



Press Release

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Kosovo Crimes, Corruption and Organ Trafficking *Serbian Unity Congress Comments*

REGARDING:
COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT dated
December 12, 2010

Washington, DC, December 17 -- The Serbian Unity Congress is indeed encouraged by the Council of Europe's steps in taking up the fight for justice and stability in Kosovo and Metohija.

The recent report submitted to the Council of Europe by Dick Marty implicating Kosovo Prime Minister Hasim Thaci and others in a series of criminal activities and war crimes represents the first step in a long overdue fight to clear Kosovo and Metohija of the criminal element rampant throughout all levels of its institutions. This report brings to light and addresses the root cause of the last decade of instability and conflict in Kosovo and unrestrained growth of crime in the region spreading into the very heart of Europe and beyond.

As has been addressed repeatedly over the last decade by numerous officials and organizations from the international community, including the Serbian Unity Congress, from its very beginning the activities of the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, were tantamount to war crimes. The continued presence of the leaders of that organization in the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo is equivalent to legitimizing terrorism.

As far back as 1998, U.S. Special Envoy to the Balkans Robert Gelbart stated that the "UCK [KLA] is, without any question, a terrorist group". However, as Mr. Marty's report states, "The international actors chose to turn a blind eye to the war crimes of the KLA, placing a premium instead on achieving some degree of short term stability." Unfortunately, justice delayed is justice denied. Although officially disbanded in 1999, KLA leaders entered Kosovo politics and continue to lead the Kosovo government. Thus the activities of the former KLA continued long afterward, taking advantage of their posts in government and subjecting Serbian and other minority people to ruthless tactics of persecution, oppression and ethnic cleansing. Kosovo Albanians deemed in opposition were also victims of their terror.

As long as former criminal KLA members continue to occupy positions in governmental institutions, the region and its people are not safe. The recent transfer of protection of Serbian Orthodox monasteries from KFOR to the Kosovo Protection Corps, KPC (which absorbed most of the KLA forces as a transition to peace) was at this time and under these circumstances, dangerous and reckless, causing a great deal

of concern and anxiety among the Serbs and others. This is an example of the kinds of situations and dangers the people of Kosovo continue to be exposed to under current circumstances and conditions.

The Serbian Unity Congress welcomes the findings of Mr. Marty's report and the quick and unanimous approval of its findings by the PACE Legal Affairs Committee. Moreover, we strongly support the request in the report that the European Union, the United States of America and other nations and bodies "commit all the resources needed to set up effective witness protection programmes" and urges they provide funding to the necessary international bodies in Kosovo to continue the investigation and at long last bring to justice those that perpetrated these horrific crimes on the people in the region. The Council of Europe should unreservedly pursue bringing to justice the war criminals and leaders of organized crime, beginning first with those who occupy positions of high leadership today. And, it should continue in its bold path to decisively stop the efforts of those who prefer the status quo and of those that continue to strive for a frozen conflict.

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