February 15, 2011

Meg Gaydosik
Senior Media Development/Rights & Tolerance Advisor
USAID, Bureau for Europe & Eurasia/DGST/DG
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 5.7.90
Washington, DC 20523

RE: USAID Grant REE-G-00-07-00029-00

Ms. Gaydosik:

Enclosed you will find the final report for the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project referenced above. This report is a summary of all accomplishments for the contract from May 15, 2007 to November 15, 2010. This includes our initial agreement, a one year extension and a six month final extension. This constitutes fulfillment of all obligations of our cooperative agreement.

This grant was an unsolicited proposal to USAID Europe and Eurasia Bureau and was designed to prove a concept: that high-quality, reader-oriented investigative reporting can create positive change in developing democracies. It can hold government accountable, spur citizens to act and ultimately lead to addressing corruption and organized crime. Our conclusion after 30 months of work is that it is possible to effect real change, but to do so on a regional level requires significant effort, hard work and refinements to our methodology. We have learned much from our experience and hope it will help guide future work in this area. We have included a lessons learned section.

Completion of this grant took the dogged efforts of many partner organizations. We thank them for their hard work. This was not a typical project. We tackled sensitive issues and stirred our own share of controversy, legal problems and safety issues. We thank USAID for its support and believe it has been a true partner.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Drew Sullivan
Advising Editor
Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project

Grant No. REE-G-00-07-00029-00

FINAL REPORT

May 15, 2007 – Nov 15, 2010

Submitted to
The United States Agency for International Development

February 15, 2011

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents................................................................................................................. 3
Acronyms................................................................................................................................. 4
Executive Summary ................................................................................................................... 5
Summary of Goals and Objectives .......................................................................................... 6
Results for Goal 1: Educating the People .............................................................................. 6
   Publishing Investigative Reports ....................................................................................... 7
   Publishing in Newspapers................................................................................................. 8
   Web Site............................................................................................................................... 10
   Reporting Project Site Statistics...................................................................................... 10
Results for Goal 2: Communicating with Law Enforcement.............................................. 13
   Istanbul Meeting .............................................................................................................. 14
Results for Goal 3: Capacity Building ................................................................................ 14
   Objective 1: Improve regional investigative efforts ......................................................... 14
   Objective 2: Improve standards and professionalism in organizations ......................... 16
      Yearly meetings ............................................................................................................. 17
      Awards........................................................................................................................... 18
   Objective 3: Improve Sustainability ............................................................................... 18
   Objective 4: Improve Safety ............................................................................................. 19
Effects from OCCRP Stories ............................................................................................... 20
Conclusions – Lessons Learned.......................................................................................... 21
Appendix A – Story Play ...................................................................................................... 23
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHTV</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina Television (State Television)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIJC</td>
<td>Bulgarian Investigative Journalism Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRN</td>
<td>Balkan Investigative Reporting Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIN</td>
<td>Center for Investigative Reporting - Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINS</td>
<td>Center for Investigative Reporting Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBiH</td>
<td>The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTV</td>
<td>Federal Television (FBiH entity television)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIPA</td>
<td>Georgian Institute for Public Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HETQ</td>
<td>Investigative Journalists of Armenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICFJ</td>
<td>International Center for Journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICITAP</td>
<td>International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, US Department of Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRE</td>
<td>Investigative Reporters and Editors Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IREX</td>
<td>International Research and Exchanges Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JDN</td>
<td>Journalism Development Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLC</td>
<td>Limited Liability Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUNS</td>
<td>Independent Journalists Association of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYU</td>
<td>New York University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCCRP</td>
<td>Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHR</td>
<td>Office of the High Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSI</td>
<td>Fund for Open Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAO</td>
<td>Public Affairs Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA</td>
<td>Request for Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>Radio Free Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td>Republika Srpska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTRS</td>
<td>Radio Television Republika Srpska (RS Entity Television)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOOP</td>
<td>Danish-funded support structure for investigative reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

In the words of the original proposal, this program’s objective was to “expose
criminal activity, educate the public about how it works and become an information
source for those fighting to change the status quo.”

Over the 30-month course of this project, the Organized Crime and Corruption
Reporting Project (OCCRP) completed nine investigative projects containing 71
stories, 24 ad hoc stories on organized crime, one television documentary, 104
blogs and 110 briefs. One additional investigative project is in the final stage of
completion, pending final inputs. Overall, OCCRP generated more than 300
separate news items on organized crime and corruption.

Those stories did educate the public. Based on the more than 700 known re-
publications of the OCCRP-generated content, an estimated 20 million persons had
access to the stories. The stories have appeared in more than 200 media
organization publications or broadcasts around the Balkans and world and have won
numerous awards. A character string search of the unique name of the organization
lists 76,500 appearances on Google, many of them story story pickups and that is just in
English. Many private, foreign language or obscure web sites, radio and television
shows and print media may have run the stories. It is possible that we have
underestimated total distribution by 10 to 20 percent.

More than 220,000 visitors from some 160 countries viewed more than 1.7 million
pages on the OCCRP website and downloaded about 130 gigabytes of data. Since
the web site started, traffic to the site increased an average of 8 percent per month, a
very healthy growth rate. That rate has not yet slowed.

OCCRP has been quoted in the New York Times, Time Magazine, Der Spiegel and
almost every single regional newspaper. Its work has appeared on Bosnian,
German, Ukrainian, French and Montenegrin television, and in a Ukrainian film
festival.

