



EU Members and Aspirants Support Croatia

Of Special Interest

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Croatia will become an EU member as soon as it meets its requirements, Finish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen (right) said during his meeting with Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader in Zagreb.

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U.S. Navy Commemorates Croatian Watertender



Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe Admiral Harry Ulrich, presents the Medal of Honor to retired Croatia Army Lt. Col. Stecko Herceg on behalf of U.S. Navy Chief Watertender Peter Tomich on the flight deck of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise [U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Milosz Reterski]

Heads of Central European Countries Support Croatia

VARNA, Bulgaria, May 19 – Thirteen Presidents of Central European countries met in Varna for their annual summit and confirmed they had a major common goal – a united Europe. The Heads of State of Central Europe supported the admission of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union as well as Croatia's entry into the Union as soon as possible.



Croatian President Stjepan Mesić met with Slovakian President Ivan Gašparovič at the summit in Varna, Bulgaria [Photo: www.predsjednik.hr]

The debate at the summit of thirteen Presidents of Central European countries held in the Bulgarian seaside resort of Varna confirmed that the countries of Central Europe not only share much of their history but also have a major common goal – a united Europe. [The Heads of State of Germany, Italy, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro did not attend]

This unity of purpose is there despite the fact that they are at different stages of development at the moment. Some are already EU members, others are in the process of accession and still others are only beginning their journey towards the EU.

The participants concluded that Europe cannot be truly united until all the countries of Central and Southeast Europe complete the accession process and become members.

Despite the fact that the European Commission has warned that it could postpone the decision on Bulgarian and Romanian accession, the two countries are generally expected to meet the remaining criteria. In addition to the support expressed for their aspirations, most participants also supported Croatia's membership speedy into the EU.

Croatian President Stjepan Mesić greeted this expression of support as an important gesture. He reiterated his oft-heard opinion that Europe and the U.S. will become real partners only when Europe is fully united. President Mesić also said that Europe would prove an even match for the U.S. and other competitors when united.

Prime Minister Sanader Meets with Heads of Government

ZAGREB, Croatia, May 18 – 23 - Last week Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader met with Finish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski and Slovakian Prime Minister Mikulas Džurinda



Pictured are Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen and Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader. [Photo: Vjesnik]

During its presidency of the European Union in the second half of this year, Finland will continue supporting EU enlargement, Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen said during his visit to Zagreb. Finland takes over the six-month EU presidency from Austria on July 1 this year. The Finnish Prime Minister said that the EU must honor its obligations and that Croatia will become a EU member as soon as it meets all the requirements. Prime Minister Sanader said that Croatia expects most reports on negotiation chapters to be completed during the Finnish presidency and that he expects those six months to be very dynamic.



Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski and Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader [Photo: www.htnet.hr]

In Macedonia, Prime Minister Sanader concluded with Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski that relations are good and constantly improving, especially when it comes to the common goal for Croatia and Macedonia – **EU and NATO membership.**

During his visit to Slovakia, Prime Minister Sanader met with his counterpart, Mikulas Džurinda. The two Prime Ministers noted the “excellent” relationship between their countries. Regarding Croatia's path to the EU, Slovakian Prime Minister Džurinda said that “we will try to eliminate all unnecessary obstacles on the path of Croatia to the EU,” adding that the EU should consider Croatia's membership individually, not tied with possible membership of Turkey.

U.S. Military Honor Posthumously Awarded to Family of Peter Tomich

SPLIT, Croatia, May 18 – The family of Croatian American soldier, Chief Watertender Peter Tomich Herceg, received the posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor awarded in recognition of distinguished conduct in the line of duty during the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.



Croatian Army Lt. Col. Srećko Herceg (ret.) displays the U.S. Navy Medal of Honor awarded to him on behalf of U.S. Navy Chief Watertender Peter Tomich on the flight deck aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise [U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Milosz Reterski]

The Croatian family of a U.S. Navy Chief Watertender accepted a posthumous Medal of Honor for the man's heroism during the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Navy Adm. Harry Ulrich, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, presented the Medal of Honor to the family of Chief Watertender Peter Tomich at a ceremony.



