

For Six Month Period Ending 10/31/2004
(Insert date)

I - REGISTRANT

1. (a) Name of Registrant (b) Registration No.
Rabin, Sheves, Lipkin-Shahak & Birger, Inc. 5524

(c) Business Address(es) of Registrant
101 Constitution Ave., N.W. Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20001

2. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following:

- (a) If an individual:
- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Residence address | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Citizenship | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Occupation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
- (b) If an organization:
- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| (1) Name | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Ownership or control | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Branch offices | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
- (c) Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in items (a) and (b) above.

IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4 AND 5(a).

3. If you have previously filed Exhibit C¹, state whether any changes therein have occurred during this 6 month reporting period.

Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to the Exhibit C? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

¹ The Exhibit C, for which no printed form is provided, consists of a true copy of the charter, articles of incorporation, association, and by laws of a registrant that is an organization. (A waiver of the requirement to file an Exhibit C may be obtained for good cause upon written application to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530.)

4. (a) Have any persons ceased acting as partners, officers, directors or similar officials of the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position	Date connection ended
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(b) Have any persons become partners, officers, directors or similar officials during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Residence address	Citizenship	Position	Date assumed
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5. (a) Has any person named in item 4(b) rendered services directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal? Yes No

If yes, identify each such person and describe his service.

(b) Have any employees or individuals, who have filed a short form registration statement, terminated their employment or connection with the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position or connection	Date terminated
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(c) During this 6 month reporting period, has the registrant hired as employees or in any other capacity, any persons who rendered or will render services to the registrant directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal(s) in other than a clerical or secretarial, or in a related or similar capacity? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Residence address	Citizenship	Position	Date assumed
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6. Have short form registration statements been filed by all of the persons named in Items 5(a) and 5(c) of the supplemental statement? Yes No

If no, list names of persons who have not filed the required statement.

II - FOREIGN PRINCIPAL

7. Has your connection with any foreign principal ended during this 6 month reporting period?
Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name of foreign principal

Date of termination

8. Have you acquired any new foreign principal² during this 6 month reporting period?
Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name and address of foreign principal

Date acquired

9. In addition to those named in Items 7 and 8, if any, list foreign principals² whom you continued to represent during the 6 month reporting period.

Government of Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire)
Republic of Bulgaria Ministry of Finance
Vuk Jeremic

10. EXHIBITS A AND B

(a) Have you filed for each of the newly acquired foreign principals in Item 8 the following:

Exhibit A³ Yes No
Exhibit B⁴ Yes No

If no, please attach the required exhibit.

(b) Have there been any changes in the Exhibits A and B previously filed for any foreign principal whom you represented during the 6 month period? Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to these exhibits? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

² The term "foreign principal" includes, in addition to those defined in Section 1(b) of the Act, an individual organization any of whose activities are directly or indirectly supervised, directed, controlled, financed, or subsidized in whole or in major part by a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign organization or foreign individual. (See Rule 100(a) (9).) A registrant who represents more than one foreign principal is required to list in the statements he files under the Act only those principals for whom he is not entitled to claim exemption under Section 3 of the Act. (See Rule 206.)

³ The Exhibit A, which is filed on Form CRM-157 (Formerly OBD-67), sets forth the information required to be disclosed concerning each foreign principal.

⁴ The Exhibit B, which is filed on Form CRM-155 (Formerly OBD-65), sets forth the information concerning the agreement or understanding between the registrant and the foreign principal.

III - ACTIVITIES

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11. During this 6 month reporting period, have you engaged in any activities for or rendered any services to any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal and describe in full detail your activities and services:

Republic of Bulgaria, Ministry of Finance - see response to Item 12, below.
Vuk Jeremic (Serbia) - see response to Item 12, below.
Government of Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire) - see response to Item 12, below.

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12. During this 6 month reporting period, have you on behalf of any foreign principal engaged in political activity⁵ as defined below?
Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal and describe in full detail all such political activity, indicating, among other things, the relations, interests and policies sought to be influenced and the means employed to achieve this purpose. If the registrant arranged, sponsored or delivered speeches, lectures or radio and TV broadcasts, give details as to dates and places of delivery, names of speakers and subject matter.

GOVERNMENT OF IVORY COAST (Cote d'Ivoire): meetings, weekly electronic newsletter and informational materials intended to strengthen the economic relationship with the U.S. and to resolve the military and political crises of the foreign principal. Reportable communications and actions are:

Sen. Christopher Dodd (Neal Orringer), 09/14/04.

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA MINISTRY OF FINANCE: meetings and communications to discuss foreign financial aid to the foreign principal, accession to the European Union and NATO, and enhancing bilateral relations with the U.S. Reportable communications and actions are:

Cong. Mark Kirk (06/10/04)
Sen. Charles Hagel (06/10/04)
Sen. Lincoln Chafee (06/10/04)
Nancy Lee, Dept. of Treasury, Assist. Sec. for European Affairs (06/10/04)
Anthony Wayne, Dept. of State, Assist. Sec. (06/10/04)

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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13. In addition to the above described activities, if any, have you engaged in activity on your own behalf which benefits any or all of your foreign principals? Yes No

If yes, describe fully.

⁵ The term "political activities" means any activity that the person engaging in believes will, or that the person intends to, in any way influence any agency or official of the Government of the United States or any section of the public within the United States with reference to formulating, adopting or changing the domestic or foreign policies of the United States or with reference to the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a foreign political party.

IV - FINANCIAL INFORMATION

14. (a) RECEIPTS - MONIES

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal, any contributions, income or money either as compensation or otherwise? Yes [X] No []

If no, explain why.

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each foreign principal an account of such monies⁶

Table with 4 columns: Date, From whom, Purpose, Amount. Rows include entries for Ivory Coast, Republic of Bulgaria, and Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assoc. (SAIA) with various retainer amounts.

(b) RECEIPTS - FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received, as part of a fund raising campaign⁷, any money on behalf of any foreign principal named in items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement? Yes [] No [X]

If yes, have you filed an Exhibit D⁸ to your registration? Yes [] No []

If yes, indicate the date the Exhibit D was filed. Date _____

(c) RECEIPTS - THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received any thing of value⁹ other than money from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal? Yes [] No [X]

If yes, furnish the following information:

Table with 4 columns: Name of foreign principal, Date received, Description of thing of value, Purpose.

6, 7 A registrant is required to file an Exhibit D if he collects or receives contributions, loans, money, or other things of value for a foreign principal, as part of a fund raising campaign. (See Rule 201(e).)

8 An Exhibit D, for which no printed form is provided, sets forth an account of money collected or received as a result of a fund raising campaign and transmitted for a foreign principal.

9 Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks," and the like.

(b) DISBURSEMENTS - THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you disposed of anything of value¹⁰ other than money in furtherance of or in connection with activities on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date disposed	Name of person to whom given	On behalf of what foreign principal	Description of thing of value	Purpose
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(c) DISBURSEMENTS - POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

During this 6 month reporting period, have you from your own funds and on your own behalf either directly or through any other person, made any contributions of money or other things of value¹¹ in connection with an election to any political office, or in connection with any primary election, convention, or caucus held to select candidates for political office?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date	Amount or thing of value	Name of political organization	Name of candidate
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^{10, 11} Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks" and the like.

V - INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

16. During this 6 month reporting period, did you prepare, disseminate or cause to be disseminated any informational materials ¹²?
Yes No

IF YES, RESPOND TO THE REMAINING ITEMS IN SECTION V.

17. Identify each such foreign principal.

Government of Ivory Coast

Vuk Jeremic

18. During this 6 month reporting period, has any foreign principal established a budget or allocated a specified sum of money to finance your activities in preparing or disseminating informational materials? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal, specify amount, and indicate for what period of time.

19. During this 6 month reporting period, did your activities in preparing, disseminating or causing the dissemination of informational materials include the use of any of the following:

- Radio or TV broadcasts
- Magazine or newspaper articles
- Motion picture films
- Letters or telegrams
- Advertising campaigns
- Press releases
- Pamphlets or other publications
- Lectures or speeches
- Internet
- Other (specify) _____

20. During this 6 month reporting period, did you disseminate or cause to be disseminated informational materials among any of the following groups:

- Public Officials
- Newspapers
- Libraries
- Legislators
- Editors
- Educational institutions
- Government agencies
- Civic groups or associations
- Nationality groups
- Other (specify) private business executives

21. What language was used in the informational materials:

- English
- Other (specify) _____

22. Did you file with the Registration Unit, U.S. Department of Justice a copy of each item of such informational materials disseminated or caused to be disseminated during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

23. Did you label each item of such informational materials with the statement required by Section 4(b) of the Act? Yes No

12 The term informational materials includes any oral, visual, graphic, written, or pictorial information or matter of any kind, including that published by means of advertising, books, periodicals, newspapers, lectures, broadcasts, motion pictures, or any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce or otherwise. Informational materials disseminated by an agent of a foreign principal as part of an activity in itself exempt from registration, or an activity which by itself would not require registration, need not be filed pursuant to Section 4(b) of the Act.


VI - EXECUTION

In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1746, the undersigned swear(s) or affirm(s) under penalty of perjury that he/she has (they have) read the information set forth in this registration statement and the attached exhibits and that he/she is (they are) familiar with the contents thereof and that such contents are in their entirety true and accurate to the best of his/her (their) knowledge and belief, except that the undersigned make(s) no representation as to the truth or accuracy of the information contained in the attached Short Form Registration Statement(s), if any, insofar as such information is not within his/her (their) personal knowledge.

(Date of signature)

(Type or print name under each signature¹³)

November 1, 2004



Gil Birger

¹³ This statement shall be signed by the individual agent, if the registrant is an individual, or by a majority of those partners, officers, directors or persons performing similar functions, if the registrant is an organization, except that the organization can, by power of attorney, authorize one or more individuals to execute this statement on its behalf.

CONTINUATION SHEET
SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT FOR PERIOD 04/40/04 TO 10/31/04
RABIN, SHEVES, LIPKIN-SHAHAK & BIRGER, INC.
REGISTRATION NO. 5524

Continuation of Response to Item 12:

VUK JEREMIC: meetings and communications including weekly electronic newsletter intended to enhance U.S. bilateral and regional relationships with the State Republic of Serbia & Montenegro, increase support for pro-democracy candidates in Serbian local and national elections, to defeat a U.S. legislative resolution involving Kosovo, the formation of the Serbian Caucus in the House of Representatives, and improve U.S. investment in Serbia. Reportable activities are:

Cong. Robert Wexler or staff (07/06/04; 10/07/04)
Charles English, Dept. of State (07/07/04; 07/08/04; 10/04/04)
Cong. James Walsh or staff (08/20/04)
Cong. Brad Sherman or staff (08/20/04; 10/07/04)
Cong. Curt Weldon or staff (08/24/04; 10/07/04; 10/20/04)
Cong. Dan Burton or staff (08/30/04; 10/07/04; 10/19/04)
Cong. Peter King or staff (09/10/04)
Cong. Gary Ackerman or staff (09/10/04; 10/07/04; 10/19/04)
Cong. Adam Schiff or staff (10/07/04)
Cong. Howard Berman or staff (10/07/04; 10/19/04)
Cong. Henry Hyde or staff (10/07/04)
Cong. Joseph Pitts or staff (10/07/04)
Cong. Mike Pence or staff (10/19/04)
Sen. Joe Lieberman or staff (10/19/04)

Rabin, Sheves, Lipkin-Shahak & Birger, Inc.
Registration No. 5524
Disseminated Materials
Supplemental Statement for Period 4/30/04 – 10/31/04

**MATERIALS DISSEMINATED ON
BEHALF OF FOREIGN PRINCIPAL**

GOVERNMENT OF IVORY COAST

Birger, Gil

From: owner-ivory@v2.listbox.com on behalf of IvoryNotes [ivorynote@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 17, 2004 9:32 AM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: IvoryNote

Ivory notes

Published by RSLB Partners
Washington, D.C.
April 17, 2004

RECONCILIATION TALKS BEGIN

Ivory coast Prime Minister Seydou Diarra began talks this week with opposition parties in an effort to bring them back into the government of national reconciliation, reports the BBC. Rebels from the predominantly Moslem north split the country in 2002 with a failed coup, subsequently joined a unity government only to walk out last month and stage violent protests accusing President Laurent Gbagbo of not meeting their demands quickly enough. The first session lasted only 90 minutes and its contents were not made public; both sides agreed to continue talking. The opposition groups have brought three new demands to those talks: the right to a peaceful march in central Abidjan, impartiality in the state media, and the guarantee of the security of politicians and civilians. Rebel leaders have joined the meetings with Diarra but refuse to speak with the president, whose resignation they've called for.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/3625679.stm>

REBELS DENY PLANS TO SPLIT THE COUNTRY

Rebels in the predominantly Moslem north insist they have no plans to split from the predominantly Christian south, reports Voice of America, but the New Forces rebels say they will not negotiate with President Laurent Gbagbo until a United Nations investigation clears him of charges that he brutally suppressed an unauthorized march by opposition groups last month. That march turned blood when opposition groups and pro-government groups clashed and the police were forced to intervene. Gbagbo had banned the gatherings for fear they would turn violent, but organizers defied the government order.

