

REPUBLIKA SRPSKA PM

## RS Government Wants Coordination Mechanism "Fixed"

Republika Srpska Prime Minister said that her government will not be part of the coordination mechanism because it didn't participate in its creation

PM Zeljka Cvijanovic (SNSD) said that the RS government will reconsider its position when the coordination government is "fixed", because "the government decided so". She said that the entity Assembly will back the government's decision, and "it is the problem of the BiH (state) level that they ignore the positions of RS institutions".

"That is not our problem anymore. We will participate (in the coordination mechanism) when they fix what they made wrong and in secrecy; and it can only be fixed in consultations with us and with our institutional participation, not unilaterally by the Council of Ministers. Simply, decisions that define the position and participation of Republika Srpska institutions can't be passed on the BiH level - that can be done only by the RS institutions. BiH (state) institutions are not superior to us in any segment, and that matter is clear," said PM Cvijanovic.



Zeljka Cvijanovic

"Also, there is a problem if (the Council of Ministers) told (the EU) that we discussed concrete solutions, because we didn't in any of the meetings. The problem is that, unfortunately, after the comments (of lower levels on the coordina-

tion mechanism) were delivered, a meeting wasn't scheduled to define the final version acceptable to all government levels; instead, the decision (on coordination mechanism) was simply published," said PM Cvijanovic.



Mladen Ivanic, BiH Presidency: I am convinced that the RS government will participate in the working bodies of the coordination mechanism, because there were similar situations in the past, when the RS government objected, but then they agreed to cooperate



Branislav Borenovic, PDP: As far as we know, there will be no special session of the RS Assembly on the coordination mechanism, and there is no need for it, although we were willing to participate in it, even initiate it, but I am afraid that would be waste of time and energy



Dragan Covic, HDZ BiH: I am sure that we must do everything to keep the (ruling) coalition, because it is a guarantor of further reforms. But, the fact is that every day somebody makes sure to create a "little problem" that might create impression that (the coalition) doesn't function

## SDA Will Have Its Own Presidency Candidate in 2018: Izetbegovic

**BiH Presidency member and the leader of the SDA, Bakir Izetbegovic, said in an interview with N1 television that there was no agreement with the leader of SBB, Fahrudin Radoncic, to have a joint presidential candidate of SDA and SBB in the next general elections**

At a recent hearing in the BiH Court, Radoncic said that SDA and SBB agreed to have him as a joint candidate because Izetbegovic cannot run for the third time in the elections for the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"There was no agreement that I or SDA support Radoncic as a joint candidate in 2018. SDA is the strongest party in BiH, and had its candidate for the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly, and will have one in 2018," Izetbegovic said.

On the other hand, Izetbegovic believes that the SDA-SBB coalition will survive.

"It is in the interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosniaks that these two parties represent, it goes far beyond petty personal interests, it is the wall against possible attacks on the stability and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina," said Izetbegovic.

He noted that the atmosphere in the SDA is

very good.

"I don't think we ever had such energy, consensus and good atmosphere in the work of the party as it is now. There is nothing that resembles a split," said Izetbegovic.

Izetbegovic also commented on a recent statement of the President of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik that the city of Sarajevo is unsafe and should be avoided.

"Sarajevo has a stronger economy than the entire Republika Srpska. Dodik should come to Sarajevo and learn some things from Sarajevans who had the power to overcome what they have survived. The RS pension fund is in a state of collapse, decaying railways, banking system, the collapse of refineries; their pensioners are the poorest in Europe, so Dodik has a lot to clean up in his own backyard and he could learn a lot from Sarajevans alone," said Izetbegovic.

### RS Government Pledges Financial Assistance to The Hague Defendants

Persons from Republika Srpska who are in the custody of the International Criminal Court for War Crimes in The Hague will be awarded one-time financial assistance in the amount of 40,000 KM, the RS Government said.

"The rules, criteria and conditions for the use of individual financial assistance to

persons who are in custody of the International Criminal Court for War Crimes in The Hague will be defined in a special ordinance that will be adopted by the RS Center for Research of War Crimes and Search for Missing Persons, with the approval of the RS government", said the entity government.

### Abu Hamza May Sue Government over Years in Detention

The Syrian citizen Imad Al-Husin better known as Abu Hamza told the TV network Aljazeera Balkans that he may file a lawsuit against the Bosnian authorities for keeping him for more than seven years in detention, on suspicion that he represented a threat to national security. "I challenge the Bosnian authorities to hold a fair trial," Al-Husin told Aljazeera. "I'm ready to give them my head if they can prove I am a menace to national security. If I'm guilty, they can condemn me. If not, I will sue them because they

held me [in detention] for seven-and-a-half years," he said.

Abu Hamza denied claims made by the Ministry of Security on Thursday that he still represented a menace to national security.

"Back in 2014 my legal team asked the Bosnian authorities to produce evidence that I represented a threat," Abu Hamza said. "All they could do was present two newspapers articles dating from 2006 and 2007. Apart from that, they didn't provide any evidence to justify the idea that I represent a threat to Bosnian national security," he stated.

# DAILY MARKERS

By Amra Zimic  
Editor-in-Chief

## Two Titles Arrive in BiH

Successes in sports, arts and show business are reserved for big countries and big nations. Therefore, the joy with which Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes every international success of its citizens in the fierce global competition is understandable.

We are used to awards of film director Danis Tanovic. Two years ago, he also won a "Silver Bear" at the Berlin Film Festival. Film "An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker" was made in 2013 with a budget of only 17,000 Euros. "Death in Sarajevo" is also a low-budget production, which the film critics, the audience and the jury recognized this week as a quality film and awarded the same "Silver Bear" to our director. Also, Tanovic got the award for best film, awarded by the International Association of Film Critics (FIPRESCI).