But popularity doesn’t necessarily equate to change. OCCRP has also been cited as
instrumental in several law enforcement actions. OCCRP stories may have led to
the arrest of an offshore agent who sold turn-key money laundering systems, may
have led the National Bank in Montenegro to investigate a bank owned by the
Prime Minister’s family, may have led to the removal of guns permits by law enforcement of
crime figures in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and led to the coordination of
French and Romania police in an investigation of agents who trade football players.
While it’s difficult to show a direct causal relationship, there is strong
circumstantial evidence that the OCCRP investigative reporting directly led to these
actions.

OCCRP was designed to build the skills of local working investigative reporters
throughout South East Europe. The project has resulted in a trained group of
investigative reporters with significantly improved capacity, as well as understanding of the journalism standards and techniques required for high-quality investigative reporting. As one participant said, “[OCCRP] helped (me) a lot to understand how criminals from (the) whole region, and (the) whole world, work together, no matter how distant they are. Understanding the system and all the connections between organized crime figures was crucial for us reporters to make better stories for readers, and, at the same time, to improve the quality of our work.”

The OCCRP also built upon the strengths and existing capacity of two local organizations through partnerships with the Center for Investigative Reporting in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Romanian Center for Investigative Journalism. Additional donor resources were secured to expand the program and network with investigative journalists in countries outside of South East Europe. Ultimately, investigative journalists from 13 countries participated in the OCCRP project including journalists from Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine. Reporters in the project also cooperated on stories with journalists from more than a dozen other countries including Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States and many others.

Summary of Goals and Objectives

The goals/objectives for OCCRP in this project were as follows:

1. Overall Goal 1: Educate the public, government and law enforcement in South East Europe on the workings of organized crime and corruption in government
2. Overall Goal 2: Improve communication between regional police and justice systems and investigative reporters
3. Overall Goal 3: Improve the ability of regional investigative reporting organizations to report on organized crime
   a. Objective 1: Improve regional investigative efforts
   b. Objective 2: Improve standards and professionalism in organizations through working with editors
   c. Objective 3: Improve sustainability of regional investigative reporting organizations
   d. Objective 4: Enhance safety of journalists working on regional crime stories

Results for Goal 1: Educating the People

According to the original proposal, “the goal of educating the people, government, law enforcement and businesses requires widely publishing important stories told in an interesting way while meeting all international standards for fairness, accuracy, ethical conduct, depth, context and clarity.”
It was decided that in order to effectively meet this goal, OCCRP needed a website since some of the countries did not have a center with its own site. The plan was to reach an audience as wide as possible. It was understood that, as effectively a new organization, the consortium would have to slowly build its reader base on its website but that it could rely on the existing relationships with news organizations in each country to get distribution.

To satisfy objective one, OCCRP would have to:

1) Report and write important stories that met international standards
2) Publish in local media
3) Build a website to self publish

This was a formidable task but since OCCRP participants had worked on a small number of projects together already, it had a significant advantage and was able to start reporting on Day One.

**Publishing Investigative Reports**

OCCRP exceeded the goals of this objective by publishing:

- Nine major projects containing 67 separate stories originating in different parts of the region. A tenth report is still in progress.
- Three mini projects containing seven stories
- 24 ad hoc feature and investigative stories highlighting major issues related to corruption and organized crime
- 110 briefs highlighting smaller issues related to corruption and organized crime or updating previous stories
- 104 blogs highlighting interesting news events related to corruption and organized crime.
- A documentary film on tobacco smuggling.
- About five information graphics related to stories

This tally does not include the reporting and writing of a major follow-up to one of the projects and most of the work for a tenth project which is complete and awaiting a final lead story due to recent happenings.

These nine projects include the following stories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Underground</td>
<td>Oct 2008</td>
<td>Done in cooperation with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), OCCRP completed four stories including one that traced the assets of Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic who was accused of profiting from smuggling cigarettes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2008</td>
<td>OCCRP looked at the role of organized crime in football including looking at how match fixing was done, ownership of clubs by crime figures and the shady business of trading players.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2009</td>
<td>OCCRP looked at how organized crime figures were not prosecuted in the Balkans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>OCCRP looked at how organized crime has been involved in the gambling business in the region, how the states don’t regulate who owns a casino in some countries and how many casinos don’t pay their tax bills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>OCCRP looked at how organized crime owns many security firms and how they use owning firms as a tool to legally get guns. Some states don’t regulate security firms at all while others do it poorly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2009</td>
<td>OCCRP documented the trade in forged and illegally issued identification documents. Many have found holes in the system while legitimate persons can’t get documents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>OCCRP looked at about fifty major figures that appear often in stories on organized crime. OCCRP documented their assets, their associates, their businesses and other basic information on who these people are.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2010</td>
<td>OCCRP reporters went undercover to show that offshore brokers are selling turnkey solutions for laundering money and evading taxes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2010</td>
<td>OCCRP showed how Serbia’s richest man used offshore companies to bypass laws on bank ownership and monopolies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that this does not include three extensive mini projects that looked at crime figures Naser Kelmendi and Darko Saric and a small project on food smuggling.

**Publishing in Newspapers**

OCCRP published almost all of its stories in regional newspapers. These include some of the largest regional newspapers including:

- Vecernji list – Croatia (circ 250,000)
Local organizations were responsible for overseeing distribution of stories. In many cases, this worked well especially in Serbia and Bosnia where the centers had active relationships with media. In other countries without a center or where reporters worked for a specific media house, publication was more limited.