Estimates of the death toll range from 37, according to the government, to 500, according to the opposition. The United Nations office in Abidjan announced that it was forming an independent committee to investigate the violence. A rebel spokesman said "We have no secession" plans for now because talks are going on with Prime Minister Diarra. Secession rumors were sparked by a speech by rebel leader Guillaume Soro saying the north no longer needed the government's support; his spokesman has since denied the New Forces plan to abandon the peace process and split Ivory Coast in two.

<http://www.voanews.com/EnglishtoAfrica/article.cfm?objectID=D9E31339-1DA7-430B->

'COME LET US REASON TOGETHER'

President Laurent Gbagbo has called on opposition parties and rebels to "resume the republican dialogue" and end their walkout from the unity government, reports Agence France Presse. "Together we must find a swift and lasting solution to end the impasse where the painful events of the last few days threaten to lead Ivory Coast once again," the president said. Gbagbo welcomed the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops in his country but said, "it's up to us, ourselves first and foremost, to bring back the conditions needed for peace." In addition to the peacekeepers, the UN Secretary General has sent a three-person team of legal officials and human rights experts to investigate last month's violent outbreaks. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2004/04/14/256.html>

REBEL DEMANDS BEING MET

One of the sparks blamed for igniting the 2002 civil war was quenched this week when Ivory Coast's parliament amended a controversial law on the status of foreigners, reported Agence France Presse. Rebels and opposition groups had made that a high priority, and the change was mandated by the 2003 peace pact; they contend the government is dragging its feet on implementation. Lawmakers last month adopted other provisions of the agreement, including sections on eligibility for the presidency, land ownership and a code covering the status of foreigners in the country, where one in five people is a migrant worker, according to AFP. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2004/04/14/256.html>

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Birger, Gil

From: IvoryNotes [ivorynote@comcast.net]**Sent:** Tuesday, April 20, 2004 11:18 PM**Subject:** IvoryNotes draft for ur ok

Ivory notes

Published by RSLB Partners

Washington, D.C.

April 21, 2004

DEMONSTRATION BAN LIFTED

President Laurent Gbagbo has lifted his ban on public demonstrations as a gesture of reconciliation toward opposition parties and rebel groups in a bid to bring them back into the national unity government, reports the Voice of America. He also agreed to the opposition groups' demand for equal access to the media. The opposition coalition walked out of the government last month after demonstrations they called -- in violation of the government ban -- turned violent. President Gbagbo also agreed to guarantee security during a prayer memorial called by the opposition groups. <http://www.truthnews.net/daily/2004040200.htm>

GROUPS AGREE TO RESUME TALKS

Opposition groups calling themselves M7 for the seven parties backing the Marcoussis peace accords have agreed to reopen dialogue with President Laurent Gbagbo if a reform timetable is set and observed, reported the BBC. Both the president and the prime minister have agreed to the bulk of opposition demands, according to UPI, including a non-denominational religious memorial service for those killed and injured in the March 25 rally. <http://washingtontimes.com/upi-breaking/20040418-060150-2076r.htm>

U.N. INVESTIGATORS INTERVIEW PRESIDENT

The U.N. Commission investigating the deadly March 25 clashes between the military and civilian demonstrators interviewed President Laurent Gbagbo for about an hour this week, Voice of America reported. The four-member commission is spending the latter half of April in Abidjan gathering information for its report to the U.N.'s acting high commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary General Kofi Annan by the end of the month. The independent investigation into the "bloody Thursday" events is one of the demands of the opposition parties and rebel groups as the price for rejoining the peace process with President Gbagbo. Commissioners, who are from Argentina, Cape Verde, Burundi and Italy, will also visit sites of the fatal clashes. <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=6924EB41-63BC-48FC-948F5F78EA3233BD>

SUGAR STORY AIN'T SWEET

4/21/2004

Ivory Coast's civil war has taken a heavy toll on the country's sugar industry, which has lost more than \$26 million since at September 2002 failed coup by rebels from the predominantly Moslem north, reports Agence France Presse. "The sector is going through a difficult period that could lead to a total shutdown," warned Kobenan Kouma, secretary general of the sugar growers' union. The industry employs 350,000 people who produce an average of 120,000 tons of sugar annually in a market controlled by two companies. Most of the plantations and refineries are based in the turbulent north, which has been controlled by the rebels for nearly two years.

http://servihoo.com/channels/kinews/v3news_details.php?id=36380&CategoryID=47

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Birger, Gil

From: owner-ivory@v2.listbox.com on behalf of IvoryNotes [ivorynote@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, May 03, 2004 9:59 AM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: IvoryNotes

Ivory notes

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May 3, 2004

REBELS THREATEN 'GENOCIDAL' WAR

Ivory Coast rebels are threatening to plunge the country back into civil war unless President Laurent Gbagbo steps down, reports Reuters. The predominantly Moslem rebels from the north split the country in September 2002 with a failed attempt to overthrow the government based in the mainly Christian south; thousands were killed in that uprising and an estimated million more forced from their homes. A French-brokered peace plan last year was supposed to lead to a power-sharing government, but rebels and their supporters walked out in March complaining reforms were not being implemented quickly enough to suit them. "We are preserving the germs of future genocidal war in Ivory Coast," threatened Guillaume Soro, the rebel leader. "There will be war again in 2005." Parliamentary elections are scheduled for next year. Gbagbo said reforms cannot be put in place as long as rebels refuse to disarm and threaten renewed war. Anti-government demonstrations in March by rebel and opposition followers, in violation of a government ban, led to violence and at least 32 deaths. UN peacekeepers began deploying in the country last month but they could wind up in the crossfire if Soro follows through with his threats for war and disruption of the coming elections. He warned, "Only Gbagbo's departure from power will allow the organization of free and transparent elections in 2005."
<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=5007651>

THIS TIME THEY GOT IT RIGHT

Last week's rally in Abidjan passed peacefully, in stark contrast to the reason for the gathering. The gathering and prayer service was called by the opposition in memory of those killed in violent anti-government demonstrations in March. Several thousand people participated in the memorial at the Parc des Sports stadium. Ivorian police and UN troops kept things peaceful. The government sanctioned the event, unlike the demonstrations which were being memorialized. http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?click_id=68&art_id=qw1082805661976B222&set_id=1

IF HE CAN'T SUCCEED, HE'LL SECEDE

The 31-year-old rebel leader laden with magic charms and the silver Mercedes SUV apparently has decided if he can't overthrow the leader of Ivory Coast he wants to secede and set up his own country.

Guillaume Soro, who led a failed coup in September 2002, told cheering followers at a rebel stronghold last week that "a return to civil war" is an option but "we prefer secession." Before the failed coup, Ivory Coast was the world's top cocoa producer and a symbol of stability in a volatile region. Soro insists secession is an alternative to further bloodshed, but others fear it would only re-ignite the civil war that has already cost so many lives. Despite signing a peace agreement last year, rebels and opposition groups have boycotted the country's power-sharing government since their March 25 anti-government demonstrations turned violent. Secession by the arid north from the fertile south would create new economic hardships, says a report in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, and it is also unclear whether other nations would recognize the breakaway government.

http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/national/apeurope_story.asp?category=1103&slug=Ivory%20Coast%20Rebel's%20Yell

UN ISSUES VAGUE THREATS

The United Nations Security Council is threatening to take unspecified action against those blocking implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement that was supposed to end the Ivory Coast civil war last year. As 6,240 UN peacekeepers deploy around the country to supplement 4,000 French troops patrolling the lines between the rebel-held north and the government-controlled south, tensions continue to rise. The rebels and opposition refused to return to the power-sharing government they walked out of following violent demonstrations in March. The Security Council expressed "grave concern" over the impasse but did not specify what actions it was prepared to take to bolster the faltering peace process, only expressing its "readiness to consider further steps encourage implementation" of the peace agreement. http://www.sabcnews.com/africa/west_africa/0,2172,78937,00.html, <http://washingtontimes.com/upi-breaking/20040430-061526-9225r.htm>

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Birger, Gil

From: owner-ivory@v2.listbox.com on behalf of IvoryNotes [ivorynote@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2004 11:42 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: IvoryNotes

Ivory notes

Published by RSLB Partners
Washington, D.C.
May 13, 2004

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

Both sides welcomed the United Nations' decision in February to send peacekeepers to war-torn Ivory Coast in the hope that they could help keep the fragile peace from disintegrating into renewed civil war. But today the blue helmet force is "mired in a political storm," unable to deploy most of its troops, fearing they could themselves become targets, reports Reuters. At best, they may be able to preserve the status quo instead of their intended mission of building peace and reuniting the once-stable former French colony. Some of the problems were created by the U.N. itself, the result of leaking a report highly critical of government forces in responding to an illegal rally by the opposition in March. Overnight, the United Nations appeared to go from being part of the solution to part of the problem. Supporters of President Laurent Gbagbo accused the U.N. of helping rebels, who control the northern half of the country, undermine the president, Reuters said.
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L09128567.htm>

REBELS SEEKING COUP PARTNERS

The man who led a failed coup in Ivory Coast last year, Guillaume Soro, is calling on the international community to stage a second attempt on his behalf to take over the former French colony and "remove" President Laurent Gbagbo, according to Reuters. Meanwhile, rebel and opposition groups have effectively paralyzed the country by boycotting the power-sharing government which was set up in French-brokered peace talks last year. Once the most stable country in Africa and prospering from being the world's largest cocoa producer, Ivory Coast today is in turmoil.
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L09128567.htm>

IS WORLD BODY U.N. -BIASED?

The highly-critical U.N. report on the deadly riots in Ivory Coast two months ago is heavy on rumor and innuendo and light on facts, charged a leading Ivorian political figure. And the country's ambassador to the United Nations accused the world body of orchestrating the leak in an effort to destabilize the government of President Laurent Gbagbo. The report, leaked to the French media, charges security forces went on a deadly rampage against illegal demonstrations by opposition and rebel supporters,

reports the Voice of America. Pascal Affi Nguessa, the former prime minister of Ivory Coast and head of the ruling Ivorian Popular Front, dismissed the accusations and said the leak was part of a pro-rebel propaganda campaign against Gbagbo. Ivory Coast's U.N. ambassador, Philippe Djangone-Bi, told reporters that leaking the report was an attempt to weaken his president and undermine the process of national reconciliation. Another member of the ruling party, Desiree Miniaoti, called the report "false" and inaccurate, and said it could make things "very difficult" for the U.N. peacekeepers. "If they want to work in this country they have to be impartial," he said. The report by the U.N. Human Rights Commission, accused Ivorian security forces of indiscriminate killings during the March 25-26 demonstrations by opposition and rebel supporters. President Gbagbo himself has said the March demonstrations were part of an attempt to overthrow him. <http://www.voa.gov/>, <http://feeds.bignewsnetwork.com/?rid=953bf4e13a748aac>

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Gorfinkel, Ron

From: Birger, Gil
Sent: Thursday, May 27, 2004 11:09 AM
To: Gorfinkel, Ron
Subject: Fw: IvoryNotes

Gil Birger
RSLB Partners
Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

-----Original Message-----

From: owner-ivory@v2.listbox.com <owner-ivory@v2.listbox.com>
To: Birger, Gil <gbirger@rslbpartners.com>
Sent: Thu May 27 10:52:44 2004
Subject: IvoryNotes

Ivory notes

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ANTI-UN RALLIES BANNED

A United Nations spokesman praised the Ivorian government's decision to ban public demonstrations against the international organization in front of its Abidjan headquarters. Ivory Coast's Minister of Interior Security issued the decree just as women supporting President Gbagbo staged a second protest rally demanding removal of the UN special envoy Albert Tevoedjre, reports Voice of America. Minister Martin Bleou said he invoked the ban because the UN is in Ivory Coast at the request of the President. After an earlier women's rally demanded the UN begin disarming rebel forces, the UN declared its peacekeepers are in the country only to support the government's disarmament campaign, not to conduct it themselves. <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=A8A98CF3-A1AB-457B-AD64EB379E2AE835>