The story of Tanovic's film focuses on the famous Sarajevo assassination and its reflection on our society today. The film is based on a play by French philosopher Bernard-Henry Levy, "Hotel Europe". In addition to some ten Sarajevo actors, the main role in the film is played by the legendary French theater actor Jacques Weber. At the same time, news came from Germany about a new success of boxer Adnan Catic (Felix Sturm), who took back the title of world champion by the WBA version of the super middleweight division. This is the fifth time that the German born in our country takes back that title, which makes him a phenomenon in the world of boxing. That was also met with enthusiasm in Bosnia and Herzegovina, from where dozens of his supporters traveled to the match in Oberhausen, in which he was better than Russian Chudinov.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been a country of talents. Before the war, many of our athletes and artists received international awards. Today, little or nothing is invested in them, the social climate is depressing... Therefore, their successes are much more valuable than those achieved in BiH's brighter past.

# "The Third Entity" in Covic's Cabinet

**How to respect the head of state who, like Covic, places next to the flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina a symbol of his separatist creation Herceg-Bosna?**

Aggressive fools were once, two decades ago, stopped here. On the morning in April 1992 when the inscription appeared on the facade of Sarajevo's main post office: "This is Serbia!" a patriotic hand humorously replied: "This is a post office, you fool!" And those who planned to capture Bosnia and Herzegovina and its capital city overnight turned out to be fools. I fear, however, that in the new era, seemingly peaceful, other miners of Bosnia and Herzegovina can become winners. So far, the fools are we that tolerate the unprecedented arrogance of our official head of state, Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Dragan Covic, at the epicenter of our country. For more than a year, a flag of the so-called Herceg-Bosna stands prominently next to the state flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina in his office.



**By Vlastimir Mijovic**  
Senior Editor

If words lie, pictures do not.

And a reporter of klix.ba news website captured with his camera the situation in Covic's cabinet. The notorious flag of officially non-existent "third entity" (which the Constitutional Court has twice declared illegal) stands equally with the national flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Now the hypocrisy of the alleged advocate of the statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dragan Covic, is even more clear, and his alleged rejection of the idea of creating a third, exclusively Croatian entity. Why pursuing that when he already has it in practice: the flag in official statesman's cabinet, calling our cantons the counties, which was long declared unconstitutional, the unobstructed use of the Croatian kuna as a means of payment, also illegal, but very alive in the area under Covic's baton.

Let's stick to the flag. I really do not remember such a political prank and such defamation of our country's reputation. And by a formal chief of our country!

But why Bakir Izetbegovic and Mladen Ivanic, Covic's housemates in the building in central Sarajevo, never told his colleague to remove the intruder? Why didn't they inform the public about that? Why didn't they report Covic to the prosecutor's office, due to the unconstitutional actions?

Also, if he didn't know by now about this humiliation of BiH and the unconstitutional,

anti-Dayton behavior, will the High Representative Valentin Inzko order Covic tomorrow to stop that? In fact, it would be normal if he removed him from the Presidency with a very short and precise decision, to which he has the right, because the gravely violated the code of conduct in the highest office in the country. Thirdly, if none of the abovementioned reacts, with which explanation will the police dispel offended Bosnians, loyal to their country, if tomorrow they go to forcibly remove the provocative prop from Covic's Cabinet?

If the state will not move a finger, its citizens could try and do the job some day.

In addition to Covic, on this occasion criticized were also Bakir Izetbegovic, Fahrudin Radoncic, Mladen Ivanic and Milorad Dodik, who praise Covic and work closely with him. In that way, they become complicit in his arrogance and

illegal actions. Together with the redundant flag in the said cabinet, they could also be swept away! Their rivals from the SDP also have no reason to gloat. In the previous term of government, they cooperated with even bigger scum, the followers of Ustasha in the Croatian Party of Rights (HSP). Those would have brought Pavelic's picture and the flag of the criminal NDH in the BiH Presidency, if they had an office there.

I wrote several times about the chief of HDZ as a politician worth every contempt, a chameleon and primordial enemy of an independent, unified Bosnia and Herzegovina, a hypocrite who says one thing and does another. He is well aware that the Republic of Croatia, his "mother", strictly prohibits and punishes display of anyone's national flag in places where there can only be the local one. He apparently thinks that it is not a rule here, that we are some kind of a fictional country, a political cartoon, the butt of jokes.

I know that the mentioned politicians from other peoples know all about Covic. Are they any better than him, if they tolerate such his policy?

If they think they are, they have a chance to take the test again. They can at least verbally, with some statement and announcement, reprimand Covic. Until they do that, they are his allies in the dirty work of mocking and undermining the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

❖ Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina Igor Crnadak participated in Belgrade at the international seminar "Britain, Belgrade and Western Balkans", held under the auspices of the Group of Serbia Parliament of Great Britain and Minister without portfolio in charge for European integration of the Republic of Serbia Jadranka Joksimovic. Minister Crnadak spoke at the opening of the seminar, followed by a panel discussion on "The limits of public diplomacy in strengthening economic and political cooperation," when he stressed the importance of regional cooperation, especially in economics, infrastructure and European integration.

❖ Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina Josip Brkic received the Secretary of State for European Integration and chief negotiator for the Accession of Montenegro to the EU Aleksandar Andrija Pejovic. Brkic informed his counterpart on the submission of application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership in the European Union and stressed that the application is a confirmation of all the previous efforts by all levels of government in BiH on the European path.

❖ Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Fadil Novalic and FBiH Minister of Energy, Mining and Industry Nermin Dzindic received a delegation of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, headed by Director for BiH Ian Brown. The delegation also included advisers from the Initiative for the investment climate and management of EBRD Franklin Steves and Anastasia Rodina.