OCCRP stories in English were designed for a regional audience. Those published locally often included slightly different information depending on the local needs. Wherever possible, OCCRP editors encouraged that local partners stayed close to the edited OCCRP versions.

OCCRP stories got extensive play on the Internet as well and it is impossible to determine the full extent of the overall play.

Appendix A includes a listing of all known places where OCCRP stories appeared. It is likely there are many more sites we missed.

It is difficult to estimate how many readers visited these sites and read the newspapers where OCCRP stories appeared. OCCRP can make a rough estimate based on commonly accepted circulations for regional media. These estimates show that the projects ranged from a low of about 200,000 readers (the Battered Justice Series) to about 11 million (for the Tobacco Smuggling Project). OCCRP estimates that overall, about 20 million readers worldwide had access to OCCRP stories through an accessed web page, a watched TV program or a purchased magazine or newspaper. This includes a base of 220,000 readers at OCCRP’s website and 300,000 readers at partner websites.

In the early projects and during the handover from editors, the publication of some projects was not documented. With time, this problem was resolved although in some countries, publication was poorly tracked. That means there are likely many more instances of stories getting play than are documented in Appendix A.
Web Site

OCCRP has successfully built a database on organized crime and corruption making it the only real dedicated news site to this issue. It started from scratch during this project and built it up to a current month rate of about 14,000 visitors per month and a growth rate of about 8 percent per month.

The site has gone through two iterations with an initial site built for about the first year. The site, which was built over the tenure of three web administrators, was weak and a major redesign was started almost as soon as it was completed. A significantly improved site was completed in year two.

The site, while restricted to English due to limited resources, has a decent regional showing and has at times seen high traffic. In fact, OCCRP had to upgrade the server once because traffic exceeded the ability of the webhosting company to handle it. At one point, in August, 2010, the site had more than 4,000 visitors downloading 22 gigabytes of files in a brief three-day period as people flocked to see the records of accused drug lord Darko Saric.

While OCCRP is happy with the progress, we understand that further upgrades are necessary and staffing issues have not been completely overcome.

Reporting Project Site Statistics

While significant work remains, we believe we are moving forward. The content is growing significantly leading to more search engine hits. As the site improves its search engine performance, it shows up in the results pages closer and closer to the
top of the search engines -- leading to more hits. This can be demonstrated by searching the generic terms “organized crime” and “corruption” in Google. When done, OCCRP shows up as the third Google listing. This is a significant improvement from the past where it showed up from 16 to 20 pages into the results and only the most determined researcher would find it.

OCCRP is also getting more links. More than 400 sites are listed as having links to OCCRP although the number of quality site links is probably closer to 60 to 80, a significant improvement as well. This also improves search engine performance. Search engines provide about 35-40 percent of the hits on OCCRP. Links provide about 10 percent. More than half are from people entering the OCCRP site directly.

The majority of site traffic came from the region despite being in English. In 2010, the site breakdown of visitors by country showed the following trends:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The site traffic demonstrates that the information is being used locally. While the United States shows up first, this is likely because most search engines and large email servers are based in the US. Many of the US hits are likely to be local traffic.

A complete list of web traffic is shown below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total unique</th>
<th>Total visitors</th>
<th>Visits average</th>
<th>Page hits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2011</td>
<td>10292</td>
<td>13731</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>55796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2010</td>
<td>10315</td>
<td>13829</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>83478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2010</td>
<td>10491</td>
<td>14726</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>76374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 2010</td>
<td>9739</td>
<td>13040</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>56929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2010</td>
<td>10276</td>
<td>13288</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>64760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2010</td>
<td>13522</td>
<td>17604</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>112235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2010</td>
<td>7465</td>
<td>10174</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>41699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 2010</td>
<td>9372</td>
<td>12462</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>46523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>7460</td>
<td>10752</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>51182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2010</td>
<td>6799</td>
<td>9867</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>43527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2009</td>
<td>7,441</td>
<td>10,150</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>46,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb * 2010</td>
<td>6,827</td>
<td>8,099</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>31,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2009</td>
<td>2,796</td>
<td>3,463</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2009</td>
<td>3,244</td>
<td>4,021</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 2009</td>
<td>6,705</td>
<td>8,098</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>64,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 2009</td>
<td>5,602</td>
<td>6,686</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>56,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2009</td>
<td>4,482</td>
<td>5,435</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>58,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 2009</td>
<td>3,630</td>
<td>4,332</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>52,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 2009</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>55,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>4,358</td>
<td>5,816</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>49,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2009</td>
<td>5,228</td>
<td>6,291</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>56,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 2009</td>
<td>3,677</td>
<td>8,296</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>117,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2009</td>
<td>5,010</td>
<td>9,603</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>110,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2009</td>
<td>3,286</td>
<td>7,170</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>98,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2008</td>
<td>2,106</td>
<td>4,472</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>68,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2008</td>
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<td>4,033</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>68,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2,320</td>
<td>3,890</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>61,488</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 2008</td>
<td>1,904</td>
<td>3,264</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>39,690</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 2008</td>
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<td>3,899</td>
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<td>38,183</td>
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<td>1,434</td>
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<td>45,412</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,531</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>29,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td>1,086</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>14,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2008</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>8,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 2008</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2008</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* January 2010 data missing due to problems with website statistics package
This growth of about 30 percent a year should continue for the next few years. As mentioned, OCCRP needs a permanent staff doing stories on organized crime on a more daily basis to jump to the next level. It remains the only dedicated organized crime site in the world but has no permanent staff. The addition of even two or three staff members would have a significant impact on attracting readers.