HOT COCOA

Ivory Coast's on-going civil war is an "ethnic feud over cocoa land" in the "fertile heart" of the world's leading cocoa-producer, reports the New York Times. The predominantly northern and immigrant cocoa workers say they have been expelled from plantations and lush land that once produced 40 percent of the world's cocoa -- and still managed to produce a bumper crop this year despite the fighting; that land now seems to also be producing a bumper crop of fear and hatred. The once economically booming country's domination of the international cocoa market is threatened, some analysts say. The country is divided between the predominantly-Moslem north, home of the rebels who

staged an unsuccessful coup in September 2002, and the majority Christian south, the base of power for President Laurent Gbagbo. Rebel forces are trying to heat things up, accusing the president of not moving quickly enough to adopt reforms; they have withdrawn from the power-sharing government and are threatening to secede and split the country in two if their demands are not met. "At the heart of the war is the contest over cocoa land," reports the Times. Tensions have increased as the immigrant population swelled. Many of the newcomers are laborers, but some have bought large cocoa plantations. Today nearly one in four Ivorians is considered a foreigner, either by virtue of being an immigrant or the child of one. Cocoa brought the immigrants to Ivory Coast from poorer surrounding countries like Burkina Faso and Mali, and they want to stay and be full citizens. The issues range from political rights to economic opportunity to tribalism and sorcery.
<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/tnt.html?tntget=2004/05/26/international/africa/26ivor.html&tntemail0>

UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEMANDS PROBE

The UN Security Council "strongly condemned" human rights violations in Ivory Coast and directed Secretary General Kofi Annan to establish a commission of inquiry. The Council said it was "deeply concerned" at the decision of opposition and rebel ministers to walk out of the power-sharing government, and President Laurent Gbagbo's subsequent dismissal of them. The 15-nation council also threatened to take action against individuals blocking implementation of the 2003 peace agreement that was supposed to end the civil war and create the power sharing arrangement. It urged rebel and opposition party members to end their two-month-old boycott and return to the government. "These measures are essential to enable (Ivory Coast) and Ivorians to return to the path of peace, stability and economic development," the statement said.
http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1532648,00.html,
http://www.navhindtimes.com/stories.php?part=news&Story_ID=052763

UN REBUFFED

At a time when the UN Security Council is calling for reconciliation in Ivory Coast and a return by all parties to the power sharing government, rebel leaders moved in the opposite direction. They announced they no longer recognize the authority of President Laurent Gbagbo, a move Reuters reported, is "plunging the country deeper into political turmoil." Their move came in the wake of the president's decision to fire three opposition and rebel ministers who had been boycotting the government. <http://www.reuters.com/news>

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Ivory notes

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ATTN:
 Laurent Zohore
 From: Gil

THREE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

The Presidents of three African countries – Nigeria, Ghana and Togo – have stepped in to try to mediate between Ivory Coast's government and rebel factions who quit the country's unity government in March and threaten to rekindle the nation's civil war. Meanwhile, fighting has broken out among rival rebel groups, with at least 22 people killed in clashes in two cities in the rebel-held north, reports the Canadian Press. The three presidents fear the fighting threatens the regional economy and disrupts neighboring countries which are still striving to recover from their own civil wars, it adds. Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo met with the three leaders earlier this week in Nigeria to discuss overcoming fierce anti-rebel sentiment in the pro-government south.

<http://www.canada.com/calgary/calgaryherald/news/story.html?id=13558d5a-f1e6-4509-a0bb-156141feceb8>

POLIO STAGING A COMEBACK

Ivory Coast is one of 10 African countries experiencing a comeback of polio after a 16-year global effort to eradicate the disease, reports the Washington Post. The current upsurge began in Nigeria and has spread because "immunization efforts virtually stopped last year because of political rivalries and rumors about the vaccine's safety." The virus afflicting Ivory Coast and neighboring countries is traceable to northern Nigeria. Clerics in predominantly Moslem northern parts of Ivory Coast have reportedly spread the rumor that the vaccine was part of an American or Western plot against Muslims and would cause infertility or AIDS. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A61984-2004Jun22?>

TENSIONS ALONG LIBERIAN BORDER

Smuggling of arms and combatants across the Liberian-Ivory Coast border has prompted the deployment of United Nation's peace keepers in areas of southeastern Liberia formerly held by that country's rebels. The first group of 100 soldiers are taking up their positions and the rest of the 650 troops, all from Senegal, are expected to be in place within the week. Cross-border gun-running and looting threaten to destabilize the region. Liberia is rebuilding after two decades of civil war, reports the Voice of America, but former rebels in the border area "continue to harass civilians." Meanwhile, Ivory

Coast's own rebel forces are threatening to plunge that country back into civil war.

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=37BEC515-8001-41EA-ABA8406F5661CE51>

INTERNECINE WARFARE

Rebel groups in Ivory Coast have been fighting among themselves, swapping accusations of being extremists, opposing the peace process, plotting coups and collaborating with the central government.

At least 22 were killed in gun battles between rival factions in the northern towns of Korhogo and Bouake earlier this week, according to a report on Channelnewsasia.com. It has been 11 months since a French-negotiated ceasefire supposedly ended the fighting following a failed coup in September 2002, but the conflict is heating up again. Sunday's firefights began with a late-night attack by "heavily-armed elements" on a convoy traveling from Burkina Faso to Korhogo carrying one rebel commander, Guillaume Soro, that was repelled by his troops. Soro's fighters reportedly killed 11 of their attackers, including Guinean and Liberian nationals. Rebel military commander Colonel Soumaila Bakayoko said the attack was an attempt to assassinate Soro.

http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_world/view/91256/1.html

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 Subject: IvoryNote

Ivory notes

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 July 9, 2004

A → →
 Laurent Fohone

From: Gil Birger

911 RESCUE CALL

The presidents of several West African states will be meeting with key political figures on all sides of the Ivory Coast dispute to try to resuscitate that country's comatose peace process, according to a report in the Washington Times. They will be convening July 19 in Accra, Ghana, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan announced this week at an African Union summit in Ethiopia. The last time such a group convened was in January 2003 in Marcoussis, France, to hammer out the pace agreement that set up the unity government in the wake of a failed coup four months earlier. The peace process was derailed in March when unauthorized anti-government demonstrations by opposition and rebel groups turned violent; those groups subsequently quit the government. President Laurent Gbagbo and Prime Minister Seydou Diarra are expected to attend the Accra meeting, as are opposition and rebel leaders, although no names have been released, according to reports. The group of presidents will press the Ivorians to accelerate the legislative reforms called for in the peace agreement, particularly nationality and land ownership, which are considered the root causes of the crisis, according to Agence France Presse. President Gbagbo has agreed to call an extraordinary session of parliament to deal with these issues, if necessary. Rebel leaders have agreed to attend the meeting, reports Voice of America. The presidents of Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, Gabon and Mali also are expected to attend. Rebel leaders, who control much of the northern part of the country, have refused to talk to President Gbagbo directly, blaming him for the collapse of the peace process and accusing him of arming for a war against them, VOA said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20040707-100720-4778r.htm>, <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=A538FC50-5A24-481B-8ED512617A8B0459>

HOW SWEET IT IS

The road from Ivory Coast to the small city of Oswego in uptown New York is paved with chocolate. The world's largest cocoa producer is torn by civil war that is badly damaging its famous industry, and at the other end of the chocolate highway Oswego saw one of its major employers close down a chocolate factory few years back. Now the two are helping each other solve some of their problems. There are now seven full time workers at the New York Chocolate and Confections Co. in upstate New York, but by September there will be 85 and within three years 375 more will be making chocolate bars at the former Nestle plant, reports the Oswego County Business Magazine. Owners are a consortium of Ivory Coast cocoa growers – Fonds de Regulation et de Controle, known as the FRC. Their goal is to produce 10 times the amount of chocolate as Nestle did at that facility and control up to three percent of the

American chocolate market. Cocoa beans used at the factory will come primarily from the Ivory Coast, which produces 40 percent of the world's production; most of it comes from small family farms. "This is the first time Ivory Coast growers have been involved at this level," said Cisse Locine, who helped negotiate the agreement. Some \$40 million is expected to be invested in plant and equipment
<http://www.oswegocountybusiness.com/issue72/72Chocolate.html>

COUP PLOT PROBE CONTINUES

The former military leader of Ivory Coast's northern rebels and 14 others remain under investigation by French authorities in connection with an alleged plot against President Laurent Gbagbo's government, but terrorism charges have been dropped by a Paris court, reports the Associated Press. Ibrahim Coulibaly and 14 others are suspected of recruiting mercenaries for a coup against the Gbagbo government. Coulibaly, a former army sergeant, has also been under investigation in connection with an alleged plot to assassinate Gbagbo in connection with the coup plot, AP said. Under French law, mercenary work is a crime that is punishable by up to five years in prison, and plot leaders who involve mercenaries can get up to seven years jail time.
http://www.africana.com/newswire/homepage_article.asp?ID=629

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Ivory notes

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ATT
 Albert Zohar
 From: Gil Birger

LOW CARBS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The low-carb Atkins diet may not be the craze of Ivory Coast, but maybe it should be, though not for the reasons you'd think. A consortium of Ivory Coast cocoa growers will be manufacturing sugar-free chocolate bars in upstate New York under contract with Atkins Nutritional, which focuses on low-carbohydrate diets, Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY) announced this week. The New York Chocolate and Confections Company bought out the Fulton Chocolate Co. and will become the sole producer of chocolate in the former Nestle facility in Fulton, NY, reported the Fulton Valley News. The group from Ivory Coast, the world's number one cocoa producer, owns the New York Chocolate which expects the first cocoa beans to arrive late next month and to be in full production by the end of this year. In addition to the low-carb bars, the plan will produce both traditional and contemporary chocolate products. New York Chocolate is headed by the Fonds de Regulation et de Controle, which is owned by the Ivory Coast chocolate growers, banks, insurance companies and the Ivorian government.

http://www.valleynewsonline.com/news/2004/0710/Front_Page/020.html

'CLIMATE OF FEAR AND LOATHING'

Ivory Coast may be deeply divided between the rebel held and predominantly Moslem north and the Government-controlled south, but along the dividing lines it is relatively quiet, according to The Guardian. But that is deceptive. "The peace process is crumbling," it reports, and attempts at power sharing, disarmament, demobilization and reconciliation are on hold. West African leaders are meeting regularly in various capitals with all sides in an attempt to prevent the situation from deteriorating farther, and in hopes of putting the peace process back on track. The great fear is if large scale fighting resumes it could spill across borders. A big part of the problem, says the Guardian, is "both sides dislike each other more than ever." The paper describes a "climate of fear and loathing." For the time being the two sides are "still trading insults" and not bullets, but that could change in the hostile atmosphere that engulfs the country. What fighting that does go on seems to be among the rebel factions rather than with the government. In defiance of agreements, "the rebels have kept their guns, consolidated territorial control of the north, talked up the possibility of secession and demanded the president's resignation." <http://www.aljazeeraah.info/Opinion%20editorials/2004%20opinions/July/9o/Ivory%20Coasts%20Last%20Chance%20for%20Peace,%20Rory%20Carroll.htm>

CAMPUS VIOLENCE REFLECTS SOCIETY

The deep divisions which have split Ivory Coast between pro- and anti-government factions reach even into the nation's classrooms, reports Voice of America. Campuses are increasingly polarized, and violence has broken out among students in the government-dominated south, often spilling out into the towns and cities. At least one group, VOA says, "is turning into a gang." One student leader of the pro-government FESCI said his group's goals are to defend students and help reunify the country so that displaced students in the rebel-controlled north can return to school. Student violence predates the September 2000 civil war, but it has greatly intensified since that time, and the campuses reflect the divisions in the rest of Ivorian society. While students have aligned on all sides, by far the majority appear to be pro-government and the largest among those is FESCI. Student activists recently stormed a hotel in Abidjan which housed rebel leaders and demanded they return to the north and disarm their fighters. <http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=BCCDEF2D-808D-4303-B25E0995BEAF89C2>

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NOTY 10115

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August 2, 2004

BREAKTHROUGH

Ivory Coast's warring factions have agreed to a timetable for political reform and rebel disarmament following a two-day U.N. sponsored summit in Accra, Ghana. The deal calls for rebel forces holding the north of the West African country to start disarming by October 15 after political reforms which were first agreed in a January 2003 peace agreement are implemented by the end of next month. Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo must implement last year's peace deal and the power-sharing government will resume work within a week, said U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, who attended the summit along with a dozen African leaders. The pact also calls for disarmament of the rebels as well as "all paramilitary and militia groups." At stake is not only the fate of the world's leading cocoa grower but regional stability as well. Last year's French-brokered agreement was supposed to bring peace following a failed coup attempt in September 2002, but rebel protests against the speed of reform turned violent in March, leading to a breakdown in talks; rebel and opposition leaders walked out of the power-sharing government and threatened to launch a new civil war.