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# Coordination Mechanism Reflects Dayton Structure: Borenovic and Inzko

**PDP leader Branislav Borenovic and High Representative Valentin Inzko said that the coordination mechanism is a document that reflects the Dayton structure of BiH and gives full significance and capacity of Republika Srpska in adopting the harmonized positions on the path towards the European Union**

At a meeting in Banja Luka, it was noted that the judiciary should be independent, impartial and act in a professional manner in order to respond to the challenge of fighting corruption and crime, said the PDP.

"The proposed coordination mechanism corresponds with the document which was adopted in the RS Assembly in October 2013, with a team that is further enhanced by defining consensus vote of each level of government in accordance with its constitutional jurisdiction, which means that no decisions at the Collegium, Committee, sub-committees and task forces for European integration, as well as ministerial conferences can be adopted without the vote of the RS i.e. representatives of the Government of Republika Srpska," said Borenovic.

He added that a new law on the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be adopted in order to eliminate the ways of decision-making



by majority vote against any nation or entity, and expressed his expectation that this issue is resolved as soon as possible. According to Borenovic, PDP is seriously preparing for a new phase of development of the RS in which priority should be solving pressing economic and social problems of the citizens of the RS instead of meaningless and empty politi-

cal issues that were exhausted and led RS to the difficult economic situation. The meeting was attended by Zoran Talic, a member of the Presidency of the PDP, and he emphasized that the PDP, together with the parties of the Alliance for Change, is seriously preparing for the next local elections in October 2016, and general elections no later than 2018.

## Implement Real Reforms: Cormack

US Ambassador to BiH Maureen Cormack congratulated Bosnia and Herzegovina on the submission of the application for EU membership and pointed out that this is a very important step for the country.

"We all know that real reforms and the implementation of real reforms should come after this. The next step in the accession process is the process of completing the questionnaire, then there must be a complete consent in connection with

the coordination mechanism and the adaptation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement," said Cormack in an interview with *Oslobodjenje* daily. She believes that one of the benefits of the whole process is the fight against corruption. She stresses that a transparent business environment must be created to fight and eliminate corruption, because modern companies do not allow corruption. "We cooperate with the justice system, work through institutions, we are work-

ing with the courts, the prosecutor's office, to help the judicial system to identify cases of internal or corruption, then it builds and builds up so that it is able to fight and to prosecute corruption cases. The key is the highest level of professionalism in the judiciary and to indeed prevent political interference in the judicial process. We are trying, through the USAID, to raise public awareness that corruption is not normal to be accepted," said Cormack.

## HNC PM Meets with Deputy Head of OSCE Mission to BiH

Prime Minister of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC), Nevenko Herceg, met with Alexander Chuplygin, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and representatives of the OSCE Office in Mostar. PM Herceg informed Chuplygin about the current situation in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and activities and work

of the new Government. He pointed out the adoption of the Action Plan for the Reform Agenda and the adoption of the HNC Budget. He also spoke about the Government's plans in the current year, stressing that special attention will be paid to the adoption of legislation, among others, the Civil Service Law, the Law on Salaries and Labor Law.

Chuplygin stressed the good cooperation of the OSCE Office in Mostar and the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, pointing out the need for a stronger mutual engagement when it comes to protection of human rights, and voiced expectations that the issue of the so-called two schools under one roof will be resolved soon.

# Exhibition "Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Eyes of Diplomats" Opens in Sarajevo

A photo titled "Gornja pecina Bijambare" (Bijambare Upper Cave) by Susanne Mattis from the German Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina was declared the best among more than 150 photographs presented at the international exhibition "Bosnia and Herzegovina in the eyes of diplomats", which opened at the Bosnian Cultural Center in Sarajevo

"I took the photo two weeks ago in Bijambare, where I went to get away from the smog in Sarajevo. I also hike regularly and at this exhibition I presented photos from Bjelasnica and Jahorina. These are the places where I always have my camera with me," told FENA Suzanne Mattis.

According to the jury's decision, chaired by BiH painter Zekerijah Nalic, the second place went to two photos, one was taken by an advisor in the Spanish Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina Esther Iguierdo Martinez, titled "Lonely snowman" and the second photo was taken by Andrew Mayne, UNHCR Representative, who's photo portrays cats sunbathing.

The photos titled "Homes and the shelter" and "Strangers on the road" took the third place, authored by Representative of the Embassy of Norway Anne Havnor and Second Secretary of the Embassy of Russia in BiH Anton Sokolov. Although she did not win any of the prizes, Ambassador of Norway Vibeke Lilloe was pleased that the exhibition featured three of her photographs and that she also as a member of the jury voted on the best photos of the exhibition "Bosnia and



Herzegovina in the eyes of diplomats." "I try to focus on small details and motifs, which can also be artistic. While I was riding in my car on Mt Vlasica I was fascinated with colors, and I had to tell the driver to stop to get out of the car and make some photos which symbolize winter. This is what I love the most," said the Norwegian Ambassador to BiH. The exhibition, open until March 4, was organized by the Russian Embassy in BiH with the support of the diplomatic corps and the Public Institution Center for Culture of the Sarajevo Canton. The photos depict true values and posi-

tive experiences in Bosnia and Herzegovina, said the Russian Ambassador to BiH Peter Ivantsov and added that this will help citizens of BiH to see how much natural treasure this country in fact has.

"Representatives of the embassies and international organizations, as well as the authors have demonstrated with this exhibition that the international community does not see Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political problem, but as a fascinating country with friendly and interesting people," said the Russian ambassador at the opening of the exhibition.

## BiH Deposit Insurance Agency Is In Service of Citizens

High Representative, Valentin Inzko, and Principal Deputy High Representative, Bruce Berton, visited the BiH Deposit Insurance Agency in Banja Luka. Both praised the Agency for its dedicated work and achievements to the benefit of the country, its economy and all of its citizens.

