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Media News

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Media Laws

Republika Srpska RTV Loosing Ethnic Exclusivity

The international community's High Representative Carlos Westendorp at the end of his mandate in Bosnia-Herzegovina passed a decision on the establishment of a public radio television system in the country. Based on that decision, his successor Wolfgang Petritsch on August 31 announced modifications and amendments to the Law on Radio Television of Republika Srpska. This decision is a so-called transitional measure and will in effect until February 29, 2000, by which time the Republika Srpska National Assembly must pass a law with the same name and in full compliance with the European principles for establishing public radio television and with this transitional decision.

The most important provision of this law, although it appears to be of a formal nature, is that the name of the present Serb RTV is being changed into Radio-Television of Republika Srpska. This practically means that it is loosing its exclusive ethnic prefix even formally, which is in line with the international community's efforts to give both Bosnian-Herzegovinian entities a multiethnic character, and their televisions the character of public services. The modifications to the law state that RTV Republika Srpska is a public enterprise seated in Banja Luka and established to carry out radio-diffusion activities of interest for the Republika Srpska. The part of the law which speaks about activities states that preparation, transmission and broadcasting of its own radio and television program is conducted "taking into account the satisfaction of the cultural and language needs of the citizens of the Republika Srpska." When interpreting the letter and spirit of these legal modifications, Republika Srpska RTV should in the future take into account in a balanced way the interests of members of all peoples living in this entity and satisfy the interest to have a quality

program for all citizens, namely its subscribers. Now it may be expected that journalists and other RTV RS staff will include employees of non-Serb nationality.

According to one article of the modified law, RTV RS will not longer transmit via its transmitters programs that are not encompassed by permits issued by the Independent Media Commission (IMC). In that way, the re-broadcasting of Belgrade-based RTV Serbia is subject to permit from the Independent Media Commission. Also, local public and municipal radio stations may re-broadcast only RTV Republika Srpska's primetime news programs until the Independent Media Commission issues permits that will regulate program contents and the criteria of re-broadcasting.

As the basic professional criteria in information, the law stipulates timeliness, impartiality and truthfulness. Programs must contain at least 25 percent of program produced in the Republika Srpska, which stimulates not only production, but also cooperation with other producers and broadcasters from this entity. The average length of commercials shall not exceed 12 minutes within one hour of programming, with the total not exceeding 15 percent of overall programming.

RTV RS's bodies shall be the managing board and director general. The managing board shall have six members representing independent journalists, the legal profession, economic sector, academic community, Republika Srpska syndicate, and employed workers. In selecting them one shall bear in mind the "cultural and language differences among the citizens of the Republika Srpska." Members of the managing board shall be appointed by the RS National Assembly, while the director general is appointed by the managing board for a period of five years.

RTV RS shall be financed from subscription, but also from a monthly government subsidy. The law stipulates criteria for government participation in covering RTV expenditures.

Media Cooperation (1)

Entity TVs Should Cooperate Like Entity Armies?!

(Opinions by politicians and journalists from the Republika Srpska)

The decision to establish a Public RTV Service for the territory of the entire Bosnia-Herzegovina, as we have written in our previous issue, has caused different reactions in the political and media public – from support, to indifference, and even protest. The Government of the Republika Srpska maintains that



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the establishment of a public RTV service at Bosnian-Herzegovinian state level will lead to the creation of a unitary media environment in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is in opposition to the Dayton Peace Agreement. However, the establishment of a public service actually directly stimulates cooperation between the two public entity radio-television stations – RTV BiH Federation and RTV Republika Srpska. Our Banja Luka bureau has interviewed a number of prominent people from Banja Luka who have influence on public opinion in this entity. We asked them the following questions: **is cooperation between entity televisions possible and desirable, in what form can it be expressed, what they would like and what they certainly would not like to see from the federal TV program on their own television.**