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=5833775>

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=D941182A-C449-46E2-A49047989286B4E3>

CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

Another critical breakthrough came when Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo agreed to use his constitutional powers to open the way for an opposition leader to run for president in elections scheduled for next year, reports Reuters. African leaders said Gbagbo has pledged to change the constitutional requirement that any candidate for president must be Ivorian born to parents who are both Ivorian born. The 2003 peace agreement called for amending the constitution to allow that only one parent be an Ivorian native; current law says the candidate and both parents must be Ivorian born. The change will permit opposition leader and former prime minister Alassane Ouattara to run for president in October 2005. President Gbagbo, who had earlier insisted that the constitution could be amended only by referendum, faces vigorous opposition among his followers to any easing of the restrictions, some threatening war if the change is made; rebels had made the change a fundamental demand. "That crucial word, or, is the most important success of this

summit," UN special envoy to Ivory Coast Albert Tevoedjre told AFP following the signing ceremony.

<http://www.reuters.co.uk/newsPackageArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=557072§ion=news>, http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1566141,00.html

SUDAN CRISIS OVERSHADOWS IVORIAN TALKS

African leaders meeting in Ghana to break the deadlock in the Ivory Coast peace process took time out to focus on the critical situation in the Darfur region of Sudan. Tens of thousands of black African farmers and their families reportedly have been slaughtered by pro-government Arab militias, known as Janjaweed, reports Voice of America. An estimated one million people have been displaced and the country has plunged into what has been called the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=1AE79908-0AAC-4A6E-AFABDB5D5DA220BE>

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Ivory notes

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August 23, 2004

ATT. Ambar Zohar
From: Gil

BACK TO WORK

Ivory Coast's power-sharing cabinet is back at work, fulfilling pledges by political factions and rebels at the Ghana summit, reports Xinhuanet. Among those returning were three opposition ministers fired by President Laurent Gbagbo following their boycott of the government following violent clashes in March. Government-banned demonstrations by opposition and rebel supporters turned bloody and brought the peace process to a grinding halt. A UN-sponsored summit of West African leaders in Ghana earlier this month produced commitments to return to the government, resume peace talks and accelerate reforms to pave the way to year's presidential elections. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-08/10/content_1754292.htm

'IVORY COAST LEADERS SMILING'

It's been a very long time -- far too long -- since any editor could run a headline like that, so needless to say it grabbed our attention when we saw it on South Africa's News24.com web page. Rebels and other opposition leaders ended their five-month-old walkout and returned to Ivory Coast's power-sharing government, News24 reported. "We think the moment has come to work for peace and to move things forward," said rebel leader Guillaume Soro, who resumed his post as communication minister. "It's like the first day of school. Smiles are everywhere," Prime Minister Seydou Diarra was so happy to bring his cabinet back to the table, he said, "It's like the first day of school. Smiles are everywhere." http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,6119,2-11-1447_1570456,00.html

EU CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, REBEL ATROCITIES

As rebel and opposition ministers return to the power-sharing government, the European Commission has called for "consultations" with the Ivory Coast government to "reestablish the full respect of the principles of human rights, democracy and rule of law." The country has been in varying degrees of turmoil since rebels launched a failed coup against President Laurent Gbagbo in September 2002; a new peace agreement signed in Accra, Ghana, earlier this month is intended to put the peace process back on track and pave the way for peaceful presidential elections in 14 months. The re-convened government is

8/24/2004

pledged to adopt a series of political reforms aimed at reconciliation prior to the October 2005 voting, including an independent electoral commission and liberalized eligibility requirements, reports Eubusiness.com. The EU warned against delays in adopting the reforms and expressed concern about human rights abuses. Clashes among rival rebel factions in the north turned particularly brutal when earlier this month when dozens of boys and men suffocated as a result of being locked in an airless shipping container by rebels, the Associated Press reported. The UN Security Council branded the killings a massacre. The AP noted this supports accounts of "atrocities during factional fighting in Ivory Coast's rebel-held north." <http://www.eubusiness.com/afp/040810114516.kthlodjt>,
<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/international/AP-Ivory-Coast-Rebel-Killings.html>

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 Aug. 6, 2004

ATT
 Albert Zahore
 From: Gil

REBEL VS. REBEL

Three mass graves containing 99 bodies, apparently victims of fighting among rebel factions, have been uncovered in a northern Ivory Coast area that was recently the scene of a fierce battle, reports Khaleej Times Online. The graves were reported by UN officials investigating reported human rights violations near the northern city of Korhogo. "Some were asphyxiated, some had bullet wounds," according to a UN official. He said the investigation into circumstances surrounding the deaths is on-going. France condemned the killings in its former colony as "unacceptable acts of barbarianism." "The authors of this violence and those who inspired it must be held to account for their acts," said a foreign ministry spokesman in Paris. UN forensic experts are trying to determine whether any of the victims had been killed after June 20-21. That's when rebels said fighters loyal to a rebel military chief, Ibrahim Coulibaly, reportedly tried and failed to assassinate the rebels' political leader, Guillaume Soro. Coulibaly, who currently is barred from leaving France and is accused of plotting to assassinate President Laurent Gbagbo, says Soro's followers are responsible for the mass killings.

<http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?>

[xfile=data/theworld/2004/August/theworld_August63.xml§ion=theworld,](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/theworld/2004/August/theworld_August63.xml§ion=theworld)

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L03224491.htm>

PLEADING IGNORANCE

Ivory Coast's rebel New Forces insist they were unaware of the UN discovery in areas under their control of three mass graves containing 99 bodies. "We did not receive this report," New Forces spokesman Antoine Beugre told AFP, but he admitted "there were clashes on June 20 and 21 [see item above], there were deaths and those victims were buried." UN officials, who insist that the rebels had been kept fully informed, say the killings -- by shooting and suffocation -- were the result of fighting among factions of the rebel forces who have been responsible for keeping the country in turmoil since their failed September 2002 attempt to overthrow President Laurent Gbagbo. The Soro faction and the Coulibaly faction each accused the other of engineering a massacre on the other's forces, and there have been calls to deploy UN peacekeepers not just along the line between government and rebel-held areas but between rebel factions. Rights watchdog Amnesty International said there have been reports that some victims were beheaded and other had their hands tied behind their back. The group also charged

8/8/2004

that people had been locked into containers and suffocated before they were buried in the mass graves by Soro's supporters. http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_world/view/99068/1/.html

REGAINING FORMER GREATNESS

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, marking the signing of a new accord last week in Ghana to revive Ivory Coast's moribund peace process, called on leaders of all sides to put their country's interests ahead of their own personal ambitions. He spread the blame equally for the country's political mess and called on all leaders to restore peace and prosperity to what was once one of the continent's most stable and affluent countries. "Messses have been cleaned up before and I don't see why we cannot clean up the mess in Ivory Coast. But, the heavy lifting has to be done by the Ivorians and the Ivorian leaders themselves," he said. "It is their responsibility and they have to put their nation and their people first and not their own personal, political ambitions," he told the Voice of America. "A nation that was an inspiration for others and a nation that welcomed all their neighbors and in some sense was a mini-economic motor, economic engine for the region -- and look at the situation Cote d'Ivoire is in," he said. "It can return back to the good old days. It has potential, it has resources."

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=D07A1F11-1C09-455A-88C8DE91F750C1D4>

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Subject: Ivory Notes

Ivory notes

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ATT.
Albert Fohre
From: Gil Birger

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan praised the progress being made in restoring Ivory Coast's government of national reconciliation and urged all parties to keep on the path to peace and economic stability, VOA reported. In a report to the Security Council, he said much remains to be done and political leaders must honor the timetables for adopting legal reforms and settling outstanding disputes. Failure to meet deadlines could have severe economic and security implications for the country. He called on both the government and its opponents to quit pointing fingers of blame at each other and cooperate more closely on problem-solving. <http://www.voanews.com/article>

HOPEFUL GENERAL SAYS DEADLINES CAN BE MET

The French army chief of staff said on a recent visit to Abidjan that he is confident Ivory Coast's warring factions will meet the October 15 deadline to begin disarmament, reports Agence France Presse. Gen. Heri Bentegeat, who came to inspect more than 4,000 French peacekeeping troops in the former French west Africa colony, said disarmament should "begin as quickly and as calmly as possible." The Accra agreement signed in July in Ghana requires the government to adopt a number of political reforms before disarmament of all paramilitary and militia forces can begin. "We have decided that together we will study how to best proceed with disarmament," Bentegeat said. "I am confident that things will start on time." But with only six weeks to go before the turnover, there are reports of efforts to undermine the peace process. AFP reports that forces in Liberia, which has just emerged from 14 years of conflict, are smuggling weapons across the border into Ivory Coast, either to disrupt the peace process or because those arms can bring a higher bounty for turning them over to the government -- \$900 in Ivory Coast vs. \$300 in Liberia. http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_world/view/101972/1.html

GOVERNMENT, UN AIDING REBEL AREAS

Improving health care for the people of northern Ivory Coast will be the highest priority of the government of national reconciliation, Prime Minister Seydou Diarra said on a visit to the region this week. The government and United Nations officials "are slowly helping northern populations cope with life under rebel control," reported VOA. But until the rebels disarm, it will be difficult for the

government to resume public services which have seriously deteriorated since rebels launched a failed coup two years ago this month. Health officials estimate that in that period, four out of five doctors, nurses and midwives have fled the north, and HIV-AIDS, typhoid and malaria are on the increase, according to VOA. Tourism Minister Marcel Amon-Tanoh said. "The health situation is very bad in this area and only the peace could improve the situation."

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=0A68499F>

THE SCHOOL VACATION NO ONE WANTS

The national unity government may be back at work in Abidjan, and rebel and government ministers may even be talking and smiling with one another, as one cabinet member reported, but back in the rebel-controlled north conditions continue to deteriorate. The health situation is severe (see above) and many schools cannot open because teachers fled and are afraid to return. Women who criticize the rebels are beaten, VOA reports, and many farmers were forced to relinquish control of their land and must now work for rebel commanders. According to a UN peacekeeping official, Ivory Coast last year had negative economic growth because of the fighting, and people "want to get back to their lives" and see their country rebuilt, and government services resumed. <http://www.voanews.com/article>

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Birger, Gil

From: owner-serbletter@v2.listbox.com on behalf of Serbletter [serbletter@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2004 5:35 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € April 13, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

NO DOUGH FOR SLOBO

Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica rewarded Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist party for helping put him in office when the minority government pushed through a bill to pay salaries and allowances to the families of indicted war criminals and to cover legal fees and travel expenses for family visits to The Hague, reported b92News. The Socialists provided the margin of votes needed to put Kostunica in office after he rejected pro-democracy alliance with the Democratic party led by Boris Tadic. Amid questions of whether this was a payoff or just a down payment, even members of the government coalition cross the floor to vote with Tadic and the Democratic party against the legislation. The majority of the indictees facing the UN war crimes tribunal are former members of the Socialist party, most notably the former Yugoslav president Milosevic. Democratic Party leader Boris Tadic says his party feels Milosevic and his family shouldn't get any special assistance that would make his trial in The Hague easier. Milosevic's rule left many people "living in very difficult circumstances while those who were in power throughout those years are financially very secure and we see no reason to help them,"² said Tadic. As a result of such criticism, the government announced it would draw up means-test guidelines that would prevent funds going to Milosevic's family. http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=27824&order=priority&style=headlines

TERROR TRAINING

Serbian Defense Minister Boris Tadic said his ministry has information that Albanian terrorists were being trained in camps in Kosovo, but international forces have ignored the defense ministry's warnings, according to b92.net. "We have warned all the international institutions, KFOR and UNMIK, but there's been no adequate response from them," Tadic said. "We have adequate information of movements of certain paramilitary troops from various parts of Kosovo and Albania towards Kosovska Mitrovica. Some of these were armed and were stopped by the authorities in charge in Kosovo, but the question remains of whether all of them have been intercepted." <http://www.b92.net/english/news>

