the quality of TV BiH programming. Actually, is this television missing something in order to be able to call itself a modern television in the full sense?*

**The quality of television programming everywhere in the world depends on a number of elements. In addition to people, their skills and creativity, technical preconditions are also necessary, as well as financial resources for procuring attractive programs. BHT programming depended so far exclusively on the enthusiasm of people, because nothing else could be relied upon, neither technological infrastructure nor purchased program. In view of that, its quality was maximum. With the establishment of a new management structure and some investments in technology, as well as with programming innovations, the quality has improved significantly. Today BHT is on the right path to becoming a public service that will enable viewers to satisfy their needs for information, culture, to relax and to be entertained.**

*You are returning to your previous organization in Slovenia. Will someone replace you? Is there a need at all for a new "supervisor," actually advisor?*

**There will continue to be a member of the steering board who will represent the international community, which I have done so far. And regarding your question of whether there is a need for a new supervisor, I will answer that RTV has enough professionals who do not need expert help in program issues. On the other hand, this house will not be left on its own. The international community will continue, through the activities of the OHR, to try to assist in its restructuring process.**

**(Interview made by: Z. U.)**

## **Independent Media Commission (IMC)**

### **In Action: Decision on (Non)Broadcasting of HRT Program**

The Independent Media Commission (IMC) on December 16 passed a decision on the broadcasting of Croatian Radio Television (HRT) program. The decision was elaborated in detail in 24 paragraphs, while its factual part, which is related strictly to the dispute *HRT/Erotel vs. RTV BiH*, is given in the paragraph before the last, which consists of five lines.

The IMC first recalled its decision of September 15 this year, according to which disputed transmitters, facilities and frequencies, owned by the former Television Sarajevo, which were forcibly occupied during the war by the HVO and then given to the Erotel

d.o.o. Mostar company, were put under IMC supervision until RTV BiH and Erotel reach an agreement acceptable to the IMC.

The IMC also recalled in the decision that a draft law has been made on Radio-Television of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as a public RTV organization, based on the model of a law prepared by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). The draft law defines the basic structure and obligations of the federal RTV, including broadcasting on two television channels, which should be under one administration. It is anticipated that the process of implementing this law will take several months. As far as the present RTV BiH is concerned, it is undergoing a dynamic restructuring process. Improved programming is noticeable, the staffing structure has become more balanced (with the engagement of Croat journalists), and a new "politically neutral logo" was promoted recently.

The most important thing is that the idea of two national channels within the new federal RTV has been definitely abandoned. According to IMC officials, they actually never seriously discussed the idea of two separate national TV channels. To put it simply, according to them, one channel should be approximately 70 percent Croat, or Bosniak, by its content, while the remaining program should have common content. It is important to emphasize that these so-called national portions cannot be filled with content that suggests or inspires cultural or ethnic divisions. Or even worse, that spreads exclusivity, xenophobia, intolerance, etc.

The IMC warned that Erotel, which re-broadcasts three HRT programs, has majority Croatian state ownership (76.6 percent), meaning that it is owned by a neighboring country, which in addition to state and legal dilemmas and ambiguities, also has serious economic repercussions. Namely, HRT, by usurping its position on the market of Bosnia-Herzegovina, deprives local electronic media of considerable income. This essentially illegal status of a foreign RTV organization in Bosnia-Herzegovina "hampers the development of a normal media market in the country... "Development of a healthy market economy is one of the principle goals of GFAP . The economic intrusion represented by massive HRT rebroadcasting consequently obstructs its implementation" says paragraph 15.

Re-broadcasting of HRT program also violates international copyright laws and agreements, as well as obligations resulting from EBU membership. Hence, re-broadcasting has elements of piracy as well.

At the same time, the IMC and the international community in general expressed complete understanding for the cultural, social, political and other needs of the Croat ethnic community in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but they maintain that needs in the media segment must be articulated through local internationally recognized instruments and mechanisms.

At the end of the decision is the following formulation: "The decision concludes that the direct rebroadcasting of HRT programmes be terminated at the earliest practicable time, when and as RTV BiH is able to establish a Federation television system that meets the needs of the Croat Community in BiH." (D.B.)

## **OSCE – Inter-Entity Journalist Conference**

### **Polemics as a Journalistic Form**

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) organized an Inter-Entity Journalist Conference in Sarajevo on December 11-12. Journalists from the whole country discussed polemics as a journalistic form, education of young staff, freedom and

rights of journalists, and the role of police and authorities in freedom of expression violations.