Putting Oil on the Fire Should be Avoided

Most of the interviewed persons gave general answers and avoided stating their opinion on what they would like, and what not from the other entity's television program. Still, Radio Free Europe correspondent Lazar Petrovic says "oil should not be put on the fire and programs that are to be exchanged should be made without issues that may insult anyone." He backs his view with the following words: "Haris Silajdzic and other so-called hardliners should not be put on air." Correspondent for the Sarajevo-based *Oslobodjenje* and Voice of America Gordana Katana also supports cooperation between entity televisions. In her opinion, some issues suitable for program cooperation are return of refugees, war crimes, corruption and a series of other burning issues which the citizens of both entities have incomplete information about. Katana says: "Why shouldn't we have two stories on Srebrenica? Rehabilitation and coexistence are not possible if burning issues are avoided."

"BiH is a single territory, both legally and politically and economically; it functions as a single state," says Branko Peric, head of ONASA's Banja Luka bureau and until recently president of the Republika Srpska Independent Union of Journalists. Cooperation in the field of information is a condition for establishing contact between people, maintains this journalist.

Zoran Kalinic, director of Independent RTV Banja Luka, uses a concrete example to support his view that "if French and Algerian TV can cooperate, why shouldn't our two entity TVs?!" According to him, workers from the Zenica Steelworks (BiH Federation) would surely like to know what is happening with their traditional partner, the Ljubija iron ore mine (Republika Srpska). Kalinic says he has a contract with Sarajevo-based TV BiH and adds that "there is a big need for exchanging information; it is imminent, whether some local minister wants it or not..."

Meanwhile, the Republika Srpska information minister, Rajko Vasic, is more concerned with the character and purpose of the Public RTV Service for Bosnia-Herzegovina than he is against potential cooperation between the two entity televisions. He points out that production of a centralized news program on a separate RTV network, even if only for an hour or two for the time being, will lead to a phasing out of the entity televisions, which would be against the Dayton Peace Agreement. He maintains that the entity televisions are able to agree on cooperation by themselves, without mediation from the OHR. Such cooperation would consist of entering the program market together, organizing pools for covering major events, exchange and even joint production of some programs. According to the RS information minister, the two entity RTVs could establish a joint institution similar to what once was JRT (Yugoslav Radio Television), which also did not have central production or its own broadcasting network.

Vasic's journalist colleague, Nikola Guzijan, editor-in-chief of *Glas srpski*, was unwilling to elaborate on his stance that "information under the Dayton Agreement is in the

jurisdiction of the entities and inter-entity cooperation is desirable, but with insulting issues being avoided.”

“I am a government official and my stance is the same as the stance of the information minister, Mr. Rajko Vasic,” says this journalist.

Ethnic Television Has No Perspective

Most Serb politicians from Banja Luka also maintain that the main starting point for any discussion on information is the Dayton interpretation “that information is in the jurisdiction of the entities, not the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina,” RS People’s Alliance President Biljana Plavsic maintains there should be cooperation between the entity radio-televisions, in the same way that such cooperation has been established between the entity armies. “There is a joint commission there (for the army), which discusses common issues. Establishment of a joint television would derogate the provisions of the Dayton Agreement. Serb RTV is financed from income made by the Republika Srpska citizens and their money cannot pour into another cash-box,” says Biljana Plavsic. Unlike her, the president of the Alternative Council of Ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina and founder of the Banja Luka-based paper *Prelom*, Miodrag Zivanovic, speaks without reserve about the need to establish different forms of cooperation between the entity televisions, but he also supports the concept of a joint radio-television. “Its establishment greatly depends on the political structures. The national oligarchies are striving to close everything, although that story of ethnic televisions has no perspective. One should start with the fiercest issues, which present the essence of life,” Zivanovic explains.