KOSTUNICA'S CONUNDRUM

Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica may have made a deal with the country's ultra-nationalists to put him in office but he doesn't want one of them to be Serbia's next president. He said the election of Tomislav Nikolic of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical party could spark an international uproar, b92News reported. But he also refuses to back Nikolic's main rival, Boris Tadic, head of the reformist Democratic party, because he is a member of the opposition. Tadic and his party refused to join the Kostunica government because it owes its existence to the support of the pro-Milosevic ultra-nationalists. Kostunica, a moderate nationalist, is still smarting from the international criticism he faced when he relied on Radicals and the Socialist party of former president and indicted war criminal Slobodan Milosevic to win him parliamentary approval to lead the government. Recent surveys indicate the only way to beat the right wing extremists is for reformists to unite around a single candidate, something Kostunica has so far resisted. Nikolic's election would be expected to halt political and economic reforms and cause a serious deterioration of relations with the West and block hopes for UN membership, according to Agence France-Presse. http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=-&nav_id=27974&order=priority&style=headline, <http://www.afp.com/english/home/>

MINISTER CALLED 'TOO PRO-WESTERN'

Serbia's nationalist-led provincial government has called for the removal of Boris Tadic, the pro-Western defense minister of the Serbia-Montenegro federation. A major point of contention is Tadic's call for the arrest of war crimes suspects, a move opposed by Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, whose government owes its control in parliament to the support of radical parties like that of former strongman Slobodan Milosevic. Milosevic is currently on trial for war crimes before a United Nations tribunal in the Hague. Miroljub Labus, Serbia's deputy prime minister, called for Tadic's removal, accusing him of refusing to cooperate with the Serbian government. Tadic said neither Labus or any other member of the government had raised the issue with him, nor do they have jurisdiction since only the federal parliament can make such a decision. <http://www.ap.org>, <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

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From: owner-serbletter@v2.listbox.com on behalf of Serbletter [serbletter@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 04, 2004 9:19 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € May 5, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

PRESERVING DEMOCRACY IS TOP ELECTION ISSUE

The coming presidential election in Serbia is all about democracy, Democratic Party candidate Boris Tadic told a meeting on Capitol Hill last week. The differences could not be clearer in a race where the top two contenders are Tadic, a pro-Western democratic reformer, and Tomislav Nikolic of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party. Nikolic, a supporter of former dictator Slobodan Milosevic, who is on trial at The Hague for war crimes, was the top vote getter in the previous election, but low turnout negated the election and the presidency has been open since December 2002. Tadic told a German Marshall Fund reception in his honor in the U.S. Capitol last week that a victory for the nationalists will be a defeat for democracy. Another threat to Serbian freedoms is organized crime, which he said is "destroying democracy." A top priority of his presidency will be waging war on the criminal syndicates, he declared. He said his friend and colleague, the late reform-minded Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic was assassinated on the orders of criminal elements who considered him a threat to their illegal empire. Kosovo is a "generator" of organized crime "in our country and the region, which is why we have to find a solution" to the conflict there. He stressed the importance of the American presence in Kosovo and said an American withdrawal would create a "very dangerous" situation. The U.S. presence should be military, political and business, he said, emphasizing a stable Serbia will be an attractive magnet for foreign investment.

TADIC IN WASHINGTON

Boris Tadic brought his reform message to Washington last week for two days of meetings with Members of Congress, the Bush administration, think tanks, the media and others. He stressed the need for continuing American support for political, economic and social reform in Serbia and said they are the centerpieces of his campaign for the presidency against the ultra-nationalist candidate, Tomislav Nikolic of the Serbian Radical Party. At stake is the orientation of Serbia, which Tadic believes should be pro-Western, including membership in the European Union; the radicals reject joining the EU and are highly critical of Serbian cooperation, under governments led by Tadic's party, with the United States and with the war crimes tribunal in The Hague. Tadic, who was defense minister until last month, was responsible for extensive reform of that department, particularly in asserting civilian leadership. Among those he met with were Senators Joseph Biden (D-Delaware), Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) and George Voinovich (R-Ohio) of the Foreign Relations Committee; Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-Connecticut)

of the Armed Services Committee; Representative Howard Berman (D-California) of the House International Relations Committee; Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pennsylvania) of the Armed Services and the Homeland Security Committees, and Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Virginia) of the Appropriations Committee. He also met with Assistant Secretary of State for Europe Elizabeth Jones and Ken Wollack, the head of the National Democratic Institute. The American Enterprise Institute hosted him at a luncheon attended by its top scholars and guests.

MLADIC MUST BE EXTRADICTED

Gen. Ratko Mladic, indicted Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect, must be arrested and turned over to the UN Tribunal in The Hague if he is in Serbia, said Serbian presidential candidate Boris Tadic. Tadic, leader of the opposition Democratic Party, said Mladic's extradition would open the possibility of Serbia trying three other generals also indicted by the UN court, rather than face the unpopular move of arresting them and turning them over, reports B92News. Mladic was indicted for his role in the 1995 massacre of more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys in the UN-guarded enclave of Srebrenica in Bosnia, and, Tadic said, "he must answer for that crime." Tadic, the outgoing defense minister, branded as the "height of irresponsibility" a call by Serbia's new justice minister, Zoran Stojkovic, to scrap the new special court in Belgrade to try war crimes cases. http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=2&nav_id=27904&order=priority&style=headlines

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From: owner-serbletter@v2.listbox.com on behalf of Serbletter [serbletter@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2004 5:53 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € May 12, 2004
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DID ACCUSED ASSASSIN MAKE A DEAL?

The leader of Serbia's pro-Western democratic reform movement said he is concerned that the accused mastermind of the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic made a deal to turn himself into the current government in exchange for being a witness against other plotters. Boris Tadic, head of the Democratic party and its presidential candidate in next month's elections, said he would have nothing to do with any government in which Milorad Lukovic, the suspected ring leader, or his lawyer have trust in, reported B92News. "If there was some kind of special trust between the current government and that man, and that's why he surrendered, then I wish them the best of luck," said Tadic. Lukovic, the former commander of the Red Berets special police unit, contacted authorities himself to arrange his surrender at his suburban Belgrade home after a year on the run, according to a report in the New York Times.

Djindjic, the pro-Western reformist who helped topple former Yugoslav dictator Slobodan Milosevic, was killed by a sniper outside his office in central Belgrade 14 months ago. The accused shooter, Zvezdan Jovanovic, is currently on trial and has reportedly admitted to the killing, but his attorneys are trying to withdraw his confession. [http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=28314&order=priority&style=headlines,](http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=28314&order=priority&style=headlines)
<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/tnt.html?tntget=2004/05/03/international/europe/03serb.html>

MECHANIC OR HIT MAN?

Milorad Lukovic claims he's just a simple auto mechanic and pensioner, but authorities in Belgrade think he is a big time hit-man involved in a string of high profile murders and attempted murders. For starters, he is accused of masterminding the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic on March 12, 2003. Lukovic, whose real name is Milorad Ulemek and goes by the nickname "Legija" for his past service in the French Foreign Legion, told Belgrade's Special Court this week that he is also accused of the murder of former Serbian president Ivan Stambolic and an attempt on the life of Serbian Renewal Movement leader Vuk Draskovic, according to B92News. He is also under investigation for the murder of four officials of the Renewal Movement in a staged highway accident, and he is the suspect in the arson of a nightclub near the headquarters of the since-disbanded Red Berets police squad which he once commanded. Lukovic is due back in court June 11. <http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php>

RADICAL CANDIDATE THREATENS MONTENEGRO

Tomislav Nikolic, the ultra-nationalist candidate for president of Serbia, isn't waiting to be elected before issuing a series of threats of what he'll do if he wins. This week he said he will cut all economic ties to Montenegro if the coastal republic seeks independence, according to news reports. He also warned Montenegrins living in Serbia could lose their jobs and the border between the two republics "will be real and difficult to pass," he was quoted as telling the newspaper Vijesti. Nikolic, deputy leader of the pro-Milosevic Serbian Radical Party, also said that if he wins he will seek the resignation of Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica or the dissolution of parliament. The leader of Nikolic's Radical party, Vojislav Seselj, is awaiting trial at the UN war crimes tribunal at The Hague, where Milosevic's trial is underway. http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=28203&order=priority&style=headlines

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• Birger, Gil

From: Serbletter [serbletter@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2004 5:59 PM
Subject: Speaking for Serbia -- SPECIAL EDITION

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € June 14, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

SERBIAN DEMOCRACY AT STAKE IN RUNOFF VOTE

The first round of the presidential election in Serbia-Montenegro was tighter than expected, with pro-democracy reformist candidate Boris Tadic running a very close second behind hardline nationalist Tomislav Nikolic, according to the Center for Free Elections and Democracy. The two will face each other in a June 27 runoff election since no one got a majority of the votes this time.

Analysts predict Tadic, head of the Democratic Party, has a strong chance of winning if the pro-democracy forces unite behind his candidacy. He is seen as the leading advocate of democratic reform and pro-Western orientation for Serbia. Nikolic, the candidate of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), has been strongly critical of cooperation with the West, particularly when it comes to working with the U.N. Tribunal in The Hague. SRS leader Vojislav Seselj, along with former Yugoslav strongman Slobodan Milosevic, is in The Hague facing war crimes charges stemming from the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s.

Early returns as the polls closed Sunday showed Nikolic with 30.1 percent, Tadic with 27.3. Far behind, at 19 percent, was Bogoljub Karic, Serbia's wealthiest man, and Dragan Marsicanin, the candidate of the ruling coalition, a distant fourth with 13.3 percent.

The election was a major defeat for the man whose name wasn't even on the ballot -- Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia. He campaigned hard for his candidate, Marsicanin. Western countries will be watching closely to see whether Kostunica and other pro-democracy parties thrown their support behind Tadic to prevent a victory by the nationalists and fascists.

This was Nikolic's fourth run for the presidency; he led in the previous three but they were invalidated because a majority of eligible voters had not cast ballots. That requirement has since been dropped, opening the way for the runoff in two weeks. Nikolic had confidently predicted a first round victory last week, but his early lead in the polls steadily closed.

A nationalist victory on June 27 would lead to greater instability in the region and potentially reignite the flames of ethnic conflict, according to analysts, and it could also reverse progress toward democracy and derail hopes of Serbia entering the European Union.

6/13/2004

The presidency has been vacant since December 2002, when Milan Milutinovic, a Milosevic ally, stepped down and surrendered to the UN war crimes tribunal. Tadic is chairman of the Democrat Party and successor to assassinated reformist Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic; they were leaders of the pro-democracy movement that overthrew Milosevic in October 2000. Tadic did markedly better in Sunday's vote than his party did in last December's parliamentary elections.

http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_world/view/89174/1/.html

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=5408446>

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From: owner-serbletter@v2.listbox.com on behalf of Douglas Bloomfield [dmb@his.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2004 10:16 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: SERBLETTER – Special Election Edition

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. • Washington, D.C. • June 27, 2004

TADIC ELECTED PRESIDENT IN LANDSLIDE

Boris Tadic became Serbia's first democratically elected president of Serbia since World War II when the 46-year-old pro-Western reformer easily defeated a hard-line ultranationalist disciple of former Yugoslav strongman, Slobodan Milosevic on Sunday.

Tadic's margin was greater than expected, winning by 54-to-45 percent over the Radical party candidate Nikolav Tomislav, according to the highly reliable Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID).

Nikolav's party conceded defeat Sunday evening, calling Tadic's victory "the will of the people."

NATO leaders meeting in Turkey immediately began phoning their congratulations to Tadic. The vote is seen as an endorsement of his advocacy of closer ties with NATO and the EU.

The U.S. State Department has called the election "an opportunity to further Serbia's development as a peaceful, democratic state, governed by rule of law.

CESID spokesman Zoran Lucid said, "It is certain that Boris Tadic has won and is the new president of Serbia. The difference is too great in Tadic's favor, this is without a doubt the election result," reported the Associated Press.

"The presidential vote was seen crucial to whether Serbia moves closer to the European Union and

6/27/2004

NATO or sinks back into the nationalist isolation reminiscent of Milosevic's autocratic regime," according to the Associated Press.

Nikolic had run three times earlier but low voter turnout negated those elections. This time the requirement for a majority turnout was dropped.

The presidency has been vacant since Milan Milutinovic moved out of the presidential palace at the end of 2002 and into a cell at the UN war crimes tribunal at The Hague, where Milosevic is currently on trial.

Tadic's election is a victory for the democratic reform movement, but it was a setback for Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, a conservative who put up his own candidate, Dragan Marsicanin of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS); he finished a humiliating fourth in the June 13 vote. Kostunica subsequently endorsed Tadic for the runoff, as did most of his coalition partners.

The two pro-democracy parties had cooperated in ousting Milosevic in 2000. The conservative Kostunica is more hesitant than Tadic and his Democratic Party about cooperating fully with the West.

