

Foreign Press Office - Mostar

MEDIA REPORTS

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Presidency Chairman Jovic defends removed education minister Lovrinovic

Ashdown is discarding our European standards

Slobodna Dalmacija
By Blanka Magas

July 15, 2005

The removal of Central Bosnia cantonal education minister Nikola Lovrinovic by Paddy Ashdown's decree caused confusion among Croats in BiH, especially because of Lovrinovic's statement that some high HDZ officials "helped" him get removed. Lovrinovic is a member of HDZ and defended its political positions.

We spoke about this issue with BiH Presidency Member and current chairman of the highest state institution Ivo Miro Jovic.

A few years ago, you held the position of Central Bosnia cantonal education minister. How would you have acted if you were in Nikola Lovrinovic's position?

Minister Lovrinovic's removal is certainly not a civilized act because BiH's Dayton constitution has an annex that stipulates all human rights conventions are a part of the constitution. The right to language, school and media are fundamental human rights, and the person responsible for implementing the Dayton Agreement must have the knowledge and sense that each people in a multi-level state such as BiH must enjoy these rights.

In the case of Minister Lovrinovic, we are not dealing with any legal regulations he proposed. The High Representative imposed a law, and if he did that, then he is responsible and not the minister.

According to OHR, the minister should have implemented the law, but he "obstructed" it?

I think it is a thing of the past to implement laws which deny fundamental human rights. However, since we are where we are, I fully support the right of the Croat people to preserve and exercise all their rights in education, language, culture and media. That is the principle and standard in Europe. We seek to implement such legal decisions that are, practically, at the level of national minorities in Europe. As you can see, we are even being denied those rights. However, I wish to point out, they cannot be as strong as we can be persistent.

What do you think about Minister Lovrinovic's statement that someone from the HDZ leadership "helped" in his removal?

I regret that some media, including you, are creating confusion among Croats by publishing such information. I do not understand why Minister Lovrinovic did not take the opportunity say something at the cantonal meeting a few days ago, but he did not even attend that meeting.

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I doubt he said something like that because HDZ headquarters for a while already has a clear purpose when it comes to Croat rights to education, culture, language and media.

To your knowledge, did Minister Lovrinovic break any laws?

The High Representative imposed the law on schools for that canton. It is not the responsibility of the minister to implement that law, but of the High Representative. The law was not adopted by the cantonal council. The law was imposed and Minister Lovrinovic conducted himself in accordance to protecting Croat national rights.

That is the only canton where students and their parents had the right to choose the language of their schooling. Croats, unfortunately, do not have that right in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Bihac, Banja Luka, etc.

Instead of the High Representative caring that everyone has equal access to their language, education, culture and media, he removes the person who established the highest standards, in accordance with European standards. I consider it a great absurdity. (Excerpt)

UNESCO debates Old Bridge and Mostar in Durban yesterday

Vecernji list

By Zoran Kresic, Dorotea Jendric, Miso Relota

July 15, 2005

UNESCO's committee debated enrolling Mostar's Old Bridge and Old town on the World Heritage list during a dramatic and uncertain session in Durban yesterday. Mostar could, after its third attempt, become the first city in Bosnia and Herzegovina to have a cultural monument on UNESCO's list. The state delegation consisting of Mostar Mayor Ljubo Beslic, BiH Ambassador to UNESCO Zeljana Zovko, Rusmir Cacic, Tihomir Rozic, Amir Pasic, and Ferhat Mulabegovic are currently in Durban participating in the meetings.

"The battle and competition to get on the list is tough, because it is a significant economic, cultural and historical enhancement for every country, and especially city, to be awarded the Committee's symbol for world heritage," said Ambassador Zovko.

If the Old Bridge were added to UNESCO's World Heritage list, it would be a unique case in the world, where instead of the original structure destroyed in war, experts recognize a newly built object and place it under their protection. (Excerpt)

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Zovko: Universal symbol of coexistence

Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to UNESCO Zeljana Zovko, a Mostar native, stated: “The Old Bridge has entered the competition because of its universal value as a symbol of reconciliation, coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups. The bridge has become a world symbol of how to live and rebuild after war and destruction.”

Ambassador Zovko thanked assistant to UNESCO General Director for culture Mr. Mounir Bouchenaki for his enormous help. According to Ambassador Zovko, without the help of this individual, whose roots are from BiH, it would not have even been possible to nominate the Old Bridge.

Beslic: Returning property to occupiers

One condition to enroll the Old Bridge in the UNESCO World Heritage List is to form an Agency for protection, management and maintenance of the Old town. The international community has said that all buildings in the Old town, which are owned by the City of Mostar, be put up for tender. The conditions will be the same for all, those ready to pay will have access to property in the Old town, whereas those unwilling to meet the conditions will not be able to use the space, confirmed Mayor Beslic and added that this will create conditions for investment and reconstruction of the old city center in accordance with the UNESCO project.

Haris Silajdzic new BiH Presidency Member

Party for BiH founder returning to politics

Dnevni list
By Nermin Bise

July 15, 2005

Party for BiH founder Haris Silajdzic will be one of the candidates for Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency in next year's general election.

According to our sources, Silajdzic has the support of Bakir Izetbegovic, current SDA [Party for Democratic Action] vice-president, and other officials in that party who are close to Izetbegovic.

After he left SDA, Silajdzic founded the Party for BiH, which many consider the younger sister of SDA. Many officials and voters dissatisfied with SDA policies found refuge in Silajdzic's new party. (Excerpt)

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Americans organize day camp for kids in Ripci

Vecernji list

July 15, 2005

RAMA - The primary school, Fr. Jeronim Vladic, in Ripci held their annual friendly day camp which has been organized for the past four years, by the American association, Training Workshops International for the Children. According to the schools headmaster, Ilija Faletar, the camp consisted of sporting activities, dance and other workshops, that accommodated 50 children and 15 teachers - including the director from the US. The director of the camp is Bobby Hauser from Washington.

(For more information on TWI for the Children, write P.O. Box 8158, Springfield, VA., 22151, or call (703) 569-5920. Information on the organization can also be obtained by accessing its Web Site at: www.twi4kids.org)