**Results for Goal 2: Communicating with Law Enforcement**

The grant provided limited funds to host one meeting between law enforcement and journalists. In addition, OCCRP editors hoped to work individually with reporters and police to build relationships. Over the past three years, these relationships have borne fruit and contributed in key ways to the reporting of stories. While specific police names can not be mentioned in order to protect sources, more than two dozen police sources are regularly used by OCCRP members, some originating from the original Istanbul meeting.

These sources have been critical in the stories about various crime figures, the People of Interest Project, the Security firm project and the tobacco smuggling project. In addition, OCCRP editors and staff have been asked to speak at conferences with law enforcement attending.
Istanbul Meeting

In June of 2008, 35 law enforcement officers and reporters who specialize in organized crime, corruption and terrorism met in Istanbul. The goal of the unique conference was to find common ground between people working in this difficult area. It was decided to include terrorism experts because of the close ties between both terrorists and organized crime and because the skill set needed for both issues is so similar. OSCE provided funds for reporters and terrorism experts allowing us to significantly expand the meeting size.

Initially, there was great skepticism whether this conference would work. A number of police organizations refused to come even though both OSCE and ICITAP were enthusiastic and helped organize the event.

Although conversation was muted at first, a few critical law enforcement persons and journalists were instrumental in giving a hearty approval to working with media under certain conditions. This led to much greater openness. The event included a number of social events including a boat tour of the Bosporus which worked very effectively to bring the two sides together. By conference end, there was strong camaraderie built up among the attendees. During and after the conference, there were specific discussions about stories and pledges by both sides to communicate better.

Results for Goal 3: Capacity Building

The objectives for Goal 3 included:

- Improve regional investigative efforts
- Improve standards and professionalism in organizations through working with editors
- Improve sustainability of regional investigative reporting organizations
- Enhance safety of journalists working on regional crime stories

Objective 1: Improve regional investigative efforts

Prior to OCCRP, there was little if any regional cooperation on stories. Instances of news organizations cooperating were limited to existing regional organizations like BIRN, or instigated by organizations like SCOOP or were present among future OCCRP members. CIN in Bosnia and the Romanian Center were regularly cooperating and that cooperation became the basis for OCCRP. Other examples of regional cooperation from members, especially the Romanian center, were built upon by OCCRP. There was cooperation occasionally between Western media and local media particularly when international media needed help. Other than those instances, we know of no prior cooperation on investigative stories among regional media.
During the course of the program, OCCRP became a focal point for regional cooperation. OCCRP helped to build regional relationships between member organizations and between journalists. OCCRP dominated regional cooperative efforts leading to a strong regional team built around member organizations. OCCRP’s network became so strong and well known that it was used by organizations like the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists when it began to work in the region. A grant from the Open Society for a regional project on Roma Health also used the OCCRP network.

OCCRP surveyed all partners to evaluate whether they felt OCCRP had improved their regional efforts on organized crime. Every participant reported that it had made a difference. Comments included:

- “OCCRP it is one of the best network of investigative journalism about corruption and organized criminal in cross-border reporting. Through excellent cooperation and coordination between journalists in this region we have gone more deep in our investigation as journalists.” – Macedonia
- “The OCCRP project improved my understanding of reporting on organized crime by 1) explicit presentation of the topic proposed to reporters for investigation; 2) exact formulation of the questions related to investigated topic in the incipient faze of the investigation; 3) support offered by project coordinator in the process of investigation; 4) exchange of information between reporters by promoting best practices; 5) participation at the OCCRP meeting and seminars.” – Moldova
- “It gave me more systematic approach to the topic – for example -- a general scheme of items to collect information about controversial figures (a project: 100 Organized Crime figures). Finally when I got information about several OC leaders (companies, addresses, related persons, business partners etc.) and put it into the system it became much better to analyze it and to find connections for broad factual picture of underworld.” – Russia
- “I understood how the system of the investigative story process is essential for the success of investigative stories, why is necessary to carry out all phases of the investigative process and to work out all angles of the possible stories. Every number and every letter in the story had to be verified by the sources. Especially, it was supporting documents need to be supplied. Role of the editor was essential for me to understand importance of fact checking and editing.” – Serbia
- “Until I started working with OCCRP I did not know much on reporting on organized crime. OCCRP editors gave me perspective and understanding of how organized crime works; they provided me with support, guidance, motivation and challenge to keep digging. They were there to answer my questions, give idea how to proceed, new ways of trying to access information. They taught me how to follow the money by tracking down companies. Everything I know I learned from them.” – Bosnia and Herzegovina
• “It helped a lot to understand how criminals from whole region, and whole world, work together, no matter how distant they are. Understanding the system and all the connections between organized crime figures was crucial for us reporters to make better stories for readers, and, at the same time, to improve the quality of our work. Key for that was cooperation between reporters from several countries, so working in teams with people that you actually don’t know was a valuable lesson and something that, as we learned, doesn’t have an alternative in today’s journalism.” Bosnia and Herzegovina