Dragan Cavic, deputy president of the Presidency of the SDS, the party that was in power in the Republika Srpska during the war and until 1997 (and which rejected any possibility of contact in the field of information with the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina), now says: “In the sphere of information, systematic changes should be made, which means that a law on media should be passed, professionals should be employed, media should be freed from the political influence of the ruling structures, which is now the case in both the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The appointment of the state TV managing board should have been left to all parties, not only the ones in power. Cooperation between entity media is in any case needed in all segments of content, just as it is necessary in the economic and every other field.”

RS National Assembly general secretary and member of the RS Socialist Party Main Board Momir Malic replied laconically to our questions: “Spare me the television story...!”

In conclusion we can say that not a single person we interviewed in the Republika Srpska, regardless of their professional or political position, is still against program cooperation between the two entity radio-televisions. This is a new view concerning the establishment of the media environment in Bosnia-Herzegovina coming from this entity. The authorities, and even journalists from state media, however, still opine that joint, “umbrella,” or state Bosnian-Herzegovinian media cannot exist because that is neither in the interest of the Republika Srpska citizens, nor is it in the spirit of the Dayton Agreement. Pioneers of media cooperation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who are very deserving for the creation of a positive inter-ethnic climate in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the war, and of which some have spoken for Media News, are of a different opinion.

The War Of Headlines

The New York Times article of August 17 on corruption in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which gives horrifying information on abuse by Bosnian-Herzegovinian politicians and asserts that one billion dollars of foreign aid has been stolen in Bosnia-Herzegovina, has caused a real earthquake in the local political structures. Media interest in this scandal can be compared to the Stability Pact Summit which in Sarajevo is considered to be one of the most significant events for the contemporary Balkans.

Media Plan Institute has carried out a monitoring of daily press reports in both entities concerning this event. The period encompassed was from August 18, when the article in American press was first reported about, to August 21, when the paper's New York office published a partial correction of some information from the article. As one may assume, reporting on this scandal has reflected the divisions present in other spheres of Bosnian society: blame and responsibility always lie on others.

Slobodna BiH, which is considered a Croat paper, in its headlines and articles underlined the responsibility of the Bosniak political leadership, in particular Bakir Izetbegovic, son of Alija Izetbegovic. Serb press acted in a similar manner. On the other hand, newspapers based in Sarajevo covered the scandal from objective factual reporting to almost unreserved support to the authorities accused in the article.

BiH Federation

All four daily newspapers in the Federation (we include *Slobodna BiH* among them although it is based in Split, Croatia, because it is a Bosnian-Herzegovinian paper by its content) gave immense coverage to Chris Hedges' article in which he presented serious accusations against the Bosnian, and especially the Bosniak authorities. *Dnevni avaz* features on its front page a huge headline "One billion dollars stolen in Bosnia-Herzegovina," under which it quotes parts of the article. Below that is a small picture of Presidency member Izetbegovic and his words that this is a deliberate lie to besmirch the Bosnian authorities. The headline – "One billion dollars misappropriated?" is featured on the front page of *Vecernje novine*, while *Slobodna BiH* in its headline quotes OHR spokesperson Alexandra Stieglmeier at a press conference in Sarajevo: "One billion dollars lost in BiH due to massive corruption." However, this paper presents the American report only on its last page in the form of a news agency item titled "Bakir Izetbegovic is the boss of 60,000 apartments." *Oslobodjenje* on its front page focuses on an earthquake in Turkey, and on the fifth page reports on the *NY Times* article under the headline "One billion dollars stolen in BiH!"

It is interesting that only *Dnevni avaz* on Aug. 18 and *Slobodna BiH* on Aug. 19 carried the *NYT* report in full, while *Oslobodjenje* and *Vecernje novine* only reported on the article with quotes of the most significant parts.

