

Foreign Press Office - Mostar

MEDIA REPORTS

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Hague must drop indictments

Vecernji list

By Davor Ivankovic

July 22, 2005

Republican Congressman from Michigan Thaddeus McCotter submitted an amendment seeking to withhold funding for operations of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for 2006 and 2007 “until the tribunal dismisses all criminal charges against four journalists who have filed reports critical of the work of the ICTY.”

In his press release, McCotter reminds the U.S. Government that the Hague Tribunal has recently brought charges against four Croatian journalists for “contempt of the tribunal.”

The four Croatian journalists could face up to seven years in prison and pay a fine of \$122,000 because they revealed the name of a protected witness.

The Congressman believes that such “actions of the tribunal are a direct threat to the evolution of liberty in the Former Yugoslavia, and we should be more determined in our efforts to defend a strong, free media as the ferment of every democratic process.”

The proposed amendment carries the title “Protection of Freedom of the Press in the Former Yugoslavia.” It is expected that the process could result in a positive vote due to the fact that McCotter is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, which is chaired by the powerful republican Henry Hyde.

Republicans hold a majority in the Committee.

The proposed amendment is a result of forceful lobbying by Croatian intellectual circles in Washington. Our lobbyists believe this is the beginning of intensified lobbying of the current Administration, which should relieve some of the Tribunal’s pressure on Croatia.

Certain powerful republicans have been calling for strong pressure on the Hague Tribunal for some time now. Their goal is to remove Carla del Ponte.

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Federation House of Peoples approves government's activities on resolving the “Aluminij” issue

FENA

July 22, 2005

The FBiH House of Peoples adopted on Friday the FBiH Government’s report on activities aimed at resolving standing issues in Aluminij d.d. Mostar.

The report contains starting basics for the future agreement for the future agreement between the Government and Aluminij which should resolve the issue of this company.

The House of Peoples supported the activities of the Government but requested that their final result be transformed into changes to the law on the privatisation of companies. Only after changes to this law are adopted by the Parliament will the Government be able to sign the agreement with Aluminij.

The basics for the future agreement that were presented to the House of Peoples by Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic propose a change to the ownership structure of capital in Aluminij – 44 percent of state capital, 44 percent of shareholders’ capital and 12 percent of capital on the part of the Factory of Light Metals Sibenik.

State capital in the amount of 88 percent would be offered at a tender to a strategic partner “who knows what Aluminij is”, was stated on Friday.

The current structure of capital is – 64 percent on the part of small shareholders, 24 percent state capital and 12 percent in the hands of the factory from Sibenik.

The basics for the future agreement also propose compensation to workers for relinquishing their share in the ownership structure.

Johnson: Del Ponte has not informed us about the referral of the Ljubicic case

FENA

July 22, 2005

BiH Court’s Chamber for War Crimes and Organised Crimes Registrar Michael Johnson said that this institution was not informed on Thursday about the intention of ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla del Ponte to refer the “Pasko Ljubicic case” from Croatia to the BiH Court.

“We assume that the referral of this case to the BiH Court will be requested”, Johnson told journalists in Sarajevo on Friday.

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He thinks that the “Ljubovic case” is appropriate for prosecution in BiH, rather than in Croatia, because it deals with crimes committed in BiH.

“He should be tried before the BiH Court in a fair trial with the participation of international judges”, Johnson said.

Pasko Ljubovic was the former commander of the HVO Military Police in the Central Bosnia Zone of Operations. He has been charged with war crimes against Bosniaks.

Ljubovic surrendered to the Zagreb police on November 9 2001 in the presence of his attorney immediately after entering Croatia.

He has spent three and a half years in ICTY detention, since November 21 2001. Ljubovic is an ICTY detainee that has been waiting for the start of his trial for the longest time. His request for release has not been resolved since September 2004.

The corrected amended indictments from April 8 2002 charges Ljubovic with 15 counts of crimes against humanity and violations of rules and customs of war and persecution of Bosniaks in Vitez and Busovaca municipalities between January and July 1993 during the Bosniak-Croat conflict in BiH.

The central point of the indictment is the HVO attack on Ahmici on April 16 1993 when more than a hundred Bosniaks were killed. The indictment states that Ljubovic conveyed orders to his subordinates that all Muslims of military age should be killed and the civilians expelled, and that he directly participated in the attack on Ahmici.