• “I took part in a lot of OCCRP projects and most of them improved my knowledge about the organized crime. This happened thanks to the high professionalism of the editors of OCCRP, very rich resources we have opportunity to use – data base, specialized software, hi-tech platforms for joint work and communications, etc.” Bulgaria

• “The OCCRP project enhanced my abilities as a cross border investigative journalist. It helped me better understand regional and global issues that affect my country and it also improved my abilities in gathering and processing information through techniques and software. The work I have performed for OCCRP made me see a much clearer picture of how organized crime operates across frontiers and how it influences the lives of ordinary citizens.” Romania

Objective 2: Improve standards and professionalism in organizations

Measuring standards is always difficult because there is no universal agreement on what standards should be. In OCCRP, it was no different. There were many discussions and even heated arguments about such fundamental issues as what constitutes proof in a project, what is the best way to tell a story to a readers and what information should be included along with many, many more disputes on minor issues.

Overall, OCCRP has developed through three years of hard work a standard that is implementable. The reporters have agreed to follow that standard and all stories reflect that standard.

In the survey and in regular discussions, most reporters felt their standards were good before working with OCCRP although they didn’t always believe the standards at other organizations were as good. So while they did not directly report that their standards needed to be improved, they did give indications that they had changed how they worked. Some examples from the survey:

• “I simply started treating OC reporting in more professional manner. For example, if before, I often relied on wires and news reports for the
information. Right now, I almost never do this on investigative projects always trying to go to the source whenever possible.” – Ukraine

- “I got basic skills of coordinating several journalists from more than six countries. It gave me understanding of how international investigative projects are usually developing – I have passed all the stages – from discussing the idea and collecting basic general material to the final process of editing and fact checking. It was good experience and training for me.” – Russia

- “All stories produced in cooperation with OCRRP had much more quality, clarity and were well documented. For an example project called “People of interest” helped us in two ways. First, we started to develop our database of organized crime and second it helped us to write better and documented stories. That resulted in much more quotes in traditional media.” - Serbia

- “Working on OCCRP project helps me to better organize my research and stay focused on important facts in my stories.” – Bosnia

- “It does, by working on issues in modern style. Problem in Macedonia is approach to investigative journalism. It’s considered expensive and not profitable journalism. There is no training for that. In this program I can work with enough time and resources on some story and have constant support from editors and colleagues.” – Macedonia

- “OCCRP project gave me opportunity to work with some of the best journalists in Eastern Europe and with some very good US editors. Thanks to this my journalistic skills were highly improved, and now I have very good contacts in all of the Balkan and Eastern European countries. In fact without OCCRP is impossible to have deep and strong investigations about the organized crime in this region.” - Bulgaria

### Yearly meetings

OCCRP held three annual meetings with reporters working in the program (including the above discussed law enforcement meeting). The meetings were held in Istanbul which offered easy visa access, cheap hotels and a central location. At the meetings, OCCRP editors did advanced trainings especially on standards, techniques and safety issues. In the survey, almost all of the reporters said the meetings were useful and some believed more were needed. Some preferred to have more direct county to country contact where possible. Some comments were:

- “Those meetings were very useful for me.” – Macedonia

- “In December 2009 I was invited at the OCCRP Istanbul meeting. The discussions with my colleagues from other countries and with the OCCRP staff, the presentations and lectures held by the OCCRP experts etc. improved my skills and understanding of advanced investigative reporting.” – Moldova
• “They have been very useful, as it’s a great way to make sure we are on the same page on the projects we work on, as most of us have our own jobs, and often it’s difficult to keep track of all the development via email. It would be much better if we could have the separate project meetings, at least for the major projects, as I think it would greatly improve coordination.” - Ukraine

• “Meetings were one of the best in cooperation with OCCRP, because it was time when we shared our experience in person, and when we got the best comments and got better perspective of our work. “ - Serbia

• “It’s important to meet people you work in person. At least once a year. We can talk how we doing things, it’s not the same with Internet and other communication devices. For me meetings are useful enough.” - Macedonia

• “Yes, all annual meetings were very useful – to make contacts, to coordinate relations between journalists and to improve journalistic skills. It was very good idea in the meetings to be invited different experts from area, connected with fighting against organized crime. The meeting would even more useful if there in bigger training part – for example training with Computer Assisted Reporting skills – this would be very nice. “ -Bulgaria

Awards

One means of demonstrating international standards is through awards. Awards demonstrate that peers, often international journalists with good reputations and high standards, believe your organization is meeting these high standards. OCCRP has won the following awards or recognitions:

1. Finalist – Daniel Pearl Award 2009 – Documents project
2. Overseas Press Club Award (with ICIJ)
3. Tom Renner Award for crime reporting. Investigative Reporters and Editors. (with ICIJ)
4. Global Shining Light Award

In addition, many members of OCCRP have won regional and international awards for their individual work. For example, OCCRP member Roman Shleynov at Novaya Gazeta was named the winner of the 2008 Transparency International Integrity Award. OCCRP nominates members for these awards and often discusses their work with OCCRP.

Objective 3: Improve Sustainability

An important goal of this program was to improve the sustainability of the partner centers. Because each center has individual needs and because there was not sufficient funds for editors to spend significant time in various centers, we focused on developing advanced plans at CIN in Sarajevo, CINS in Serbia and the Romanian Center. For the other centers, they benefitted from earning funds for the
work done, getting connected to Western media and improving international connections to lower reporting costs and build relations.