"The continued increase of the deposit insurance limit to today's 50,000 KM has built public confidence in the banking sector and encouraged savings, which in turn has contributed to the loaning capacity of banks and has

kept the banking sector stable, as evident at the time of the economic crisis. This clearly shows how state-level institutions work to the benefit of all citizens in BiH. The BiH Deposit Insurance Agency's efficiency and effectiveness in reimbursing Bobar Bank depositors after the bank's bankruptcy is the most recent and obvious evidence of this, and once again stresses the necessity of preserving the full independence and highest professional standards of this crucial state institution", said High Representative.

## Cavic and Inzko Discuss Coordination Mechanism

The coordination mechanism should be unblocked as soon as possible, it was said at a meeting of the President of NDP Dragan Cavic and the High Representative in BiH Valentin Inzko.

"Tensions are rising unnecessarily and it blocks the EU path of BiH and reduces the chance that the economy and the overall economic and social development becomes a focus of interest of citizens and elected officials," said NDP in the press release.

# Russia to Train Republika Srpska Special Police

Special units of the police of Republika Srpska will be trained in Russia from where the government of the entity is keen to buy military equipment, the Ministry of Interior said, reports BIRN

**D**ragan Lukac, Interior Minister of Republika Srpska, said the entity government will soon send its special police units for training in Russia and is also keen to buy military equipment from Moscow.

"It's a really important opportunity to train the special units of our police with Russian units, which are known and respected all over the world," Lukac told the Banja Luka-based newspaper *Nezavisne Novine*.

He added that working with the Russian police would be of great importance, especially in terms of dealing with terrorism, *Nezavisne Novine* reported. Details of the cooperation between the two police forces were included in a protocol signed last year in Moscow by the Russian and RS Ministries of Interior, Lukac explained. According to Lukac, cooperation with the Russian police should also concern exchanges of information in the fight against narcotics and human trafficking.

The RS police units will also get specific trainings on investigation techniques and forensic analysis. Lukac explained also that the authorities in RS are interested in buying military equipment from Russia, including armored vehicles equipped with water cannons and Kalashnikov rifles, which are commonly used by police in the region, he noted.



*Dragan Lukac*

According to Milos Solaja, professor of Political Sciences of Banja Luka and an expert in international relations, closer cooperation between the police of Republika Srpska and Russia is not surprising.

"Russia is trying to consolidate its presence in the international scene, not only in the Balkans but in other regions as well," Solaja told BIRN.

"There is no doubt that Moscow is interested in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Republika Srpska, for at least three reasons: first, the country is still not in NATO, so this situation gives Moscow more freedom

when it has to deal with us," Solaja said.

"Second, there are common characteristics between Russia and RS - their residents are Slavs, orthodox, and have a common Socialist past; finally, Russia has some commercial interests in this entity, like the refineries in Brod and Modrica," he said.

## The United States Extradites War Crimes Suspect

A former member of the Croatian Defense Council (HVO) was extradited from the United States to Bosnia due to suspicions that he committed war crimes in Pocitelj and Capljina. The state prosecution suspects Edin Sakoc, a former member of the HVO military police, of war crimes against Serbs in the Pocitelj and Capljina area in 1992.

"He is suspected of rape and sexual abuse of a Serb woman in the Pocitelj area and participation in the murder of two Serbs in Capljina with individuals known to him," the Bosnian state prosecution said. After his extradition to Bosnian judicial bodies, Sakoc was handed over to the competent prosecution. The prosecution will examine him and decide whether to file a custody order motion. Sakoc was arrested in the United States in 2013 because he gave false information on his role in the Bosnian war to US authorities, stated the BiH Prosecutor's Office.

## SDP Criticizes Plans to Create Three Ethnic Public Broadcasters

The Presidency of the Social Democratic Party of BiH said that the application for membership in the European Union is an important step for the country. The strategic interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina is membership in the EU and NATO, and therefore SDP said they will always support everything that will contribute that country becomes part of these integrations as soon as possible, said the party. Members of the SDP Presidency called on the current ruling coalition to demonstrate seriousness in relation to the application for the EU and resolve the accumulated problems as quickly as possible, including traditional trade as part of the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

The Presidency of SDP also discussed the proposed formation of three ethnic channels within BHRT, which they said was absolutely unacceptable and an attempt to further divide the country.

It is yet another attempt of segregation of BiH media space and an attack on the public broadcasting service, which, because the Council of Ministers has not yet appointed a new Minister of Communications and Transport, is practically dying. These proposals call into question the basic premise of the public broadcasting services in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which in their entire program content must be available to all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation, the party said.

# EBRD Works on a Program to Assist Reform Implementation

**Prime Minister of Bosnia's Federation Fadil Novalic and entity's minister of energy, mining and industry Nermin Dzindic met in Sarajevo with a delegation of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), led by head of the bank's office in Ian Brown**

The delegation also included advisers from EBRD's Investment Climate and Governance Initiative (ICGI) Franklin Steves and Anastasia Rodina. Goal of the visit of this team, which deals in EBRD with capacity building in promoting economic transition by improving the investment climate and good governance, is to assess the potential and the need for the assistance of EBRD in the implementation of the Reform Agenda, in part concerning the improvement of the business climate and economic governance. Steves said that the initiative is being implemented in several European countries, adding that BiH is

among the potential partners. "Conditions for the program to be applied is the need for reforms, space and will of the host or the government for EBRD to provide its assistance," said Steves, pointing out they have identified some common goals through the Reform Agenda implementation. Expressing satisfaction with the offer from EBRD, Novalic said that this is one of the most concrete offers that the Federation government has received from international institutions and organizations. "The goals outlined by EBRD are consistent with the Reform Agenda and I think that we are touching upon the essence of the problem,"

said Novalic. He stressed the government is committed to reforms and is ready to deal with key economic issues of the society such as enhancing the business environment, where certain steps have already been made, as well as strengthening the corporative governance. "We did a lot when it comes to corporative governance, but we need your assistance. What needs to be improved is the competition council, company registration through one-stop shops in every municipality and particularly judiciary," the prime minister noted, adding the latter is further not capable to deal with commercial law.