## **Local Polemics are an Obstacle to Dialogue**

Does polemic exist in Bosnian journalism or are journalists, actually, the only ones who cherish it? Is insulting the opponent an integral part of any polemic or an exception in polemics in Bosnia? Who are real polemicists? These are only some of the questions which prominent Bosnian-Herzegovinian journalists tried to answer during the first day of the work of the conference.

**Boro Kontić**, director of the Soros Media Center, who was the moderator and first speaker, said: "We speak about dialogue in the sense of encouraging the public not to accept the monopoly of one idea, one group or one interest. Dialogue is not an idyll, someone has once said, dialogue is a struggle with all the consequences that this word carries within itself. When a struggle of this kind grows into a war, then we speak of polemic. I am afraid that what we have called polemic in the local media, with more or less ease, was often not worthy of that name. Local polemics end without conclusions and without the necessary catharsis. The only value in that sense is the fact that what exists, but what is often suppressed due to local specific differences and habits, is brought to the light of day. Local polemics multiply personal animosities and reinforce monopoly. Local polemics leave a sickening feeling of implacability and become an obstacle to dialogue. Local polemics are frightening," Boro Kontić said.

The editor-in-chief of the Sarajevo-based weekly *Slobodna Bosna*, **Senad Avdić**, maintains that polemic in its meaning is – waging war, "taking up arms."

"We should not be surprised or upset by the fact that in local polemics people often use elements that can easily be considered as insults and personal animosity, because that is precisely what polemic is by its character. Polemic is also psychological warfare in which, if we look back at history, all means are admissible. Big polemics contained filth – remember the polemics in which writers such as Matoš, Krleža, Ujević, and later Kiš participated. Those polemics always included in them a desire for total liquidation of the enemy," Avdić said.

However, Avdić emphasized, if polemics are started anywhere, that is done only in newspapers by journalists.

"We do not have any dialogue on polemics among the local humanistic intelligence at all. If there is any seed of dialogue anywhere in this society, it is only in journalism, whatever level it may be on," Avdić concluded.

## **What is Moral, What is Not**

An independent journalist from Banja Luka, **Željko Cvijanović**, who engaged in a polemic in the past several months on the pages of the Dani magazine with a journalist from Sarajevo, Ozren Kebo, said that both parties showed weaknesses during the polemic.

"That means that the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, not only among the common people, but also among intellectuals, by creating a new system of values, also created a new ideology and new mythology which none of the sides can now shake off. Try to explain to a Serb, it does not matter whether to an intellectual or a peasant, that the international community is not against them because they are Serbs. I think you will get enough reasons for a fight, but not for polemics. On the other hand, try to tell a Bosniak that he has monopolized the right to be the victim of the war. Again, you will get more reasons for a fight than for polemics," Cvijanović pointed out.

The Inter-Entity Journalist Conference was also attended by advisors to the three-member Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina. A spokesman for the office of chairman Živko Radišić, **Igor Radojčić**, asked what values polemics can be started about in the first place. The system of values that existed before is shaken today, because Bosnia-Herzegovina is going through two transitions – post-communist and post-war.

"It will take time to establish a new system of values, which will tell that one thing is moral, and that another is not," Radojčić said.

There are no real and quality polemics in either Bosnia-Herzegovinian entity, Ante Jelavić's press advisor Tihomir Begić asserted, stressing that "polemics and analytic journalism are what salt is to food."

"Polemics should be engaged in using the force of arguments, not the language of hatred," Begić said.

Alija Izetbegović's foreign affairs advisor **Mirza Hajrić** agreed with Begić's assertion that there are still no quality polemics in Bosnia-Herzegovina, polemics whose quality can survive for a month or two.

"The polemics that we have here are a reflection of our media reality, but also of the politics that we have. Eminent writer Ivan Krtolić has said once that 'in polemics you must respect the opponent at least as much as you hate him.' In a small number of polemics that we are witnessing, there is respect in relation to the choice of words, in the manner of addressing the opponent. It would be better if we concentrated on the topic, instead of choosing insults, although an integral part of this most concrete media boxing, it seems to me, is a blow or two under the belt," Mirza Hajrić said.