During the course of this grant, OCCRP’s website attracted a number of international organizations. For example:

- Based on connections with OCCRP editors and the strength of the website, Time Magazine hired reporters from CIN in Bosnia for a story on terrorism and later from BJC in Bulgaria for a story on organized crime.
- ZDF German television hired reporters from Macedonia for a story on organized crime and football.
- ICIJ hired member reporters in Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bosnia and other places for projects on tobacco smuggling and illegal fishing.

At least a half dozen other references were made and private contracts worked out by reporters including media from Denmark, Brussels and other countries.

More commonly, media, after connecting to reporters, decided to make OCCRP reporters the focus of the story themselves. This included TV Arte, ZDF Television, the BBC and others.

OCCRP worked extensively with CIN, CINS and the Romanian center to improve their financial situation. OCCRP editors helped CIN and CINS develop international relations with donors, helped determine fundraising strategies, edited proposals and train staff. OCCRP played a role in CIN getting a significant grant from one Scandinavian donor and develop relations with several others.

OCCRP editors spent time in Belgrade to help staff not only improve standards, reporting skills and management issues of the center there, but also to get several key grants. OCCRP is working with the new management of CINS which has significantly improved grant earnings. OCCRP has helped all of the centers develop short term strategic plans and start the process of developing longer term plans.

OCCRP has been critical in helping CIN develop editors. As OCCRP was housed at CIN in Sarajevo, both the director and editor have benefited from the presence of OCCRP editors. These editors have helped train the CIN director and editor in management issues, leadership and planning issues. CIN has achieved a rarity in the region. It has sustained standards while improving its sustainability.

Significant work still needs to be done to improve other centers. A long term relationship is necessary to develop not only the strategic plans, but the management that is capable of seeing it through.

**Objective 4: Improve Safety**
OCCRP and its member organizations have faced the threat of physical and legal violence since its formation. That’s because OCCRP has taken on the most dangerous stories in one of the most dangerous places to work. However, in the 30 months of this grant, OCCRP has not been sued nor have any of its reporters faced any violence.

OCCRP attributes this success to a number of factors including luck. However, luck is often the residue of design and we also believe that part of the success lies with the following factors:

- OCCRP has instituted a detailed safety plan used on all of its stories. Reporters have been trained in the safety plan. Safety training is ongoing and a safety analysis is done on all stories. OCCRP’s safety plan has been used around the world and recently OCCRP editors used it to discuss safety with Mexican reporters.
- OCCRP has arranged high quality international legal assistance from one of the most respected international media legal firms. This firm has advised OCCRP when it has been threatened with lawsuits.
- OCCRP editors are trained and experienced editors well versed in spotting legal issues during the early phases of reporting.
- OCCRP has played an active role in legal issues affecting media in the developing world and one of its editors has written extensively about the issue including a report for the Center for International Media Assistance.
- OCCRP has taken a very conservative approach to both issues taking action even in cases where the threat is not considered significant.

While there is a growing awareness of safety issues among reporters, there is still much work that needs to be done. Reporters still do not take adequate safeguards to protect their safety or properly notify editors of safety issues and local editors still do not take every precaution available to them.

**Effects from OCCRP Stories**

The ultimate goal of this program was to have a real effect in the real world. It is impossible to ever truly determine if an OCCRP story led to action or whether OCCRP was used as an excuse for action even though some agent may attribute the reason to us. However, OCCRP clearly played some role in the following

- Removal of Gun Permits – Serbia police cancelled weapons permits to a security firm after OCCRP published a story about how the firm was connected to a wanted drug trafficker.
- Removal of Gun Permits – Bosnian police removed the gun permits of two family members of a reputed crime family after an OCCRP story showed not only that the men had the permits, but that police believed the family was involved in the trafficking of drugs.
• Investigation -- Bosnian officials also opened an investigation whether the same family had violated customs laws because they lied on declaration forms. This was based on information in an OCCRP story.

• Removal of Citizenship -- After a Montenegrin newspaper ran our story and cited our evidence that members of the same family had Montenegrin citizenship, government officials issued arrest warrants for the men claiming they had illegally obtained the citizenship.

• Freezing Assets – Bosnian officials froze the assets of a Bosnian business after OCCRP wrote a story about its role in political corruption and organized crime.

• Arrest – Romanian police arrested a businessman after OCCRP reporters asked government officials if his activities were legal. The businessman had tried to sell undercover reporters a turn-key solution to avoid taxes and launder money.

• Investigation - Serb prosecutors interviewed a man who was interviewed by OCCRP on tobacco smuggling.

• Joint Investigation – Romanian and French prosecutors agreed to work together after they learned through an OCCRP story that they were independently investigating the same football network for illegal activities.

• Fixed matches - After the stories published by OCCRP pointed out that the number of victories by visiting teams in the BiH champion’s league were significantly below historic rates across Europe, the number corrected itself the following year. Sources told CIN these victories were orchestrated to keep the same teams in the first league.

• Investigation -- After OCCRP published a story about how the prime minister of Montenegro used his position to serve his and his family’s business interests, including the privatization of the county's second largest bank, the Central Bank of Montenegro advertised a tender for a special audit of the bank. The Central bank cited “improper reporting” as the reason for auditing the bank which is controlled by the PM, his brother, his sister and his business partner. The prime minister responded to the OCCRP series with three press releases attacking us and calling the OCCRP staff "low paid dilettantes" and stupid.