## Energy Production Potential Can Attract Investments Worth Ten Billion Euro

BiH assuredly has enormous economic potential which, unfortunately, is further not sufficiently used. Though the percentage of foreign investments is growing, the strategy to attract new investments must be more efficient. The Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA) says that the country can attract investments worth up to ten billion euros in the field of energy production

alone. According to latest official data on the percentage of foreign direct investments in BiH, investments mostly target production sector (36%), banking sector (20%), telecommunications sector (14%) and trade sector (11%). Extremely low percentage of foreign direct investments was recorded in tourism sector, only two percent of total investments. This data is concerning

bearing in mind that BiH has rich tourist potential. However, potentials are not exclusively required for the arrival of tourists and investments in tourism sector, but a harmonized policy and legislation that will enable tourism development. Besides tourism, the potential BiH definitely must use is energy production, having in mind the numerous natural advantages.

## Foreign Investments Depend on Competitiveness

Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH Mirko Sarovic said in Sarajevo on Friday the majority of countries in the region have surpassed BiH and that the issue of foreign investments should get more importance than it has now. "BiH is the most non-competitive country in the region, there isn't anyone worse than us worse in the region and it is true that certain procedures last for months. We were surpassed by everyone in the region, including Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia. The issue of business environment competitiveness is a constant job, it never ends and we must always be in the focus of these things," Sarovic said. He added that in this regard the World Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC) respectively and as of recently the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development will follow BiH in technical

assistance, specifically in projects related to business environment, economic freedoms and general competitiveness of the country in order to lift it to a higher level. Sarovic visited the Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA) with the aim to provide support to FIPA to present BiH as a country that is ready for foreign investments. "We talked on specific projects or target groups because we think that FIPA, together with other stakeholders, should work on improving sectors such as agriculture and food industry, military industry, tourism and energy as a potential sector for investments, but also those fields that have been recording growth in recent years such as footwear, textiles, wood and furniture industry," said Sarovic, expressing readiness for making a major step forward in this regard this year. He went on to say that special attention will be

paid to barriers present in BiH for years as an obstacle to greater investments in order to determine how to overcome them. FIPA's director Gordan Milinic said the agency was pleased with the ministry's support and cooperation. "The country's Directorate for Economic Planning plans for BiH to this year attract 880-920 million KM in foreign investments, while our goal is to exceed one billion. We already made huge steps and we expect significant investments in various fields," Milinic underscored. He stressed that FIPA, in cooperation with the chamber system and the Foreign Investors Council, is examining all complaints with the aim to encourage existing investors and attract new investments. Head of the Foreign Investors Council Branimir Muidza noted that the level of foreign direct investments has been declining from year to year, particularly since 2008.

# Radeljas' Real Property Fraud

**The minister of industry in Bosnia-Podrinje Canton (BPK) Esed Radeljas is a rich man who holds valuable real property. He acquired some assets through fraud. While double-dealing in real property sales Radeljaš made nearly 1.9 million KM over seven years**

The Center for Investigative Reporting in Sarajevo uncovered that Radeljas sold other people's property and kept money to himself. He also sold a parcel of land to multiple buyers. The Radeljas family have property in Sarajevo, Ustikolina and Foca. They've built several buildings without a construction license. Instead of being held accountable, Radeljaš is serving a ministerial term that allows him to direct the allocation of public funds worth two million KM and draft laws and regulations important for the development of a region in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Duped Buyers

In 1999, Radeljaš received the power of attorney from the older members of two Sarajevo families to sell their land. He sold it for 95,000 KM, but kept the money to himself. The Supreme Court of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina sentenced Radeljas to a year in prison in 2005, but he never went to jail because his name was misspelled in the judgment making it unenforceable. It took four years to correct the typo and by this time the statute of limitations on the judgment's execution had expired. It seems that prosecution did not wise up Radeljas because soon after he returned to business as usual. He bought 1,500 square meters of land in a Sarajevo neighborhood Nedzarici for 163,000 KM. Then he sold it twice collecting a total of 700,000 KM. He sold the land first to Meho Omerovic and Reiz Djuderija for 450,000 KM. The bill of sale that CIN obtained reveals that Omerovic and Djuderija could get a deed in their name only after May 15, 2006 i.e. six months after the deal.

On the same day, a Slovene businessman Marijan Pisljar incorporated a firm Zeuz in Sarajevo that bought the same parcel of land from Radeljas for 250,000 KM. Pisljar told CIN reporters that he had set up a firm to buy the land from Radeljas. He said he did not know that the property had already been sold.

"When I bought it, everything was fine in the title register."

He deeded it into his name in 2007.

**By The Center  
for Investigative Reporting**

He said that he had not previously known Radeljas and that he was told by a friend that Radeljaš was selling a parcel of land. In a brief interview for CIN, Omerovic said he was aware of the fraud but he was not going to sue Radeljas. He hopes that he'd get his money back.

"I asked him for it - it'll be today, it'll be tomorrow...it's been dragging on," said Omerovic.



*Esed Radeljas*

Near this plot of land, Novi Grad borough leased Radeljas another parcel of land of the similar size for 51,340 KM. Since he did not build an office building within a year on it, the borough denied him the right to dispose of property and he demanded one million KM in damages from the borough. At the time when Radeljaš received the compensatory damages in 2010, he was an MP with the borough's council.