All newspapers on August 19 dedicated several pages each to reactions to the report. *Oslobodjenje* approached the issue cautiously and comprehensively. It published as many as two commentaries. On its front page the paper states that it is far from being the fact that Bosnia-Herzegovina is immune to corruption, but recognizes the validity of Izetbegovic's and

Silajdzic's requests that the international community should give sound evidence for the accusations. On its inside pages the paper presents a whole series of reactions – from High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch, who claims there is no secret OHR report, through the reaction of the accused Bakir Izetbegovic, to different views of political parties and state institutions. This is all followed by a commentary titled "Do we want Chris on the cross" in which the author, criticizing Bosnian officials' reactions, says it could have been expected that those who are blamed would defend themselves, but not that they would accuse the author of the article of hating the Bosniak people. "That kind of defense and counter-attack has often been used in the former and present Yugoslavia. Journalists, humanitarian workers, businessmen... have many times been proclaimed 'foreign agents' or 'mercenaries'" – writes *Oslobodjenje* and concludes that Chris Hedges has found himself in that kind of a situation now.

On that same day (Aug. 19.) *Dnevni avaz*, through numerous reactions and the headlines given, underlines that the accusations need to be proven, and also that there is much more corruption in the Republika Srpska. In its *Commentary of the Day*, the paper writes: "Waving around corruption like a red cloth before the eyes of Bosniak representatives in the ruling structures will continue until responsibility from the general field is transferred to the individual one." Right under the article are the results of a public opinion survey (without saying what sample and method were used), according to which most citizens do not believe that corruption has reached such high proportions without concrete proof made public. In this issue *Avaz* features, under the label *Exclusive*, a lengthy statement by a former Republika Srpska prime minister candidate, Brano Miljus (who clashed with the incumbent authorities and Prime Minister Dodik). Miljus claims: "The story of the stolen one billion dollars is a ruse planted by Milorad Dodik for the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina." This was put in the headline as well. Miljus asserts that Dodik is a corrupt politician tolerated by the international community and that many accusations of misappropriation in the Republika Srpska are being transferred to the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Dnevni avaz* continues in the same spirit the following day. On page eight it features a statement by Chris Hedges with the headline "Serbs are probably the most corrupt in BiH." Right next to that is the headline "OHR attempts to justify its high personal incomes," and under that a statement by an unnamed foreign diplomat who told the SENSE news agency that "certain international structures may also be responsible for misappropriation of funds in BiH." On the next page the paper quotes *The Washington Post* which claims that USAID provoked the collapse of BH Bank.

Slobodna BiH uses the New York paper article to attack the Bosniak leadership. On several occasions it underlines the responsibility of Bakir Izetbegovic. On August 18 it publishes an article titled "Bakir Izetbegovic is the boss of 60,000 apartments." Already the following day the front page of the paper features a picture of Izetbegovic Junior with a large headline "Bakir Izetbegovic charges \$2,000 for a tenant's right." On August 20 Bakir Izetbegovic is again on the front page, but this time in an announcement of an open letter written by him in which he denies accusations against himself. However, in the inside pages the paper again carries a large headline "Izetbegovic's son is one of the richest people in BiH," under which it reports on an article in *The Washington Post* on political relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It needs to be mentioned here that under these headlines, in which Izetbegovic's son is emphasized, the paper usually correctly presented quotes from *The New York Times* or some other foreign paper. The only article written by a local journalist featured in *Slobodna BiH* on this issue was by the Sarajevo correspondent of HINA, who mentions earlier articles on corruption in the *Dani* magazine. The article, among other things, says: "It is a public secret that the Bosniak political leadership has never submitted a comprehensive report on donations that arrived during the war for the country's defense, while yesterday's poor people close to the ruling structures have become rich overnight."

Vecernje novine can be proud of being the only daily newspaper with an exclusive statement from the author of the article, Chris Hedges, in which he claims his report is accurate (Aug. 20). The day before, this paper published a harsh commentary slamming the international community for not giving concrete evidence of corruption, but also the local politicians that it holds responsible for corruption. “When a local journalist attacks power-wielders for misappropriation of funds, he ends up with a grenade in front of his door...when a foreigner does it, the population is driven mad by denials” – wrote *Vecernje*.