Conclusions – Lessons Learned

OCCRP has been a unique experiment that worked.

It has significantly changed the journalism landscape not only in Eastern Europe but elsewhere as well. A number of journalists have sought to learn more about OCCRP with the goal of possibly implementing a similar program in Central Asia and in Central America.

The program had so many reasons why it should have failed. Eastern Europe has few media success stories over the past decade. Working on organized crime in
Eastern Europe is as hard a task as can be envisioned. There are so many safety, legal and other issues any of which could undermine the program. The fact that success is even a possibility is in itself a tremendous success.

We recommend continued work with this program and for this model to be tried elsewhere.

The hardest part has been dealing with organized crime. We have learned that a program such as this requires dedicated personnel starting with the editors. It also requires working with the very best reporters. A program like this is dangerous and will probably not be effective unless the right people are involved.

That said, with or without the organized crime component, there should be many more regional consortiums. There is no reason why there are not such consortiums everywhere on earth. They make sense and if there is money involved to do the reporting, this model can be successfully exported anywhere.
Appendix A – Story Play

About OCCRP

- American Journalism Review – Article about OCCRP and safety - http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=4884
- Niemann Reports
- Canadian Broadcasting Company – Interview on Organized Crime
  http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/06911.pdf - Textbook used OCCRP stories as examples
- http://www.bloggernews.net/114651
- http://index.hu/bulvar/2010/01/04/a_gyilkossagok megfelemlitik_a_szakma/t/
- http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5684942,00.html

All Projects Published in:

Observatorio Italiano
Member Websites
OCCRP website

Miskovic

Broadcast
B92 Television – 4 news programs
B92 Radio

Print

FoNet wire service
Danas - Serbia
Dani Magazine - Bosnia
  • Miškovićev bezdan od milijardu eura
Slobodna Bosna
  • Najveći tajkun u regiji Miroslav Mišković dužan bankama milijardu eura
San
  • Koliko su Mišković i Radončić oprali novca preko Belizea

Websites:

16. http://www.srb-rss.com/article_mi%C5%A1kovi%C4%87_kr%C5%A1i_zakon_4230320.htm
17. http://www.telex.rs/novica.php?n=245967

Offshore Broadcast

24
Romanian National TV ran a newscast on it:  
http://tvr.ro/articol.php?id=92231&amp%3Bc=58

Print (these places ran print and sometimes web versions)
1. 24 Hours Bulgaria
3. Mediafax Wire Service –Mediafax gave access to hundreds of small papers – Website search shows 316 hits show up in various news sites in Romanian language. Unsure how many paper copies ran but likely dozens.
4. Jurnalul National:  
http://www.jurnalul.ro/stiri/observator/vintu-cercetat-alaturi-de-kiss-laszlo-pentru-o-fraudade-8-milioane-de-euro-559934.html
5. Puterea:  
http://www.puterea.ro/news11815/Vintu-cercetat-in-dosarul-spalarii-de-bani-de-la-PSV-Company.htm
6. Gandul: 
7.  
8. Curentul:  

Web

Hotnews Romania  - Ran complete series in special section.
5. 316 additional hits

People of Interest


Ukraine Stories:

Chaffee Response


Saric Stories:

Vreme


Story about People of Interest Project


Documents

Arena – Macedonia
Novaya Gazeta - Russia
Radio Free Europe
Dnevni avaz – BiH
• Falsificirane dokumente BiH posjeduju i najveći kriminalci
Večernji list – Croatia and BiH
• Krivotvorine
Euro Blic - BiH
• Kriminalci dobijaju lažna dokumenta

SRNA - RS in BiH

Security

Canadian Broadcasting Company (Interview)
Blic – Serbia
Radio 021 Serbia


The Big Bet - Casinos

Frontal 21 – ZDF Television
Jurnalul National in Romania,
Koha in Macedonia
24 Hours in Bulgaria
Vecernji list in Croatia

- http://frontal21.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/1,0,1872,1001633,00.html
Battered Justice

- [http://www.viennareview.net/story/02388-hungary-corruption-continues](http://www.viennareview.net/story/02388-hungary-corruption-continues)

Football

Broadcast

BBC World Service Radio
ZDF German Television – Interview of reporters -
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXOtAifEthc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXOtAifEthc)

Print Versions

24 hours - Bulgaria
Der Speigel – story about project -
[http://www.spiegel.de/sport/fussball/0,1518,607048,00.html](http://www.spiegel.de/sport/fussball/0,1518,607048,00.html)

Dnevni Avaz – BiH
- Klubobiv dogovarali rezultate, sudijama se prijetilo smrću
- Nasilničko ponasanje krivični procesi nisu prepreka za izbor
- nasilničko ponašanje i krivični procesi nisu prepreka za izbor
- Gdje su milioni iz kase nogometnog saveza
- Vrednuje se sve osim upravljačkih vještina

Jutarnji list - Croatia
- Namještanje u BiH smatraju normlanim

Nezavisne novine - BiH
- Gosti i dalje "turisti"

Oslobodenje - BiH
- Ruku na srce, ko bi to gledao

San Dnevni Novine – BiH
- Najtužnija liga u Evropi

Večernji list – Croatia and BiH
Neregularnosti u nogometnoj Premijer ligi BiH
Savez mora platiti dva miliona duga ili ostaje bez zgrade
Svi protiv saveza-savez protiv svih
Na pozicijama u bh nogometu isti ljudi na svim razinama
Nmještanje priznala 24 trenera