According to the records CIN has obtained, this is not the only public plot of land in Nedzarici that the Novi Grad borough leased to Radeljas. Radeljas has built a 781-square meters office building on the government land without permits. He then approached the borough to legalize it and asked for property rights which he received for a fee of 50,000 KM. Two and a half month after he got the land, Radeljas sold it to Musan Seen for 100,000 KM, only to buy a part of it from him six years later for 13,500 KM. Seen lives in Switzerland and did not respond to CIN's calls for interview. Nowadays there's a three-story house with offices on the ground floor on this land. Near the house Radeljas's daughter Amra owns a car wash and maintenance. In mid-2009, the Town

Inspection told him to tear it down. However, this has never happened and the car wash and maintenance have been operating to this day. Neither Radeljas nor the borough officials wanted to talk to CIN on the subject. It seems that Radeljas's 23-year old son Admir is following in his father footsteps - he has also built a villa without a construction license. The villa is located in Ustikolina, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, where Radeljas senior has become the cantonal minister of commerce in the meantime. It is built on a parcel of land that Admir paid nearly 124,000 KM in 2013. The land is located near the Drina River and one enters the estate through a wrought iron gate under the gaze of a CCTV camera. The inside of the estate is made out of a mix of wood and stone and includes a swimming pool, two garages and a roofed fountain. The whole estate is encircled in a stone fence with a retaining wall on the Drina side.

## Construction without Permits

According to the documents that CIN obtained, the estate was built without licenses as it is located in the protected area of the Drina River. This is why the Cantonal Inspection ordered the works to end and closed down the construction site. However, the construction continued despite displayed signs about the closed construction which is why the Inspection filed a criminal complaint against Radeljas junior in Oct. 2013. Four months later, the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office informed the Inspection that it would not continue investigation against Admir Radeljas on account of taking down an official sign. The building subsequently received construction approval from Foca-Ustikolina municipality in April 2015. The approval procedure first begins with zoning agricultural land for construction. The ministry of industry headed by Radeljas was in charge of zoning, so the Cantonal government decided to exclude him from the decision process by a resolution issued in Feb. 2015. Then, the council granted its approval to Admir. The luxury estate is for sale.



THE MEMORIALIZATION OF SRDJAN ALEKSIC IN POST-YUGOSLAV COUNTRIES (III)

# The Limits of the Consensus



**Even if Srdjan Aleksic has emerged as a largely consensual memory site in several successor-states of Yugoslavia, this does not mean that this consensus does not have its limits**

Geographically, the memorialization process mainly takes place in Serbia and BiH, partially also in Montenegro, while other countries of the post-Yugoslav space, such as Croatia, are not so much concerned with it. But also in BiH and Serbia there are hesitations and resistances in relation to the memorialization of Aleksic. This appears, for example, in the fact that many street name initiatives, as those in Mostar and Bihac in BiH, or in Maglic in Serbia, have not succeeded. It also appears in social media and on internet forums, when after articles on Aleksic the comments are not necessarily unanimous. It especially appears in Trebinje where the idea of building a monument to Aleksic has existed for nearly ten years, but has so far not been implemented; and where the Organization of War Veterans from the City of Trebinje (Boracka Organizacija Opstine Trebinje) has openly called for a boycott of the film *Circles*.

## Reluctances and Resistances

Considering more precisely the content and the reasons for these hesitations and resistances, different levels of critical discourse can be found. On internet forums comments sometimes appear asking why Aleksic should be honored considering he was part of the Bosnian Serb Army which was fighting against Croatia and BiH, or stating that his case has been an absolute exception: "And

By Nicolas Moll  
Contemporary Southeastern Europe

now my Bosniaks should fall for that 0.00001% of nice stories (...) All Serbs are Chetniks, 0.00001% of Serbs aren't." The fact that Aleksic is from Trebinje and was fighting on the Dubrovnik front does not constitute a good precondition to make him popular in Croatia and among more nationalist Bosnian Croats, and the fact that the rescue story concerns a Serb and a Muslim makes it also less attractive for a Croatian public. If the saved person had been a Croat, Aleksic would probably be more known and honored also in Croatia. Other critical comments focus on the strong emphasis placed on Aleksic which is seen as problematic for different reason. A citizen from Sarajevo told me of being skeptical towards the promotion of Aleksic, arguing that "it is too early to promote and honor a good Serb, as Serb society hasn't critically addressed its criminal past yet." Others estimate that the strong emphasis on Aleksic is problematic because it is overshadowing the fact that there were also other rescuers: "I think it has become too much. It looks as if there has been only him, which is not true."

The memorialization of Aleksic presents also a problem for some more nationalist Serbian and Bosnian Serb circles, which appears for example if we look at the reluctance toward commemorative activ-

ities in Trebinje. A sport center in Trebinje was named in 2007 after Aleksic, but a specific monument has not yet been constructed, despite the fact that since 2007 the mayor of the town has made public declarations upon numerous occasions that he would support this idea, at the same time having done nothing to implement it. Is Aleksic considered a traitor who deserved his fate because he defended a Muslim? It is sometimes reported that a defendant of one of the aggressors had declared: "That is what you deserve when you defend a *Balija*".

## Attempts to Relativize the Rescue Story

This kind of perception may still exist today in Trebinje, but other attitudes are articulated more explicitly which explain the existing reluctances. On the one hand, the fact that Glavovic and then Aleksic were assaulted by Bosnian Serb soldiers sheds a bad light on the Army of Republika Srpska and its soldiers, especially when they are painted as undisciplined and drunk, as in *Circles*.

"We have to defend the honor, the dignity, the pride and the patriotism of Serb soldiers. (...) The Serb soldiers are shown in the movie as drunks, criminals and brigands, which is a big lie", declared the Organization of War Veterans from the City of Trebinje in their press communique where they

called for a boycott of Circles.

On the other hand, putting Aleksic's example forward threatens to diminish the role of the "normal" soldiers of the Army of RS: "Why should he be more honored for what he did than the soldiers who died defending our town and fatherland?"