Croatian Minister of Defense, Berislav Roncevic tours the flight deck aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise escorted by Enterprise Strike Group Commander, Rear Adm. Ray Spicer during a port visit in Croatia. [U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Milosz Reterski]

Retired Croatian Army Lt. Col. Srećko Herceg Tomich received the U.S. military's highest award on behalf of the Tomich family. Tomich, a U.S. citizen of Croatian heritage, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was born in 1893 in Prolog, in what is now Bosnia and Herzegovina, on

the Croatian border. After coming to the United States, Tomich enlisted in the U.S. Army at Fort Slocum, in New Rochelle, N.Y., on June 6, 1917. After service in World War I, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy on January 23, 1919 rising to the rank of chief watertender, equivalent to today's chief petty officer.



Croatian Army Lt. Col. Srećko Herceg (ret.) receiving the U.S. Navy Medal of Honor [Photo: Vjesnik]

Tomich was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroic actions aboard the battleship USS Utah on December 7, 1941, during the surprise Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. During the attack, USS Utah sustained major damage from a Japanese torpedo and gunfire. Knowing the ship would sink, Tomich returned to his post in the boiler room to evacuate the personnel and keep the boilers from exploding so he could get as many men as possible out alive before the ship sank. Tomich scarified his own life to save the lives of his shipmates. A destroyer, the USS Tomich was named in his honor in 1943, and the Navy's Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, R.I., is housed in Tomich Hall.



Pictured is Split Cathedral Saint Dujam with USS Enterprise [Photo: Jutarnji list]

To read U.S. media coverage about this event, go to:

<http://www.estripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=36442&archive=true>

<http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/nation/ny-usmedlo34727116may03.0.6024965.print.story?coll=ny-nationalnews-print>

Croatia Elected to UN Commission for Peacebuilding

NEW YORK, N.Y., May 17 – Croatia was elected to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, a newly-established advisory body aimed at helping countries emerging from conflict not to revert to violence. Croatia is the first Southeast European country to join this UN body.



The election of Croatia into the UN Commission for Peacebuilding is one of the greater diplomatic successes on the path of Croatian affirmation in the international community, said Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. [Photo: Večernji list]

The UN Commission for Peacebuilding was established in December 2005 as part of reform efforts at the world body and focuses on peacekeeping, stabilization, reconstruction and institutional development in countries in transition from war to peace. It has 31 members that are chosen by the UN General Assembly. Seven members come from the Security Council, seven from the Economic-Social council, five from the ranks of countries that give the largest financial contributions to the EU, five are the biggest contributors to peace missions and seven are from the General Assembly, chosen by regional key. Croatia elected from the General Assembly.

Press Release:

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/ga10460.doc.htm>

Strategy for Croatia's Development through 2013 Presented

ZAGREB, Croatia, May 15 – Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader has said that a framework for Croatia's strategic development in the 2006 – 2013 period should help the country accelerate its economic growth beyond five percent and that the average income per capita should rise from the current 54 percent to 75 percent of the European average.

Presenting a document define Croatia's main development goals until 2013, Prime Minister Sanader said that the strategy envisaged the reduction of the unemployment rate from the current 12.7 percent to 9 percent in 2010. The

document entitled **"The Strategic Framework for the Development and Competitiveness of Croatia"** was launched at an event organized by the Croatian National Competitiveness Council [NVK]. The strategy elaborates ten sectors of strategic importance, which require the achievement of excellence. Excellence should become a Croatia brand, Prime Minister Sanader said on this occasion. The State Secretary of the Central Office for the Development Strategy, Martina Dalić, said that the main objective of the strategy was to achieve social prosperity through development and employment in a market economy. The authors of the strategy also attach great importance to education, its adjustment to the needs of the economy, the promotion of lifelong learning, the reduction of poverty, and reform of the social welfare system.

Secondary School to Become Mandatory

ZAGREB, Croatia, May 15 - Prime Minister Ivo Sanader and Minister of Education Dragan Primorac have announced that attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. The move is part of the Government's development strategy, which relies on the acquisition of knowledge and skills in order to make Croatia more competitive internationally.



Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac have announced that the attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. With this initiative, the Croatian educational system will become one of the most competitive in Europe by 2010 and will help in the fight against unemployment. [Photo: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport]

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader and Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac have announced that the attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. Currently, only primary school is mandatory. According to the available data, 18 – 25 percent of children who complete primary school do not finish secondary school. A staggering 45 percent of Croatians have only primary school education or even less. This is a huge obstacle for the Government development strategy, which relies on knowledge. "Without knowledge, we cannot be competitive tomorrow," said Prime Minister Sanader adding that the new rules will turn the Croatian educational system into the most competitive in Europe by 2010 and help in the fight against unemployment.

Minister Grabar-Kitarović's Interview in Transatlantic Magazine

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 15 – Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović recently met with editor-in-chief of Transatlantic Magazine, Robert Guttman, to discuss EU enlargement, NATO membership, and relations with neighboring countries. Minister Grabar-Kitarović stressed that Croatia is doing everything necessary in order to meet requirements to become EU and NATO member as soon as possible.



For full interview, please visit the web site of the Croatian Embassy at:
<http://us.mfa.hr/?mv=1047&mh=181>

Embassy Event: CARE 60th Anniversary

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 17 - Croatian Ambassador to the United States Neven Jurica hosted a black tie dinner for CARE's 60th Anniversary



Senator George V. Voinovich (right) and his wife Janet were the special guests of honor at the celebration of CARE's 60th Anniversary. Above, Mr. and Mrs. Voinovich are pictured with Croatian Ambassador Neven Jurica [Photo: Embassy of Croatia]

The gala dinner took place on May 17, 2006 at the Embassy of Croatia in Washington, D.C. Invited to the dinner was a wide range of guests from the fields of business, politics and philanthropy. The evening's guest of honor was Ohio Senator George V. Vionovich, accompanied by his wife Janet.

CARE [Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere] is one of the world's largest private international humanitarian organizations, committed to helping families in poor communities improve their lives and achieve lasting victories over poverty. Founded in 1945 to provide relief to survivors of World War II, CARE quickly became a trusted vehicle for compassion and generosity to millions.

Janica Kostelić Wins Laureus Award

BARCELONA, Spain, May 24 – The world's best skier, Janica Kostelić was presented with the Laureus Sportswoman of the Year Award at a ceremony in Barcelona.



Croatian skier Janica Kostelić poses with the Laureus Sportswoman of the Year Award trophy in Barcelona. [Photo: EPA]

Swiss tennis superstar Roger Federer was named Laureus World Sportsman of the year for the second consecutive year with the women's honor going to Croatian skier Janica Kostelić. The 23-year-old Kostelić, who won the women's combined event at the Turin Olympics, beat off rivals including Yelena Isinbayeva, the first woman to pole vault over five meters, U.S. Open tennis champion Kim Clijsters and Swedish golfer Annika Sorenstam. Janica Kostelić became the first woman to win four Alpine skiing gold medals after her victory in the women's February's Winter Olympics in Turin. Once again she had to overcome injury and illness to triumph having been forced to pull out of the Olympics downhill because she was unwell. Four years ago she won three gold medals at the Salt Lake City Olympics after fighting back from three knee operations in 12 months.



The Laureus Award, known as the most prestigious sports award worldwide, is given by the Laureus Academy. Croatian tennis player Goran Ivanišević, a Wimbledon Cup winner, is the only other Croatian athlete to have won the Laureus Award. [Photo: Večernji list]

To read CNN's article, go to:
<http://www.cnn.com/2006/SPORT/05/22/awards.laureus/index.html>



Croatian Charmers



An island within the island: National Park Mljet is home to a 12th century Benedictine monastery. [Photo: www.croatia.hr]

The July issue of *Islands* magazine carries a spread on three Croatian jewels with a rich history.

1. During the 1800s, the Menghello family grew rosemary and bottled essential oils on the island **Eden of Palmiziana**, located just 15 minutes south of Hvar by boat. [www.palmiziana.hr]
2. The island of **Mljet** is a Croatian national park and legend has it that Calypso held Odysseus captive in one of the islands many caves. Mljet is also home to a 12th century Benedictine monastery. [www.hotelodisej.hr]
3. **Pločica** is one of the tiniest islands in the Adriatic Sea and the only building on the island is a lighthouse built in 1887. The lighthouse serves as two separate apartments, allowing visitors to have the whole island to themselves. [www.adriatica.net]



Pločica - the tiniest island in the Adriatic Sea [Photo Badrov]

Today these three islands are popular destinations for tourists from all over the world.