In February, Tadic was named head of the Democratic party to succeed Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, who was assassinated last year. Tadic was Yugoslavia's communications minister in 2001 and then defense minister in the Serbia-Montenegro union that succeeded Yugoslavia.

The pro-Western Tadic has said, "It is in our interest to be part of the European Union, to be part of the United Nations, to assume our international responsibilities concerning the fight against terrorism and corruption, and so demonstrate that we are a country that deserves in a political sense to be part of the global civilization."

Nikolic is a hard-line nationalist, which had led EU officials to warn that his election could isolate Serbia and jeopardize its chances for joining the European Union and enjoying closer trade relations. His Radical Party is committed to creating a Greater Serbia that would encompass past and present Serb-inhabited regions of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The party's leader, Vojislav Seselj, is awaiting trial on war crimes charges at The Hague.

The Serbian president has few powers in the parliamentary system headed by the prime minister and his government. Tadic's party did not join Kostunica's coalition because it included some of the pro-Milosevic parties.

Tadic's victory is expected to pave the way for Serbia's membership in the European Union. Last week, EU leaders virtually endorsed Tadic when they urged Serbs to vote for reform. After meeting with Tadic when he visited Brussels last week, Javier Solana, the EU foreign minister, said, "Serbia needs a president who is a good friend of the EU and who will be a friend among friends, because the future president will dramatically increase Serbia's chances to become an EU member."

From wire services:

http://www.comcast.net/news/print.jsp?fn=/apnews/XML/1103_AP_Online_Regional_Europe

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3840613.stm>,

<http://www.eubusiness.com/afp/040620123422.5aqi8wcd>

<http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/040624-DUSAN-001.htm>

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From: owner-serbletter@v2.listbox.com on behalf of Serbletter [serbletter@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, July 06, 2004 11:37 PM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

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TADIC ELECTION 'MAJOR STEP' TO EU

The election of pro-western reformist Boris Tadic is being hailed as "a major step" toward Serbia's membership in the European Union and NATO. Both organizations as well as the United States and other western nations welcomed Tadic's victory over an ultra-nationalist candidate in last week's presidential runoff, saying they eagerly looked forward to working with him to implement reforms

with its past. The EU has set several conditions for proceeding toward membership, reports the Southeast European Times. Topping the list is full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, followed closely by synchronizing economic systems and customs regulations. The EU also wants the two-member republics to have a common currency; currently Serbia uses the dinar and Montenegro the Euro. Many laws will have to be changed to conform with EU standards; already the Serbian government has adopted at least 17 such new laws. Serbia-Montenegro hopes to join the EU in 2007 along with neighboring Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia.

<http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/040705-IGOR-001.htm>

Boris Tadic's winning margin of nearly 8.5 percent was a clear mandate for his program of greater integration with Europe, but the 45 percent vote for nationalist candidate Tomislav Nikolic "indicted the country had far from ended its flirtation with radical nationalism," said Monday Morning, the Lebanese Internet magazine. Tadic, the first non-communist president of Serbia since World War II and the first democratically elected president, said, "Serbia's path to Europe has no alternative. Serbia has chosen a European path and European values." Tadic dedicated his victory to slain Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, a leader of the democracy movement which toppled nationalist dictator Slobodan Milosevic in 2000; Djindjic was assassinated in Belgrade 16 months ago. Javier Solana, the EU foreign policy chief, said the EU "stands ready" to help Serbia pursue "a European future." Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, a moderate nationalist who initially opposed Tadic but backed him in the runoff, said his rival's victory over the Radical party candidate "shows that slowly But surely Serbia is moving in the direction of a true democracy." He noted that this was the first time the nation's Diaspora had voted in a Serbian election.

<http://www.morning.com/ArticleC.asp?Article=1512&CategoryID=7>

'GENERATING PROSPERITY' BUSINESSMAN BIDS FOR HIGHER OFFICE FORGIVENESS

~~But by now, and with painful slowness, the great mess of what used to be Yugoslavia is being fitted back~~ into stable and prosperity-generating structures," Martin Walker writes in Insight magazine. He attributes the change to Boris Tadic's "solid victory" in Serbia's presidential election, which opens the way to Serbian access to Western aid and backing, including membership in NATO and the EU by the end of this decade. <http://www.insightmag.com/news/2004/07/06/World/Walkers>.

The richest man in Serbia finished third in the first round of presidential voting and now he wants to be the country's prime minister. Multi-millionaire Bogoljub Karic told the daily Politika that he wants the job of prime minister and the man who now holds that pos, Vojislav Kostunica, can be "the democratic backbone of institutions and systems of Serbia." He wants his Power of Serbia party to be the main partner of President Boris Tadic's Democratic party in the "pro-Europe government." Karic wants to replace Kostunica because the job "involves more experience in getting things done and more control of one's political partners." Kostunica's candidate for president, Dragan Marsicanin, finished a distant fourth behind Karic. <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

The London Club agreed to write off more than half of Serbia's \$2.8 billion debt to the group and reschedule payments over the next 20 years for the remainder, according to an AP report in the Washington Post. The decision came on the heels of the election of pro-Western reformist Boris Tadic to be the country's first democratically elected president. "This is a huge relief for our economy," said Finance Minister Mladjan Dinkic. The agreement, wiping out nearly \$1.7 billion owed to the commercial lenders, followed lengthy and intense negotiations; it cuts the country's external debt to below 60 percent of gross domestic product, the threshold for joining the EU. The agreement will take effect following ratification by the Serbian parliament. The good news was offset by some warnings of problems ahead: the country's trade deficit is soaring and inflation is growing faster than predicted and is expected to hit 10.7 percent by the end of the year. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A23079-2004Jul2.html>

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Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2004 9:50 AM
To: Birger, Gil
Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € July 13, 2004

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RECONCILIATION

It is time for reconciliation in the Balkans, declared President Boris Tadic in his inaugural address. He called on all people in the region to apologize for atrocities committed during the Balkan wars of the last decade, reported the Southeastern European Times. He pledged to cooperate with the UN war crimes tribunal, calling it "a crucial precondition for all Euro-Atlantic integration." He said, "The history of crimes in the Balkans is long and in this regard all nations of this part of Europe owe a historical apology to each other," adding "but facing crimes committed by our own people is a precondition for a friendly relationship with our neighbors and lasting establishment of European values." He made resolving the Kosovo dispute a high priority for his administration. "We are deeply devoted to idea of a democratic, rational, European solution for Kosovo based on the UN Security Council's Resolution 1244," he said, stressing the critical need for dialogue between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians.

<http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/040712-SVETLA-001.htm>

NO NEED FOR NEW ELECTIONS

Serbia needs political stability right now, not new parliamentary elections, said newly elected President Boris Tadic. The current parliament was just elected last December and last month the country held presidential elections, which he called "a test of the political maturity of the Serbian people." The country and the government need at least a year, Tadic told members of his Democratic Party; new elections would be destabilizing at a time when the country needs stability, which he called "the cure for all the country's problems." Tadic said his party, which opted out of the present government, will stay out until after a new one is formed. *http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=28990&order=priority&style=headlines*

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

As President Tadic in his inaugural address was saying cooperation with the U.N. war crimes tribunal would be a priority for his government, one of four Serbian generals indicted for alleged crimes went on

local television to say sending him to stand trial in The Hague would be treason, reported the Associated Press. A defiant Vladimir Lazarevic told Serbia's BK TV station extraditing him would be tantamount to pardoning "unthinkable crimes by ethnic Albanian terrorists" against Serbs. Apprehending wanted fugitives like Lazarevic -- he and three fellow generals are accused of being part of a "joint criminal enterprise" targeting ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in 1999 -- is linked to international aid for Serbia, the AP noted. <http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news>

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"A president who supports democratic reforms took office in Serbia on Sunday, heralding hopes of a new era after years of international isolation," reported the Chicago Tribune. Boris Tadic was lauded for "rallying a notoriously divided electorate behind his candidacy." <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/>

Tadic "called on people in the region to apologize for atrocities committed during the Balkan conflicts in the 1990s." Southeastern European Times.
<http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/040712-SVETLA-001.htm>

His election "confirms the commitment of the Serbian people to reforms and to its European future," said EU foreign ministers in a joint statement. <http://www.eubusiness.com/afp/040712141101.jzudp8p3>

"There's no true understanding of the profound need for civilian control of the armed forces as a pre-condition for civil and democratic society," said Tadic, according to the Financial Times. <http://news.ft.com/>

THE TORCH HAS BEEN PASSED

Boris Tadic, a 46-year-old former psychology professor, represents a new type of Serbian leader. He is pro-Western, ardently democratic, and strongly committed to bringing his country into NATO and the EU. The first non-Communist and democratically elected president, he is in stark contrast to those who came before him. His two immediate predecessors fought a war against NATO only a decade ago and are facing charges before the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague for crimes against humanity in connection to their treatment of ethnical Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo. They are Slobodan Milosevic, who served a seven year term, and Milan Milutinovic, who served from 1997 to 2002. The job has been vacant since Milutinovic left office and turned himself over to the UN Tribunal. Tadic is president of Serbia, the major partner in the union of Serbia and Montenegro, which has its own federal president, Svetozar Marovic.

SHOW ME YOU CARE

The international community should move quickly to ease Serbia's political isolation and help accelerate its integration with Europe, the country's new president said in an interview with the Financial Times.

Boris Tadic urged the EU to demonstrate its political and economic backing by accelerating Serbia's much-delayed application for membership, and by financing the rebuilding of Serb homes and churches destroyed in violence by ethnic Albanians in Kosovo earlier this year. "Today we need support from the West, because the citizens of Serbia voted for a pro-western way. If such a vote isn't now supported and rewarded, the EU and the rest of the West could again see democracy challenged in our society," he said. [http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?](http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=FT.com/StoryFT/FullStory&c=StoryFT&cid=1087373643293)

<http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=FT.com/StoryFT/FullStory&c=StoryFT&cid=1087373643293>

PRIORITY ONE: INTEGRATION WITH EUROPE

"No matter what party or coalition is in power in Serbia, European integration remains our common goal and first obligation," Boris Tadic told his countrymen Sunday when he was inaugurated for a five-year term as the country's first democratically-elected president, according to news reports. "The future of our nation needs to be associated with a better life, a higher standard of living, and a stable nation. A great challenge is ahead of us and it will not be easy," he said in his address before the 25-member Parliament.

Senior representatives of more than 40 countries and international organizations, including the UN, NATO, OSCE and Council of Europe witnessed the swearing in of Tadic, leader of the Democratic Party. A pro-Western reformer, he defeated the ultra-nationalist candidate Tomislav Nikolic in a June 27 runoff election. <http://www.setimes.com/>, <http://www.eubusiness.com/afp/>, <http://news.ft.com/>, <http://www.voanews.com/>

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Sent: Friday, August 06, 2004 11:19 AM
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Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € Aug. 6, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

CROATIAN SERBS COMMEMORATED

Serbs marked the ninth anniversary of the Croatian army offensive in 1995 that killed hundreds of Serb civilians and drove more than 250,000 from their homes. A religious service in Belgrade's St. Mark's church was attended by President Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica. "Every anniversary of the forced exodus of Serbs from Croatia evokes in me a deep sympathy for the families who have lost their loved ones... but also for those who were expelled and can not return to their homes," Kostunica said in a statement faxed to AFP. The EU has said that before Croatia can join it must permit return of ethnic Serbs who fled the country during and after then 1991-1995 Serbo-Croatian war, reform the judiciary and fully cooperate with The Hague tribunal.

<http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?>

[&nav_category=&nav_id=29391&order=priority&style=headlines](http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=29391&order=priority&style=headlines)

US, SERBIA COOPERATE IN MANHUNT

U.S. Ambassador to Belgrade Michael C. Polt said both President Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica have been cooperating actively with the United States in the hunt for top war crimes fugitive Ratko Mladic, according to B92 radio. Both leaders assured Washington they are fully committed to finding, arresting and transferring Mladic, who was indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for alleged genocide during the 1992-1995 Bosnian war. Also on the most-wanted list is Radovan Kradic, former Bosnian Serb leader. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-07/27/content_1653194.htm

UN HITS CALL FOR VOTE BOYCOTT

The United States and top European allies called on leaders of Serbia and Montenegro to drop a call for a boycott of the October 23 local elections in Kosovo. The UN Security Council members stressed that the only way for the Kosovar Serb minority to play a role in shaping the province's government is by participating in the voting, reported Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; failure to participate would undermine international efforts to build a multi-ethnic society. Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica last week called on Kosovar Serbs to stay away from the polls because of a lack of security for minorities in

8/7/2004

the predominantly ethnic-Albanian province, RFE/RL added. Britain's UN ambassador, Emyr Jones Parry, urged Kosovar Serbs not to abandon the political process and termed Kostunica's recent boycott call disappointing.