All papers on August 21 announced in their headlines a partial correction issued by *The New York Times* explaining that the one billion dollars refers to public funds, not foreign aid. This fact is the most conspicuous in *Dnevni avaz*, which says in a headline across half of its front page: -- “Theft of one billion dollars invented.” Under that, in smaller letters, are the headlines: “*The New York Times* apologizes” and “Izetbegovic and Bicakcic sue the American paper.”

Republika Srpska

Dnevne nezavisne novine and *Glas srpski* from Banja Luka gave incomparably less coverage to the scandal that arose following *The New York Times* article. *Nezavisne novine* on August 18 did not publish a single word about it. Is this an editorial omission or is it due to the fact that it is a Wednesday edition, which has the character of a review and whose articles are prepared much in advance? On the other hand, *Glas srpski* on that day published a headline at the bottom of the front page “One billion dollars evaporates,” under which is a short news agency item from BETA quoting AFP, which tells about the article in the American paper. Inside the paper is an extensive SRNA item on an OHR announcement that it will launch a corruption investigation in Sarajevo.

The following day both papers focused on reactions to the NY Times article, but did not report much on the article itself. *Glas srpski* carried the reaction of Alexandra Stieglmeier agreeing with BiH Co-Prime Minister Svetozar Mihajlovic, who shifts the problem to the entity governments, and also of Alija Izetbegovic who denies the allegations, and a statement from Christopher Bennett from the ICG that various misuses are primarily present in the BiH Federation.

Dnevne nezavisne novine on August 19 made up for the “omission” from the previous day. On the front page is a picture of Bakir Izetbegovic and a big headline “Bakir is not a thief,” which are the words of his father Alija in reaction to the American report. On the next page is a commentary whose gist is that the Bosniak authorities in Sarajevo are solely responsible for corruption. The author claims that in the Republika Srpska, while the SDS was in power, foreign aid did not arrive at all so it could not have been misused, and when the authorities changed, Dodik’s government publicly announced where and for what the money was spent. Responsibility of the “other side” is best seen in the following passage from the article: “The SDA, which symbolizes ‘Bosnia’ and vice versa, must understand that what goes around comes around. One does not need to ponder much to see where various banks that had foreign funds on their accounts are located... The time of capitalization without control has passed, of the insane bombardment of Sarajevo and the image of a victim of aggression, genocide, occupation... Where is the money?”

Unlike press in the Federation, daily newspapers in the Republika Srpska on August 21 did not publish the correction of some allegations from the article by *The New York Times*. Instead, *Glas srpski* on August 21 decided to feature a commentary with a high-sounding title: “Izetbegovic in a knockdown,” which starts with the claim that more than one billion dollars has disappeared, and that being U.S. dollars (which was denied in the correction). The author of the article further says that Bosniak leaders are responsible for that. “Dazed by the

knockdown, Alija Izetbegovic in a letter to Wolfgang Petritsch still cannot believe that someone can proclaim him and his people, who so generously ‘sacrificed themselves for peace in BiH, to be criminals’” writes Glas srpski. The commentary ends with a reprimand to certain independent media in the RS, “who want to drag the Republika Srpska between the lines into The New York Times report.” (R. U.)

E t h i c s a n d C u l t u r e o f C o m m u n i c a t i o n (2)

Media News has started publishing articles on ethics and the culture of communication written by renowned world authors, as well as experts who are well acquainted with the media circumstances in countries in transition and southeast Europe. We will try to give a large number of practical examples of violations of ethical norms and codes and reactions to them. Everything we publish will serve as an exercise for students attending the Media Plan School of Journalism in Sarajevo.

In this issue we bring an excerpt from the book “The Ethics of Journalism” titled “Dear lessons learned from mistakes” by Dr. Stjepan Malovic, Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi and Gordana Vilovic (biblioteka Press/Izvori, Zagreb, 1998).