See Croatia's Adriatic Pearls from \$20/night



NEW YORK, N.Y., May 15 - Sherman's travel, a leading U.S. publisher of travel sales and specials, trip ideas, and travel destination, recommends four travel packages to Croatia this summer and fall season.

1. **Gate1Travel** offers an escorted 10-day Dalmatian Coast escapade with visits to Duborvnik, Split, Plitvice National Park, Slovenia's Lake Bled, Zagreb, Trogir and Opatija. [www.Gate1Travel.com]
2. For those opting to travel in the fall, **Go-Today** offers the same package as above with additional excursions to Ljubljana, Slovenia and Zadar, the oldest Slavic city on the Adriatic. [www.Go-Today.com]
3. **Travel Time's** kayaking package is perfect for those seeking a great vacation adventure. This eight day trip includes kayaking around Sipan and Lopud islands or Korcula Island. [www.TravelTimeNY.com]
4. Finally, **Adriatica** suggests a lighthouse stay for those who want to experience the beauty of Croatia while staying within a modest budget. There is a choice of 11 lighthouses, all furnished and well-equipped with resident keepers in most of them. [www.Adriatica.net]



Lopud Island [Photo: www.croatia.hr]

To read the whole article, visit: <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/12853420/print/1/displaymode/1098/>

Film: "What Is a Man Without a Mustache?"

NEW YORK, N.Y., May 25 – New York Times featured a review of the Croatian movie "What Is a Man without a Mustache" directed and produced by Hrvoje Hribar, which opens on May 25, 2006 at the Two boots Pioneer Theater, 155 East Third Street, at Avenue A, East Village, New York.



Scene from the movie "What Is a Man Without Mustache?" [Photo: www.stojemuskaracbezbrcova.com]

Quirks of fate give shape to "What Is a Man Without a Mustache?" This pleasant if inconsequential romantic comedy from the Croatian director Hrvoje Hribar is distinguished by its good-natured sensibility and rowdy, slightly fabulous tone: a kind of Eastern European magic realism, without the magic.

One gray afternoon, high up in a city construction project, a man without a mustache loses his balance and falls, with an audible splat, to his death. He is survived by his wife, the lovely, impetuous Tatjana [Zrinka Cvitešić] who, under the influence of idiosyncratic mourning, uses the settlement money from his death to purchase the rural hillside where he first wooed her.

To read reviews about the movie, please visit: <http://movies2.nytimes.com/2006/05/25/movies/25man.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1148569518-sKLnEnoq9ABs3e7wqhfoKg>

Brief News...

• A round-table discussion on the role of women entrepreneurs in the process of Croatia's integration into European Union took place in the Croatian Chamber in Zagreb on May 17, 2006. The event was organized to mark International Women Entrepreneurs' Day. The discussion was held under the auspices of the President of Croatia Stjepan Mesić, who said that women were increasingly assuming leading roles in Croatia's economy and politics. Deputy Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor said that women as entrepreneurs and business owners were more stable and less inclined to lay-offs than their male counterparts and that they had done a lot in promoting women's human rights.

- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development would assist three urban projects in Croatia lending a total of EUR 27 million [USD 34.9 million] for their implementation. EBRD would provide the funds for the development of the new combined central parking garage and a bus terminal in Rijeka and for the renovation of the bus fleet and for a waste water management project in Pula, both on the northern Adriatic coast.



Rijeka, the largest sea port in Croatia, is getting a new bus terminal in near future. [Photo: www.croatia.hr]

- So far, the Ministry of Interior has received EUR 42 million from the EC CARDS program for 17 of its projects. Even more projects will be launched with the help of PHARE funding, including modernizing border crossings and improving cross-border cooperation in policing
- Croatia and Hungary have completed their joint bid for the right to host the 2012 European Soccer Championship, to be presented to the Union of European Football Associations [UEFA] by May 21, 2006. In addition to the two counties' bid, Italy and a joint Polish-Ukrainian bid are in contention.



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