\* \* \*

On the second day of the inter-entity conference the participants discussed journalists' freedoms and rights, and the role of police and authorities in freedom of expression violations. OSCE advisor **Tanya L. Domi** said that Bosnia-Herzegovina excels in media freedom in relation to its Balkan neighbors, but that arrests and attacks on journalists are still happening. The OSCE will in the coming period finance a lawyer from its budget, who will work within the office of the ombudsmen of the Federation, whose task will be to protect freedom of journalism.

"The law and police practice must be such that they support the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights."

In this part of the conference the following question was raised – whether police in Sarajevo are tapping journalists' phones. A representative of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, who was earlier a member of the OSCE Media Experts Commission, Fehim Duraković, said that he does "not know of such cases" and that "perhaps other bodies, not the police, engage in that."

The Inter-Entity Journalist Conference also discussed the issue of journalist education. Representatives of three departments of journalism at the universities of Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar and Banjaluka, as well as the BBC school and Media Plan School of journalism, gave opening speeches. (S. Kasalo)

## **RS Association of Journalists Becomes Member of International Federation of Journalists**

As of November 14, the Association of Journalists of the Republika Srpska is a full member of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). The most important recommendation for gaining membership were independent reactions to violations of journalist rights and freedoms. In addition, the RS Association of Journalists clearly committed to take an active part in transition towards highest media standards, rights and freedoms, and their efficient implementation in media that employ members of the Association. The RS Association of Journalists signed a Memorandum of Understanding that other journalist associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina signed on October 19 this year.

The Association of Journalists of the Republika Srpska was founded in June 1996 on the initiative of earlier members of the Association of Journalists of the former Yugoslavia. The Association today numbers more than 300 members who fulfill the most important condition, that they have lived solely off the journalist profession for at least a year with a full-time job, or two years if they do not have a full-time job. The Association has printed its own journalist I.D. cards, which serve to protect journalists who are members of the Association and to enable them to exercise rights recognized to journalists worldwide. The Association's bodies are Managing Board, Assembly and Court of Honor. The Association's executive functions are carried out by Branislav Božić, president, and Zoran Baroš, secretary general.

The main program aims of the Association are protection of the rights and freedoms of journalists, journalism as a profession and the media. For instance, the Association has reacted strongly to all forms of pressure on media coming from the ruling structures, such as during democratic changes on the political scene in 1997. The Association reacted in a similar way to the dismissal of managers of 16 RTV stations in the Republika Srpska, and to the ban on the work of the SRNA News Agency, with the aim of protecting journalists and the journalist profession.

The Association of Journalists of the Republika Srpska is seated in Kralja Petra I Karađorđevića 74, Banja Luka. Its telephone and fax number is: ++381 (0)78 18-914, for calls from the BiH Federation the code is 058. (G.D.)

### **The Monitor 's Eye**

#### **TVBiH: Saturday News Programs Becomes Richer**

It gives us more and more pleasure to watch Saturday's news program *Dnevnik* at 7:30 p.m. on Television BiH, edited by the relaxed and witty Senad Hadžifejzović. This time we decided to single out two striking items from this magazine workshop, as we may call it. The first is from the village of Baljvine near Mrkonjić Grad (December 12); it is actually a reportage on coexistence between Bosniak returnees and their Serb neighbors, made by reporter Verica Kalajdžić. A moving detail concerns a boy called Emir Habibović, who was the only student in the school until recently: "In Bugojno I learned Serb language and Cyrillic... When I am bored, I play with my dogs..." Emir says to the camera. There is a curiosity in regard to Baljvine: it is the only place in the Republika Srpska where the mosque was preserved until peacetime!

The second item (December 19), made by reporter Hajrudin Redžić, speaks about Ivan Ćurić, a guardian priest who returned to Plehan near Derventa, Republika Srpska. According to Ivan's brother, Bosniak Croats have definitely decided not to turn their backs

on their Bosnia. The message is full of optimism, although it was uttered on the ruins of the monastery and church in Plehan...

Both reports, although modest, effectively contribute to establishing an ambiance of reconciliation, trust and tolerance.

### ***Večernje novine*: Tabloid Attracts Attention**

If we set aside numerous supplements to the paper, which are typical even of large-format papers, the Sarajevo-based *Večernje novine* is becoming a richer and better quality tabloid. In the issue of December 21, two articles draw attention. The first is “Commentary of the Day” by Azra Aličković, entitled “Nameless Corruption,” which reveals in a nutshell the behavior of the incumbent power-wielders, in relation to wide-spread corruption that international community officials have been warning about for quite some time. That the mentality of narrow, dogmatic political awareness (collective identification is hidden behind phrases – “some comrades”, “some phenomena”, etc.) is shown by the author at the end of the commentary:

“One forgets that the ranks of people who have suddenly become rich behind the SDA are increasing, and this does not start or end in Tuzla (there has been much talk lately about corruption scandals in Tuzla). Many of them before the war were not accomplished, or rich, but then, objectively, they did not have Izetbegović and the SDA, who referred to them in the Statement (from the latest SDA management session) only as a “phenomenon.”