Dear Lessons Learned from Mistakes

Journalism is a profession that is constantly before the eyes and judgment of the public. Since the purpose of journalism is to publicly publish news, articles, reportages, commentaries, interviews and other journalistic genres and forms, all readers, listeners and viewers of mass media are able to comment on, analyze, react to and criticize journalistic work and the final product in front of them.

Nowhere are mistakes so obvious and so easily spotted as in mass media. Sometimes it is incomprehensible how such stupidities, incorrect or clumsy things can be published. Mass media are swarming with mistakes: from the most ordinary and common ones – typing mistakes – in print media or pronunciation mistakes analogous to them in electronic media, to publishing wrong or incorrect information, to mistakes that may cause major and far-reaching consequences because they usually cause irreparable damage to persons or institutions written about.

Those who are well acquainted with the rules of media production are not surprised at that. Journalism is never done slowly, calmly, in ideal working conditions; it is characterized by a constant fight against deadlines. Speed is the most frequent and important criterion, news must not be late, because the newspaper rotation or prime viewing and listening time do not wait.

Journalists must therefore be very well trained and able to work in very difficult conditions. Decisions must be made on the spot, events must be reacted to, judgment with far-reaching consequences must be made... The journalist does not have time to analyze an event in peace, but must inform the public right away on what has happened. Hence there is no possibility to make an in-depth analysis, to try out different possibilities of what would happen using his or her theoretical knowledge.

All this leads to mistakes and burdens journalists. Very often big news agencies and media organizations issue their own guide books for journalists, in which they teach them how to write and check news and how to behave in different situations. Our media organizations still have not started publishing such written instructions for their journalists, but there are firm unwritten rules in different media that journalists must adhere to.

However, even the best written instructions do not help journalists when they find themselves in the epicenter of an event. They cannot pull out of their back pocket a book and leaf through it as if through a cook book to apply the correct recipe for investigating something. The journalist is directly faced with the event, must investigate it, find out with as much accuracy as possible what exactly has happened, evaluate the value of the event and write a news piece. Journalists are professionals who must make a great many decisions in a very short time, which brings them into some particularly stressful situations. At the same time, journalists must be aware that already the following day they will be faced with the consequences of their decisions before the judgment of the public. Have they found out the truth, correctly evaluated an event, have they presented it in the right way and have they perhaps made some damage through their writing?

Making journalistic professional decisions also contains numerous ethical doubts that appear in reporting. Evaluations are made in the field, in difficult conditions and may sometimes be very dubious ethically.

Should the journalist approach the mother whose child was killed in a traffic accident and ask her for her opinion? If yes, should the question be: "Is this is a painful loss for you? How do you feel?" This is a relatively simple doubt from the ethical point of view, but still we can very often see in newspapers that this is precisely what journalists have done.

There are many situations in which journalists are faced with ethical doubts: Should they announce the names of persons involved in crime before the sentence has gone into effect? Is presenting the truth about mass rapes more convincing if we present a raped girl who talks about what happened to her? Should we report on a private scandal of a prominent, honest and uncorrupt politician which has nothing to do with his political activities? Do we keep silent about a prominent politician's illness for ethical reasons? Do we have the right to report in the media a generally known, but still unconfirmed truth? And finally, do we lie in the interest of our homeland?

The journalist does not encounter these doubts in an academic or theoretical way, but is faced with them in moments of most intense work. A battlefield reporter must decide whether to stand in front of the camera in such a way that the body of a killed enemy soldier can be seen or to stand one meter further away. Which solution is better? Is the ethical solution at the same time more journalistically attractive and professionally better? How much can ethics dull the journalistic edge and diminish deadly criticism? Should the journalist at any price, even by violating evident ethical principles, go after something and be the first one to report what has happened?