<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/8/4655F69F-5311-4AE7-96AD-2469F8E84765.htm>

'ALL HOPE LIES WITH TADIC'

Germany's ambassador to Serbia-Montenegro said he is disappointed with progress made by government of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica's government but he looks to President Boris Tadic to change that. "All hope lies in the fact that Boris Tadic was elected president, because a large coalition of democrats must exist in Serbia, formal or informal, because without that, the country cannot progress further," said Amb. Kurt Leonberger. <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

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Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € August 20, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

KOSOVO IN LIMBO, TADIC OFFERS HELP

Kosovo's new UN administrator, in outlining his priorities for steering the ethnically divided and dispute province away from its violent past, said the province's decrepit economy cannot be resuscitated and decisions about how it is governed cannot be made until security is improved, reported The Scotsman. He got a quick offer of help from Serbian President Boris Tadic, who said Kosovo is plagued by a lack of security for minorities, violence and organized crime. <http://news.scotsman.com/international.cfm?id=955872004>

PROTECTING KOSOVAR SERBS

Kosovo will remain politically unstable if those perpetrating ethnically motivated violence escape punishment, warned Serbian President Boris Tadic. Speaking on the first anniversary of the slaying of two Kosovo Serb teenagers, Tadic warned that unless the killers are brought to justice, "neither stability nor a political solution" would be possible for the province, reported the Associated Press. He called for improved security for Kosovo's 100,000-strong Serb minority.

<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/08/>

IT'S THE ECONOMY, SERBIA

Opportunity is growing and risk shrinking for investing in Serbia, thanks to an improved economic and political environment, says deputy prime minister Miroljub Labus. The recent election of pro-Western, reform-minded President Boris Tadic sends a reassuring message to foreign investors for whom corruption remains the most serious disincentive, he added. A recent investment conference in Vienna recognized Serbia's improving economic climate, reported the Southeast European Times. Antoine Kurineri Millet, the regional coordinator for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said that award sends a "positive message to investors and encourages the government to continue economic reforms, because that is the only way to attract new investments. The economic development of Serbia is in the common interest of the government and investors, and we are planning to remain devoted to this large market." He told Southeast European Times that improving the

investment climate, fostering dialogue between the government and investors and reaching an investing agreement should be priorities for Belgrade. http://www.setimes.com/default3.asp?lang=english&page=process_print&article_id=25516

BRIDGING ETHNIC DIVIDES

Kosovar Serbs, the largest minority in the province, are Christian-Orthodox, and many of Serbia's most treasured historic churches are in Kosovo, such as in Metohija, according to a report in the Washington Times. Over 90 percent of the population is ethnic Albanian and for the most part they are Moslem. Many Orthodox churches were damaged or destroyed last March in a wave of anti-Serb violence. In addition to 35 Serb churches that were torched, thousands of Serbs were made homeless when their residences were destroyed. Serbian President Boris Tadic said he is working for a lasting and just peace for "our southern province" and opposes calls for independence. The UN experience in Kosovo, of which the United States was an active participant, should have better prepared the United States for nation building in Iraq, writes Claude Salhani of the UPI. "Kosovo offers a prime example of ethnic divides and tensions, of a crisis that could erupt into a conflict at a moment's notice and of the difficulties of introducing coherent democracy in such an environment," he says.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/functions/print.php?StoryID=20040806-082624-8997r>

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Subject: Speaking for Serbia

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € September 3, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

HIDE AND SEEK

The U.S. ambassador to Serbia-Montenegro praised the efforts of President Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica for their stepped-up efforts to apprehend fugitive war crimes indictee Ratko Mladic. Amb. Michael Polt said the two leaders are "cooperating actively with us" and have assured him they are "completely devoted to finding, arresting and extraditing" the elusive former general, reports the Southeast European Times. Washington has been pressing Belgrade, particularly since Tadic's election, to intensify efforts to apprehend and bring to justice Mladic and fellow accused war criminal Radovan Karadzic. Unconfirmed rumors say Belgrade has been given an October deadline to capture and turn over Mladic or face sanctions, the Times said. Polt would only say the deadline was "yesterday." Tadic, who has pledged to arrest Mladic if he is found in Serbia, told the daily *Vecernje Novosti* that he may be hiding in border regions of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2004/09/01/feature-01

SLOBO TV A LOSER

The television news shows in Serbia and Montenegro may be obsessed with Slobodan Milosevic's war crimes trial in The Hague, "but ordinary Serbs are ambivalent about the case." reports the BBC. Many never even want to hear his name again, but that doesn't make them admirers of the UN war crimes tribunal, which they consider too allied with the NATO forces that bombed Serbia five years ago. Serbian President Boris Tadic has called for closer cooperation with The Hague, although he knows many of his countrymen strongly disagree. His family was "a victim of ethnic cleansing in World War II," he said, and "for me it's completely unacceptable for my people to have been involved in war crimes. This is a huge problem: to explain to our people that we have to face our war crimes. This is because of us. We need a new way of thinking." The former Yugoslav strongman is "not much of a hero in Serbia," according to BBC, but his verbal attacks on NATO and the West strike a popular chord.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3616268.stm>

TO VOTE OR NOT TO VOTE, THAT IS THE QUESTION

Serbian President Boris Tadic said today it is in the interests of both Serbia and Serbs in Kosovo to vote

in next month's parliamentary elections in that province, B92 reported, but Kosovo's Serbs, who face continuing violence, must first have greater confidence that they can live there in safety. ³Unless this is done, no appeal to Belgrade will have any effect on the election process in Kosovo and the lack of it will also discourage Serb residents from returning to the province,² Tadic said. United Nations, European Union and NATO officials have been meeting with Tadic, Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica and others, asking them to call on Kosovo Serbs to vote in the province's elections. Kostunica has said that decision hinges on guarantees for the safety of Kosovo Serbs. Such measures, plus the return of displaced Serbs to their homes in Kosovo, would provide "appropriate motivation" for Serbs to go to the polls, he told the Southeast European Times. The international group has been urging all ethnic communities in Kosovo to participate in the elections. A leader of the Serb Return coalition told B92 that Serbs in Kosovo are puzzled by insistence from Belgrade that they should stay home on Oct. 23.

"Our position is that we expect a clear sign from Belgrade and we will vote if Belgrade says so. I wouldn't be surprised if we get such a message from Belgrade," said Dragisa Krstovic. The chief of the UN mission in Kosovo has said it is essential that Serbs in the province go to the polls. He also said the process of decentralizing authority in the province must be accompanied by institutional guarantees for the safety of the Serb community as laid out in the Serbian government's plan for Kosovo, reported B92.

At the top of the list of guarantees, said the UN's Soren Jessen-Petersen, are secure freedom of movement for minorities and large-scale repatriations. Tadic said Serbia would "respect the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 on Kosovo in its entirety," adding Kosovo represents "the biggest challenge Europe is facing today," the Times reported.

<http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?>

[&nav_category=&nav_id=29739&order=priority&style=headlines,](http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=29739&order=priority&style=headlines)

<http://www.setimes.com/html2/english/040831-IGOR-001.htm>

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Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € Sept. 15, 2004
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SERBIAN CAUCUS DEBUTS ON CAPITOL HILL

A bipartisan Congressional Serbian Caucus was established on Capitol Hill this week "to improve communication, raise awareness and increase friendly relations between the United States and Serbia," announced the organizers, Rep. Dan Burton (R-Indiana) and Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Illinois). The pair will serve as co-chairs. The informal, bipartisan group will focus on "maintaining and strengthening the historical alliance between the United States and Serbia by educating Members of Congress on issues affecting the present political, economic and security climate in Serbia and the Balkans." Members of Congress wishing to join can contact Stephen Schatz in Rep. Burton's office, 202/225-2276, or by e-mail at Stephen.schatz@mail.house.gov.

SERBIA: 'WE'LL PROTECT HUNGARIAN MINORITY'

Serbia is "particularly sensitive" to all violations of human and minority rights aimed at the country's Hungarian minority in Vojvodina province, President Boris Tadic assured Hungary's visiting President Ferenc Madl this week, Reuters reported. Tadic said he has insisted on "a full legal and police investigation" of reports of physical attacks, desecration of cemeteries, racist graffiti and other incidents which community leaders say is on the rise. Hungary last week called on EU foreign ministers to intervene to prevent further such incidents in Vojvodina, where Hungarians make up 15 percent of the Serbian province's two million people. Following his meeting with President Tadic, President Madl expressed confidence that Belgrade would put an end to the ethnic tensions, Southeast Times reported.

Madl was quoted saying he did not believe Belgrade was responsible for the reported attacks on ethnic Hungarians.

http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/newssummary/setimes/newsbriefs/2004/09/13/nb-08, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L14498243.htm>

TADIC BLASTS UN ENVOY

Serbian President Boris Tadic lambasted the top UN diplomat in Kosovo for threatening to disqualify ethnic Serbs from discussions of the province's future unless they participate in next month's general elections. Tadic has said in the past that he wants to see ethnic Serbs vote but they face continuing

violence and must first have greater confidence that they can live in the province in safety. Addressing that urgent problem and not issuing counter-productive threats, should be the focus of the United Nations and its chief of mission in Kosovo, Soreren Jessen-Petersen, Tadic added.

http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/news/world_&xml/&aspKath/world.asp?fdate=10/09/2004

SERB IMAGE GETS BOOST

This summer's election of reform-oriented Boris Tadic as Serbia's president "has given a fresh boost to that country's internal image," declares a political analysis by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Serbia continues to be plagued by perennial problems of crime, corruption and poverty, but such recent developments as Tadic's victory over hardline nationalist Tomislav Nikolic raise hope of peace and stability in that part of Europe, the article said. A recent poll indicates the Serbian political landscape is "increasingly dominated" by Tadic, Radical Party leader Nikolic and businessman Bogoljub Karic.

Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica is "a poor fourth, with the backing of only 10 percent of the electorate." Ethnic conflict continues to plague the country. Most recently, Nikolic's ultra-nationalist followers have been linked to attacks on the Hungarian and Croatian minorities in Vojvodina, RFE/RL notes. <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/09/d913b6b7-a385-40de-a2bd-652bf50b6831.html>

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Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € September 24, 2004
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OPPOSITION TAKES ROUND ONE IN LOCAL VOTING

Serbia's reformist Democratic Party (DS), led by President Boris Tadic, posted a strong showing in the first round of local elections across the country this week, and is expected to emerge victorious in the October 3 runoff vote, reports Transitions Online. Also doing better than expected was the nationalist Serbian Radical Party (SRS) of Tomislav Nikolic, who Tadic soundly defeated in this summer's presidential election. The governing party of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica had a poor showing last Sunday (September 19) and appears likely to lose seats on municipal councils across Serbia. These are the first municipal elections in Serbia in four years. Despite Kostunica's party's poor showing, observers did not expect the opposition to push for early parliamentary elections. Tadic emphasized that "political stability was key for Serbia" and elections "should be held only after a new constitution is adopted and voter fatigue has passed." Adoption of a new constitution is expected in 2005. One of the big losers in this week's vote was the candidate of the party led by telecom billionaire Bogoljub Karic, Force of Serbia. Karic, who came out of nowhere to finish third in the presidential elections, was not on any ballot this time, but his backing and money didn't appear to count for much, suggesting to some observers that he was "just a one-hit wonder." Pro-autonomy forces in Vojvodina, with a large ethnic-Hungarian population, fared poorly, with barely 10 per cent of the vote, while DS and SRS won 75 per cent of the vote between them. [http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?](http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=82&NrSection=1&NrArticle=12894)

[IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=82&NrSection=1&NrArticle=12894](http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=82&NrSection=1&NrArticle=12894)

SEEKING TITLE OF 'HIZZONER THE MAYOR'

The big prize in the October 3 runoff is the powerful job of mayor of Belgrade. The frontrunner appears to be Nenad Bogdanovic of the pro-Western Democratic Party, and his leading opponent is Aleksander Vucic of the hardline nationalist Serbian Radical Party, reported the BBC. Although each candidate won about 30 percent in the first round, pollsters and other observers expect President Tadic's DS to retain the mayoralty, while the Radicals could do well in rural areas, reported the Associated Press. Prime Minister Kostunica's mayoral candidate, Zoran Drakulic, finished a distant third with 15 percent.