Resistance to the honoring of Aleksic is even stronger, as in both liberal and Bosniak nationalist circles Aleksic is regularly praised in contrast to nationalist Serb war heroes. Due to these different reasons Aleksic's story is regularly perceived as "anti-Serb" both in Serbia and the RS, even if this is rarely loudly declared.

Combined with these resistances exist attempts to relativize the rescue story and to discredit Srdjan Aleksic by insinuating that everything was very different from what is generally portrayed. I heard this kind of discourse during my field research in Trebinje. It can also be found in internet comments and has been most explicitly articulated in a lengthy text by Miroljub Petrovic published on a Belgrade-based internet portal on February 2014. Concerning Srdjan Aleksic, the author pretends that he "did not spend one day in the theater of war", but that he was active in black marketeering during the war, and that Alen Glavovic was working for him to sell his goods. Building on this, the author then says that the Bosnian Serb soldiers didn't stop Glavovic on 21st January 1993 because he was a Muslim, but because he was selling black market goods, which leads also to the conclusion that "Srdjan Aleksic jumped in to protect his goods, and not Alen Glavovic". The author then says that Aleksic's intervention was followed by a brawl, where Aleksic fell down and unfortunately his head hit on the concrete, thus presenting his injuries not as the consequence of an assault but of an unfortunate accident. Consequently, the author qualifies the whole publicly promoted Srdjan Aleksic story as a "lie" and as another piece of anti-Serb propaganda.

### Critical Voices

Other dissonant voices have sometimes been expressed by persons who sympathize with the person and act of Aleksic but who have problems with the general

consensus around his memory and/or with the apolitical way in which he is memorialized. In 2013, the writer Eli Bektas evoked his "feeling of nausea" when seeing how "Serb liberals and Bosniak-Bosnian patriots (...) and those in love with Serbhood and the Republika Srpska" are all trying, like "vultures", to appropriate Aleksic for their own purposes. The journalist Ugljesa Vukovic



*Stefica Galic*

heavily criticized Golubovic's statement that Aleksic's act was not a political act, but just a human one. Vukovic claimed that it is necessary to recognize that it was "a human and a political act, especially in the circumstances that strengthened the ethnic division of BiH in which we still live today, and when his life was lost because of ethnic and political opposition to this strengthening". He further qualified Golubovic's will to present the story as a psychological drama which doesn't take into account the political context as "a lie" and "hypocrisy". Also in Trebinje some friends of Aleksic view with

skepticism all the hype surrounding his memory, wondering what Aleksic would have thought about it. Significantly, since the publication of Srdjo in 2007, they have not participated in other public promotion activities. Sometimes, also the participation of some memory entrepreneurs has been critically perceived. When Milorad Dodik awarded Aleksic with the highest decoration of the RS, the Human Rights activist Sinan Alic criticized it as "political hypocrisy, boldness and a lie" and as a shameful attempt to manipulate the story of Aleksic for the nationalist goals of Dodik and the RS alike. These various dissonant and critical voices, coming from different sides, illustrate that the consensus around the memory of Aleksic is not unanimous, and must also be seen as fragile. This experience was also noted by Golubovic concerning his

film Circles. In an interview he declared that he hadn't expected that the negative reactions and anti-Serb accusations would be so strong, which would certainly also explain his many depoliticizing comments around the movie, and at the same time his insistence to present it as a "very Serb" movie. Beyond the movie Circles, this potential fragility must also be seen in general as a major reason for the human-depoliticizing approach in public discourses about Aleksic, in order to make the story as un-attackable as possible. But even if there have been and are different dissonant and critical voices, what is also very striking is how little they resonate in the public sphere. Resistances are more often articulated silently than openly as in the case of Mostar, where the request for a street name was never formally rejected by the municipality, - it was simply never answered. The discreetness of the critics and resistances is another illustration of the strength of the positive consensus which has been achieved around the memory of Aleksic, which also appears in the fact that the story is rarely explicitly used against others in the political arena. As mentioned, it is sometimes used in comments against Karadzic and Mladic, and sometimes from the Bosniak nationalist side his case is highlighted in order to implicitly stigmatize the Serb majority who didn't act as him. That Aleksic can be used in inner-Serb conflicts and also in anti-Bosniak perspective appeared in a controversial television debate between Milorad Dodik and the Serbian liberal politician Cedomir Jovanovic in January 2012. The latter tried to attack Dodik by claiming that Aleksic should be considered a Serb hero and not Mladic; Dodik replied that indeed it is important to honor Aleksic, and then added: "But find me one case of a Bosniak who sacrificed himself for a Serb." This kind of polemical remark in relation to Aleksic can also be found in internet comments, but they are very rare in the public sphere, as are also direct controversies around Aleksic's memory. The mentioned television debate was so far one of the very rare exceptions for a direct controversy where Aleksic was used as an argument, and it is important to note that the fact that Jovanovic had used Aleksic in his

attack against Dodik triggered an immediate and strong reaction by Rade Aleksic, who openly condemned Jovanovic for having "misused the name of my son for political aims." Rade Aleksic's reaction is another illustration of how strong the will is to keep Aleksic's memory away from political controversies. The rarity of public controversies so far allows us also to say that there exists not only a consensus around the memory of Aleksic, but widely also a consensus to maintain this consensus.

## Why Srdjan Aleksic?

The success of the Srdjan Aleksic story can be mainly explained by its universal-depoliticizing approach, which is based on the de-contextualization and individualization of the story as well as the romanticization of its main protagonist, and by the fact that it matches different socio-political needs in the post-Yugoslav sphere. But why did Aleksic in particular succeed in becoming such a consensual hero-figure and not, for example, Nedeljko Galic from Ljubuski? There are also other aspects which need to be mentioned in order to understand why it is precisely the story of Srdjan Aleksic which has become so popular, and not other figures of rescuers.