On the cultural pages in the same issue, attention is drawn by Gradimir Gojer’s column “Krug” (meaning *circle*), entitled “Pero, I and Ramadan.” His articles only seem to be dealing with cultural issues. In essence, they deal with current social issues, with strong political charge. Gojer this time slams the ignorance of non-Moslems towards a Ramadan concert held recently in Sarajevo. The author concludes the bitter commentary with something like a verse:

“People, do not go into sheep pens...

Go to the Ramadan concert.

And, together, we will also go the Christmas one...

Both of these articles are neither lessons, nor politicized messages, but an illustration of timely and engaged journalism.

(Media Plan Monitoring Center)

## **New Media**

### ***Narodne novine* in Tuzla**

The first issue of a weekly called *Narodne novine* was published in Tuzla on December 16. The review, as it is called, is to be published every Wednesday together by the djl. “Blicko” company, owned by Ahmet Bajrić, a photographer and photo-reporter from Tuzla, and DOO Printcom, one of the best private printing houses in Tuzla.

The paper lists well-known journalists from Tuzla as members of its newsroom: Zlatko Dukić, Marko Divković, Fatmir Alispahić, Đuro Škondrić, Husref Muharemagić... The editor-in-chief is Mehmed Pargan, Tuzla correspondent for Slobodna Bosna. The editorial says the following: “Our aim is, by distancing ourselves from any policy, to promote ideas and successes in this canton and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but at the same time to criticize

and fight everything that the authors of *Narodne novine* and, of course, our readers, think is negative.”  
(F.K.)

## **News Flash**

### **Fire in News Agency ONASA**

A large fire broke out in the Sarajevo News Agency ONASA in the early morning hours of December 19, completely destroying its equipment and premises. The damaged caused by the fire is great, with destroyed computers, two telephone switchboards, servers, telephone sets, TV and radio sets, office furniture and complete documentation. Right after the fire was extinguished, BiH Federation Prime Minister Edhem Bičakčić and BiH Council of Ministers Co-Chairman Haris Silajdžić visited ONASA, and assistance was offered by TV BiH, HINA agency, Slobodna BiH, Dnevni avaz and PC KIDS.

On December 21 ONASA began to work temporarily on two locations: in PC KIDS – tel. 666 - 751 and Soros Media Center premises – tel. 207 – 026 and 404 – 743, ext. 20.

Everyone who wants to help can use the following donor accounts at Market Bank, for RECONSTRUCTION AND REVIVAL OF ONASA COMPANY. For payments in KM: 10100-620-250, no: 532711000-52000269, for payments in DM: 10100-620-2000250, no: 532715000-52000269, for payments in other currencies: 10100-620-2000250, no: 523716000-52000269.

### **Course for TV Journalists Completed**

The Soros Media Center in Banja Luka on December 18 officially marked the end of three-week training of television journalists from local TV stations in the Republika Srpska. Training was carried out by BBC trainers, and the course encompassed 18 journalists from all television stations in the western part of the Republika Srpska, except for Radio-Television Vikom. This form of cooperation between the Soros Media Center and the BBC started in 1996, but this is the first time the course was held in Banja Luka.

### **The IMC Has Inaugurated Regional Advisory Panels (RAP)**

The Independent Media Commission (IMC) has recently inaugurated

two Regional Advisory Panels for the areas in and around Mostar and Sarajevo. Representatives on these Panels included media figures from Nevesinje, Kiseljak, Višegrad, East and West Mostar, Sarajevo, Srpsko Sarajevo and Pale. This was achieved through the outstanding cooperation IMC has with OSCE, OHR, electronic and the print media.

The main objective of these Panels is to offer consultation between IMC and regional media representatives and to support the responsibilities lodged on IMC at the recent Madrid Conference. The Panels can also resolve local media disputes or refer complaints to the IMC.

The new RAPs , which will, in general, meet once per month or more if necessary, will be also established to cover Banjaluka, Tuzla, Bihać and Brčko areas.

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