However, BBC reports the Belgrade results suggest that Tadic's and Kostunica's parties could form a reformist majority in the capital. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3671592.stm>

THIS TAXI DRIVER IS NO DiNIRO OR DiVITO

The hottest television show in Serbia these days is "Taxi" but it's more like the old Candid Camera than the American TV series of the same name. This version of reality television puts politicians in the driver's seat -- literally -- as they pick up ordinary citizens. On a recent morning the driver seen trying to navigate grid locked streets, accidentally running a red light and having to stop to get directions was the country's president, Boris Tadic. Taxi has become a great hit, reports the New York Times, giving viewers who are "bored with the sight of lackluster politicians attending endless government meetings or giving canned speeches at rallies" a chance to "see those same politicians put on the spot by ordinary voters" and have to cope with traffic as they do every day.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/24/international/europe/24serbia.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1095998439-n3lxTn/B4aTL2Km82wyGPQ>

RESPECT FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Serbia and Montenegro got high grades in the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report 2004. Governments at all levels strive to protect religious freedom "in full and do not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors," the report declared. Some findings include:

- The constitution and laws of the state union and republic governments provide for freedom of religion and they "generally respect this right in practice."
- "[G]overnment policy contributed to the generally free practice of religion."
- "The Jewish community in Serbia reported an increase in anti-Semitic hate speech and threats on the Internet during the period covered by this report," it said, adding, "Police and government officials have taken some positive steps in response to acts of hate speech and vandalism."
- "In reaction to widespread violence by ethnic Albanians against Serbs and their personal and religious property in Kosovo on March 17, there were protests and violence in Serbia and Montenegro beginning on the night of March 17-18."

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35482.htm>

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Sent: Monday, October 04, 2004 12:00 PM

Subject: Speaking for Serbia -- Election Special -- draft for ur ok

Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. € Washington, D.C. € Oct. 4, 2004
info@serbianatlantic.org

REFORMISTS WIN KEY ELECTION

Serbia's reformist Democratic Party (DS) scored a major victory in Sunday's runoff elections for the powerful post of mayor of Belgrade, handing the ultra-nationalists their second major defeat since June's presidential elections. DS candidate Nenad Bogdanovic won 50.3 percent of the vote, defeating the Radical Party's Aleksander Vucic, with 48.3 percent, according to the reliable Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID), Reuters reported. In his concession, Vucic said, "It is very hard for me but I have to accept this narrow defeat. I was so close ... if the turnout had been bigger, I would have won." The outcome will help improve Serbia's relations with the West, which sees the Radicals as tied too closely to former strongman and indicted war criminal Slobodan Milosevic. DS is led by the pro-Western President Boris Tadic. Also elected Sunday were mayors across Serbia and the parliament of the northern Vojvodina province. Radicals were victorious in Serbia's second city, Novi Sad, their candidate squeaked by with a 695-vote margin. Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica joined forces at the local level to block the radicals.

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/international/international-serbiamontenegro-elections.html?oref=login>, <http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/world/9828132.htm?1c>

VOTE EXPOSES REFORM-HARDLINE SCHISM

Pro-West democrats came out ahead in Sunday's local elections throughout Serbia, but the numbers exposed the sharp divide between moderate reformers and hardline nationalists, reports Agence France Presse. This was the first nationwide local voting since the overthrow four years ago of Slobodan Milosevic, who is on trial in The Hague for war crimes. The big prize, mayor of Belgrade, went to the pro-Western Democratic Party (DS) (see above), led by President Boris Tadic, but the nationalists, including Milosevic's Socialist party and the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), posted strong showings in the provinces. The Radicals became the strongest single party in parliament following last December's general elections, but they did not become part of the government. Neither did Democratic Party, which added to its presidential race victory in June with Sunday's municipal runoff vote. That sets the stage for another round of general elections, possibly as soon as early next year. The two nationalist parties won in 38 municipalities, while the reformists took 53, including 29 for the four parties of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica's ruling coalition and 24 for its rival, Tadic's DS, which is in the opposition

at the national level, according to AFP and Beta news agency. Serb analysts say Sunday's vote shows how deeply divided the nation is, and the stakes in the competition are very high. "Political and economic reforms launched four years ago, although slower than expected, could halt completely if the Radicals come to power," analyst Divna Vukomanovic told AFP. The vote also exposed another problem: voter apathy. Turnout was about 30 percent, one of the lowest since Milosevic's ouster in 2000, AP reported. The strength of the ultra-nationalists derives in large part from disillusionment over the slow pace of reforms intended to replace the poverty and isolation of the Milosevic era, AP added.
<http://uk.news.yahoo.com/041004/323/f3ulk.html>,
<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/world/9828132.htm?1c>

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Subject: Serbletter draft for ur ok
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Speaking for Serbia

Serbian Atlantic Initiative Assn. • Washington, D.C. •

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TADIC URGES KOSOVO SERBS TO VOTE

Serbian President Boris Tadic has called on Kosovo Serbs to participate in the October 23 parliamentary election there, but he demanded the international community do more "to secure a normal life" for the province's Serb population, reports the Southeast European Times. Faced with voter apathy and threats of a boycott, Tadic's call is considered very important by the international organizations and NGO's which have launched a "Get Out The Vote" campaign complete with TV spots, posters, leaflets, T-shirts and door-to-door canvassing. Kosovo Serbs are threatening to say away as an expression of concern for their security and their future in the province dominated by ethnic Albanians. The director of the Balkan Initiative of the American Institute for Peace, Daniel Server, praised Tadic's decision to encourage Kosovo Serbs to vote as a very positive move, noting that in the view of the international community, Tadic is "the best thing that has happened to Serbia since Zoran Djindjic," reports B92. "Not voting in Kosovo is a sign of self-destruction." Server said, adding that this would be "an unsuccessful tactic and will never yield positive results. Boycotting elections has never yielded results in democratic communities." Serbian prime minister Vojislav Kostunica and the Serbian Orthodox Church have supported to call to boycott the vote. Serbs are less than 10% of Kosovo's population. The Financial Times has reported that a Serb boycott could undermine the credibility of multiethnic democracy in Kosovo at a time when the international community is about to begin considering the province's final status. The ethnic Albanian majority is demanding independence while the Serbs want it to remain a part of Serbia-Montenegro. In the wake of Tadic's televised address, the Serb List for Kosovo reportedly submitted a list of candidates for next week's vote to the Central Election Commission. http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2004/10/13/feature-02, <http://news.ft.com/cms/s/e5482408-1cb3-11d9-8d72-00000e2511c8.html>, <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

KOSOVO RESOLUTION BLOCKED IN HOUSE

A controversial resolution advocating independence for Kosovo was dropped by the U.S. House International Relations Committee in the face of opposition from the State Department and friends

and supporters of Serbia and Montenegro. The Serb media praised Rep. Dan Burton (Republican of Indiana) for his leadership in blocking the measure. According to an internal committee document, an independent Kosovo would "Destabilize the Balkan region of Europe, which is still recovering from ethnically-centered civil wars; promote calls for further Balkanization of the region, especially in respect to the Serbian provinces of Montenegro and Vojvodina; dismiss recent ethnic violence attacks in March 2004 directed at the minority communities of Kosovo, including Serbs, Romas, and Ashkalis; disrupt the already well-established discussions between the United States, European Union, United Nations, Pristina and Belgrade on the political future and possible resolutions for Kosovo; empower further political fanaticism and radicalism in Serbia and possibly even lead to the toppling of the pro-Western government of Serbian President Boris Tadic. Another, more promising piece of legislation working its way through the committee, and likely to come up in the expected post-election session, is H. Res. 726, which congratulates the people and government of Serbia for conducting democratic, free and fair presidential and local elections and for reaffirming Serbia's commitment to minority rights, peace, democracy and the rule of law. The measure was introduced by Rep. Doug Bereuter (Republican of Nebraska) and cosponsored by Reps. Burton, Rham Emanuel (Democrat of Illinois) and Robert Wexler (Democrat of Florida).

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d108:HE00726:@@L&summ2=m&>, <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

JEW, SERBS SHARE 'SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP'

Serbia and Montenegro Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Draskovic told the leadership of the World Jewish Congress, "There is no difference between terrorists killing children in Chechnya or in Jerusalem or in Kosovo or in New York," reported the Jerusalem Post. Meeting in Belgrade this week, he said, "Anti-Semitism is also terrorism, the spiritual base for terrorism. There's not been a single case of anti-Semitism among Serbia and we have been very proud of this fact." Dr. Israel Singer, chairman of the governing board of the WJC, responded, "There have been [only] a few incidents in Serbia and Montenegro and we're pleased about that. Alluding to a shared history of suffering under and struggling against the Nazis, Singer said, "The Serbian people have a special relationship with the Jews. I cannot say that about many other peoples in Europe." Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica thanked the WJC for the support it offered to Serbs who became refugees after riots in Kosovo in March 2004. President Boris Tadic noted that over the past five years, in addition to a large number of Serbian Orthodox churches that have been destroyed, many Jewish synagogues in Kosovo have been destroyed as well, according to B92. WJC reported that much of the Jewish community that fled Kosovo now lives in central Serbia. <http://www.jpost.com/serolet/Satellite?pagename=JPost/JPArticle/ShowFull&cid=1097468033584&p=1008596975996>, <http://www.b92.net/english/news/>

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Speaking for Serbia

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SERBS IN KOSOVO VOTE WITH THEIR FEET

The disappointing Serb turnout in Sunday's Kosovo election was disappointing but not surprising for President Boris Tadic, who had urged Serbs to go to the polls. Tadic had warned United Nations and Kosovo authorities that ethnic Serbs, who are 10 percent of the province, would not be able to vote if they could not feel safe and secure at the voting booth, on the streets or in their own homes. But those authorities did little or nothing to dispel Serbian fears, and, as Tadic predicted, they voted with their feet. Another factor was mixed signals coming from Belgrade. While Tadic was preaching reconciliation, Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica and the Orthodox Church were calling for a boycott. Tadic had urged Serbs to vote in the UN-backed elections "for the sake of better relations with the international community," reported Australian Broadcasting Corp. and Agence France Presse, and to fill the 10 places in the 120-seat provisional assembly set aside for them; he argued that would give them a voice in next year's negotiations over the future status of Kosovo. Most Serbs boycotted Saturday's vote in the U.N. protectorate, which the Albanian majority hopes will lead to eventual independence, something the government in Belgrade opposes.

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=6588147s>, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200410/s1226542.htm>, <http://www.sundayherald.com/45597>, <http://www.bosnewslife.com/article/2/1/4/44/20.aspx>

WASHINGTON CHIDES BELGRADE OVER BOYCOTT

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli did not mention Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica by name, but it was clear who he had in mind when he expressed American "regret" and deep disappointment that "some politicians discouraged people from voting" in Saturday's parliamentary elections in Kosovo. Echoing President Boris Tadic's earlier statements, Ereli said the voter boycott was "self-defeating" because participation in Kosovo's institutions "the best way" for Serbs and other minorities "to advance their legitimate interests." The Orthodox Church also had urged followers to boycott the vote. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/>,

FEAR AND ANGER LIMIT TURNOUT

Fear and anger kept most Serbs away from voting in Saturday's legislative elections in Kosovo, according to election monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other groups. Fewer than 1 percent of Kosovo's 100,000 Serbs went to the polls. According to the chief election monitor of the Council of Europe, Serb candidates were obstructed in efforts to campaign, further discouraging Serb turnout. The boycott was seen as a protest against the worsening condition of their security since the anti-Serb riots last March. The special U.N. Representative for Kosovo, Soren Jessen-Petersen, admitted that intimidation and threats of violence by ethnic Albanian nationalists discouraged Serbs from voting, reported the Washington Times. The Orthodox Church backed the boycott out of concern over losing influence in the overwhelmingly Moslem province. "Obviously, some decided not to vote, and that's their democratic right," said Jessen-Petersen, a Dane. "Others obviously have had their democratic right to vote hijacked, who may have wanted to vote but were afraid." Between the boycott and the increased UN and NATO peacekeeping forces brought in just for the election, violence was avoided. An estimated 95% of the 200,000 Serbs who fled Kosovo since 1999 fighting have not felt it safe to return. Until the ethnic Albanian majority addresses the concerns and fears of the Serbian minority, tensions will continue and peace will remain elusive. Human Rights Watch has condemned the UN and NATO for failing "catastrophically to protect" the Serbian minority in Albanian riots last March. <http://europe.tiscali.co.uk/index.jsp?section=Current%20Affairs&level=preview&content=258560>, <http://www.tol.cz/>, <http://www.washtimes.com/upi-breaking/20041025-034628-4707r.htm>, <http://washingtontimes.com/world/20041023-112818-6788r.htm>

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