Questions follow one another in precisely this way in the heads of journalists as they file reports, and there is no real help. In such a moment the journalist is left to himself or herself, his or her knowledge and professional training. Of crucial importance are the journalist's integrity and strength of character, instructions and the position of his or her organization (if it goes after sensations or wants a serious, tested approach), and experience.

Many doubts are resolved simultaneously. A personal (un)pleasant experience, in which the journalist was faced with a violation of ethical principles, often remains a lesson for life. Journalists learn from mistakes. These lessons are dear and very difficult. Sometimes the results are shattering, and almost always come post festum.

Reportage in Memory of a Colleague

Oslobodjenje in the issue of August 28 this year made a real editorial move by again publishing a moving reportage called “Black flag” by the recently deceased colleague Mladen Paunovic, which was first published in the spring of ’96, in the still uncertain post-Dayton times. At that time the reportage was seen as the author crowing too early, as a plea for the restoration of authentic life in Sarajevo, but its messages even today have not lost their actuality. We welcome the editorial move by the colleagues from *Oslobodjenje*...

N e w s

Goran Mihajlovic, New President of NUN RS

During the Assembly of the Independent Association of Journalists of the Republika Srpska (NUN RS) on August 27, Goran Mihajlovic was unanimously elected new president. He has so far worked for Serb Radio, the papers *Panorama*, *Ekstra magazin* and *Nezavisne novine*, and has been a correspondent for Radio Belgrade, Radio Fern and Pristina-based *Jedinstvo*. Goran Mihajlovic succeeded former president Branko Peric.

***Oslobodjenje* awards**

On August 30, the anniversary of the daily *Oslobodjenje*, the paper’s managing board and journalists’ collegium decided to give journalist awards for 1998 and 1999.

Awards for life-work “30 August” were given to Hajdar Arifagic, Mahmut Buljugic, Mehmed Halilovic, Senad Praso and Slobodan Stajic. Awards for journalism were given to Asaf Becirovic, Senad Gubelic, Vehid Jahic, Senka Kurtovic and Danijel Omeragic. Awards for outside associates were given to Vojislav Vujanovic and posthumously Mladen Paunovic.

Police Attempt to Bring in Senad Pecanin

Sarajevo Cantonal Court police attempted to bring the editor-in-chief of *Dani* magazine to court on September 1.

A *Dani* statement said the “attempt to bring in (the editor-in-chief) shows flagrant disrespect for the High Representative’s decision to abolish the Penal Code articles that incriminate acts of insult and slander.” The statement further said Pecanin was supposed to be brought to court for a private suit by Moamer el-Gadaffi and the Libyan Embassy in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

However, according to a Cantonal Court statement, Pecanin was summoned to court as a witness in the Lozo Leutar murder case. It added that the editor-in-chief of *Slobodna Bosna*, Senad Avdic, was brought to court for the same reason.

The IMC issued a press release on the same occasion strongly condemning the court police intervention if it had anything to do with Pecanin's work at *Dani*.

Clash in BiH Association of Journalists

Sabahudin Hadzialic, president of the Assembly of the Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina who has resigned, wrote an open letter making a series of accusations against the Association's former president Enver Causevic.

Hadzialic asserted there has been a lot of malversation, privatization and dirty dealings in the work of the Association. Hadzialic alleged that former president Causevic never handed over his duties to his successor Edis Mesihovic, who resigned from the post a month ago.

According to *Vecernje novine*, Sabahudin Hadzialic maintains that an independent commission should be formed to investigate financial and other matters in the Association. In order to start something, together with journalists Milan Pekic, Ramo Kolar and Edis Mesihovic, he requested a suspension of the Statute and the formation of a new working group to prepare a new appointment session.

In a statement for *Vecernje novine*, Enver Causevic denied all accusations. The present acting president of the BiH Association of Journalists is Alija Lizde, director of Bosnian Muslim Radio Hayat Mostar..■

On the Threshold of a New Century



Listen with your ears!



Look with your eyes!



Think with your head!

Council of Media Plan Institute

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