Web sites

11. http://www.sarajevo-x.com/clanak/081229004
Tobacco Smuggling/Montenegro/Documentary

Broadcast
Vjesti TV
TV Arte – Interview with reporters on tobacco smuggling
TV BiH
Ukraine Film Festival – Main program and regional program
Radio Free Europe

Print
New York Times – Story mention
Novaya Gazeta – Moscow
Vjesti – Montenegro
- Svi moji prihodi su javni
- Ko je taj Centar za javni integritet
- Crnogorska veza pod lupom sudije u Bariju
Dan – Montenegro
- Bosanska policija upire u Kalića
- Ana Kolarević prodaje Luču
- MEĐUNARODNI KONZORCIJUM ISTRAŽIVAČKIH NOVINARA (ICIJ) OBJAVIO PODATKE O IMOVINI PORODICE ĐUKANOVIĆ
Dnevni Avaz – BiH
- Mile Đukanović bogatiji od Obame i Srkozija
- Trgovina je bila unosna, ali i krvava
- Zemlja okorjelih pušača
Bosnia Daily - BiH
- Smoking Proves Hard Addiction for BiH
- Legal Smuggling
- Up in a Puff of Smoke
- Smuggling Infiltrates the Balkans
- Cigarette Smuggling Still Smoking
Center for Investigative Reporting - Serbia
- Đukanovićeva Crna Gora kao porodični biznis
- Crnogorska veza
- Istraživanje imperije Đukanović
Euro Blic – BiH and Serbia
- Porodica Đukanovic poseduje 185 miliona dolara
Global Magazine – Croatia
- Preskroman im i Titov Galeb od 5500 kvadrata
Oslobodjenje – BiH
- Ljubav cigarete i mafija
- Putevi šverca cigareta u BiH
- Free shopovi u rukama politicara
- Porodično zemljište Inića okupirali šverceri
- Šverc cigaretama putem interneta
- dim u lice duhandžijama
- Švercerski izviđači nadgledaju policiju
- Zašto je propala akcija "Noćni šetač"?
Reporter Magazine – BiH
- Duty free
San Dnevni Novine – BiH
- Đukanović teški 200 miliona, u Crnoj Gori oprana milijarda dolara
- Duhanska mafija obrće milione KM
- Večernji list
• Europa pušti camel s kozom
• Crnogorska veza razotkrila kriminal
• Đukanovićeva Crna Gora kao obiteljski biznis
• Pljesnite cigarete miješaju sa svježima i truju potrošače
• Otkriven put šverca u EU
• EU puna švercanih cigareta
• Tvrtka s bahama zeli kupiti tvornicu duhana mostar
• Šverc cigaretsama-djeca za dva eura ilegalno prenose cigarete preko granice
• Djeca za dva Eura ilegalno prenose cigarete
• Šokantno: Svaki drugi liječnik u BiH pušač
• Švercaju cigarete i preko interneta
• Švercaju cigarete i preko interneta
• Šverc uništio hercegovačke proizvođače
• Svaka treća cigareta iz šverca
• Putovi šverca

Website

ABC News
Huffington Post
Galileo, science program, Pro7

3. http://www.bljesak.info/content/view/6008/155/
4. http://www.bljesak.info/content/view/6688/159/
5. http://www.bljesak.info/content/view/6994/155/
17. http://www.blic.rs/hronika.php?id=95731
18. http://espresso.repubblica.it/dettaglio/the-montenegro-connection/2100575
Kelmendi

Oslobodjenje – BiH
- Kad država ne funkcioniše: Keljmendijevi legalno nose oružje i uvoze blindirana vozila?!
- Pretreseni objekti Bećira Keljmendija
- Naser Kelmendi, trgovac interesantan policijama u regionu
- Glava regionalne zločinačke organizacije
- Keljmendijevi legalno nose oružje i uvoze blindirana vozila?!

Vecernji list – Croatia
- Kelmendi, Radonjić i Krujeziu nemaju veze sa prijetljanjama likvidacijom FTV
- Kriminalni imperij
- Pogreške policije

Dan – Montenegro
- Elvis godinama živio u Rožajama
- Potjernica za Keljmendijevim sinovima i Radonjićevim prijeteljima
- 19 UHAPŠENI NAČELNIK KOTORSKOG MUP-a SVETOZAR POPOVIĆ (51) I SLUŽBENICA TE USTANOVE KSENIJA MITROVIĆ (38)
- UPRAVA ZA NEKRETNINE POTVRĐILA DA NASER KELJMENDI POSJEDUJE OGROMNU IMOVINU U CRNOJ GORI
- Čuvenom mafijašu dali državljanstvo
- Državu će dokrajčiti Bošnjaci
- Keljmendi (ipak) blindirao Radončića

Slobodna Europa:
- Naser Kelmendi: od kosovskog osuđenika do sarajevskog biznismena

Slobodna Bosna:
- Da li se od procesuiranja Kelmenidija odustalo zbog nedostatka dokaza, ili njegovih moćnih političkih zaštitnika
- Granična policija dobila instrukcije iz Engleskog jezika

Websites
13. www.dan.co.me
17. http://glashercegovine.com/?q=node/83296