On the one hand, there is the simplicity of the story and also its tragic dimension: a man is attacked, another intervenes to save him, and dies because of that. Several persons, among them also the writer Miljenko Jergovic, have assimilated Aleksic's story with a classic "antique tragedy". The blood sacrifice makes this individual act particularly striking, and also the fact that the act of rescuing was performed openly and publicly. In contrast to this, Nedeljko Galic's rescue actions were undertaken secretly and Galic survived the war. Furthermore his act is also more difficult to de-contextualize and depoliticize than Aleksic's act. When promoting the story of a man who succeeded to liberate several hundred persons from a camp, you have to explain about the context of the camp's existence.

On the other hand, there is the fact that Srdjan Aleksic is a Serb. There is undoubtedly a bigger need to find and promote "good Serbs" than to find "good

Bosniaks" or "good Croats", as Serbs are generally seen as "the villains" in relation to the wars of the 1990s. This also makes Aleksic more attractive than Galic.

Furthermore, there is Aleksic's personality and biography (at least the parts which are emphasized in the public narratives). He was not only young, good looking and talented, he was also well-integrated in the society, and, as a soldier, appears as part of the system, but also with his own taste and style as an amateur theater actor, and displaying



civic courage through his intervention in favor of Alen Glavovic. Taken together, this offers identification possibilities for many different persons, including nationalist and antinationalist circles. On the contrary, Nedeljko Galic is, in general, described as an outsider in his hometown, which makes him a more one-dimensional figure and offers less identification possibilities. Concerning the (re)presentation of Aleksic's person, it is also interesting to note the choice of the photos which are regularly used to illustrate media reports about him, and which show him much younger than he was at the moment of his death. These are mainly two photos from the 1980s: one as a teenager of approximately 14 years of age, and the other a portrait of him in the uniform of the JNA when he undertook his military service at the age of 18. The latter photo is the one most used in media reports. It has the advantage of emphasizing Aleksic's youth while also showing him as a soldier, but as a soldier from before the war, during his JNA military service, which is an experience each family from former Yugoslavia can relate to and identify with. Significantly, another photo of Aleksic from the early 1990s, which shows him unshaved and more adult, is used much more rarely in current media reports. The choice of photos is another

illustration of the need and the will to promote a perfectly pure and consensual hero. Finally, it is important to come back and to emphasize again the role of Aleksic's father as a key actor in the memorialization process within and between many of the memory entrepreneurs. Srdjan Aleksic being dead, Rade Aleksic as his father appears to be the most legitimate person to represent him, and he is fulfilling this role in a very specific way: with dignity, where grief over the loss of his son is not turned into victimhood but into pride in the deed of his son and active promotion of his human legacy, without accusing anybody or being aggressive. For example in the debate about a monument to his son in Trebinje, he holds a very moderate position, often declaring that more important than a monument itself is that his son "is living in the heart of the town of Trebinje and of its inhabitants."

His personality and attitude earns him a lot of respect, and regularly the admiration towards Srdjan Aleksic is also explicitly directed towards his father, with comments that with such a father it is no surprise that Srdjan acted as he did to save his neighbor. This respect for and the consensus around Rade Aleksic is undoubtedly a strong factor in the achieved consensus around Srdjan Aleksic.

## "The Son of All of Us"

Regarding Nedeljko Galic, who died in 2010, there is also someone to represent his memory. His wife Stefica Galic. But she was involved in his rescue actions, which makes her automatically more exposed and attackable, and she is also much more political and less consensual than Rade Aleksic, as she is for example openly confrontational toward nationalist attitudes.

The strong presence of the father emphasizes also another aspect in the represented figure of Srdjan Aleksic, which goes together with the focus on his youth, namely Srdjan's identity as a son, which is also strongly emphasized, constituting an additional factor of identification and attraction. Significantly, Rade Aleksic has declared several times in the last years that he considers Srdjan not only as his son, but that he has now become "the son of all of us".

## WEATHER OUTLOOK



### Sarajevo

**Today:** Mostly sunny. High 11C.  
**Tonight:** Low 4C.  
**Tuesday:** Mostly sunny. Close to 17C.

### Banja Luka

**Today:** Mostly sunny. High 17C.  
**Tonight:** Low 6C.  
**Tuesday:** Chance of rain. Close to 18C.

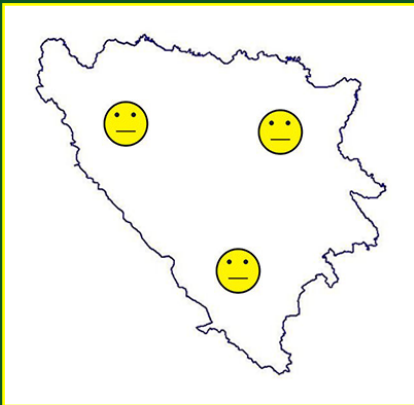
### Tuzla

**Today:** Mostly sunny. High 18C.  
**Tonight:** Low 5C.  
**Tuesday:** Light rain. Close to 15C.

### Mostar

**Today:** Partly cloudy. High 15C.  
**Tonight:** Low 5C.  
**Tuesday:** Light rain. Close to 15C.

## BIO METEO



**Air pollution in Sarajevo**

**MODERATE**

**UV Index**

**Low**

## GLOBE IN PICTURES



Syrian government forces hold a portrait of late president Hafez al-Assad as they drive near smoke billowing from Aleppo's thermal power plant after re-taking the area on the eastern outskirts of embattled city from Islamic State group fighters



A thick blanket of fog covers the brightly lit city of Sofia in Bulgaria



Participant rests after the Cuop Phet (Ball Scrambling) Festival in Phu Tho province, Vietnam



Vikings from different eras practice their drop-dead stares prior to marching to battle at York's annual festival



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