

Office for Human and Minority Rights

State Determined to Create
a Society Free of
Discrimination

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Project “Support to the
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Dačić with Representatives of National Minorities in Serbia



First Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, met today with representatives of national councils of national minorities in Serbia, with whom he exchanged views on issues related to their work in the context of bilateral relations with their home countries.

Teamwork of NMCs Crucial for All Communities



The first Coordination meeting of national councils confirmed that members of all national minorities in Serbia must work together, as they face similar problems. In order to further improve the position of minorities, and to talk about the issues, but also about the plans, on Saturday and Sunday, 19th and 20th of September, the second meeting of this body was held in Kovačica.

EDITORIAL 21

Minorities Also Need (Accurate) Information

As more and more information appears in public on the fate of the media in general, given that the new law provides for a clear deadline for the privatization of media and clear funding models, information in the languages of national minorities is an increasingly present topic.

Although most agree with this approach, information in the languages of national minorities is actually much more than translating information into the language of a national minority, such as the specific needs that members of national minorities have.

The “Great” media, the state and the institutions believe that they have done their job by enabling that particular minority language is heard in public, without going into the quality of information being placed.

On the other hand, the public service believes that it is sufficient to provide the content that is at the discretion of its editors relevant to national minorities, and that it is enough to place that content in the Serbian language.

The minorities themselves are often only an object of these discussions without influence on the manner and the ability of informing on their own needs, topics of interest or on the specifics of their national culture.

Whenever someone even mentions the idea that maybe the members of national minorities should have a larger impact or even completely autonomously organize the media content for members of their own minority, it immediately raises the argument of money, crisis, high prices and cost of production of such content.

The epilogue of this situation is that we will certainly continue to be able to watch national minorities on television as they dance and sing while generally rejoicing, because who needs the image in which minorities discuss or ask questions.

Serbia is inhabited by members of 30 different national communities!



and ONE newsletter for all

Dačić with Representatives of National Minorities in Serbia

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erbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, met with representatives of national councils of national minorities in Serbia, with whom he exchanged views on issues related to their work in the context of bilateral relations with their home countries.



“In direct dialogue, issues related to the national councils of national minorities in the context of the international position of Serbia and its foreign policy priorities were also discussed”, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Minister Dačić has called for the establishment of a regular practice of meeting in this format, stressing that the MFA is open for cooperation with national minorities and their councils in Serbia, the statement concludes.

RUTHENIAN COMMUNITY

Ruthenians from Vojvodina Also Presented in Brussels

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n the European Week of Cities and Regions “Open Days 2015”, at yesterday’s Round Table at the European Parliament entitled “Understanding Vojvodina” - the director of the Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Ruthenians, Mr Sergei Tamaš presented the Ruthenian national minority in Vojvodina.

The work of the Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Ruthenians at the Round Table was presented by the Director of the Institute, Sergei Tamaš. Tamaš spoke about the work of the Institute since its foundation in 2008 until today, as well as the most important activities and the largest projects implemented.

He also presented the goals or long-term plan of the Institute, but also other important institutions for Ruthenians, such as the national council of Ruthenians, Newspaper Publishing Institution “Ruske slovo”, Department of Ruthenian Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy and Ruthe-

nian editorial office of Radio Television of Vojvodina.

In addition to the delegation of AP Vojvodina, headed by the President of the Provincial Government Bojan Pajtić,

as well as the directors of other institutes of Vojvodina’s national communities, the Round Table was attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia in Brussels, Duško Lopandić, and members of the European Parliament.



State Determined to Create a Society Free of Discrimination



Director of the Office for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Suzana Paunović, said that the project “Support to the promotion of human rights and zero tolerance for discrimination” is going to strengthen the capacity of national institutions in the field of human and minority rights.

Paunović, at the initial meeting marking the beginning of realization of IPA 2013 project funded by the EU with 1.2 million, and co-financed by Serbia with 60,000 euros, explained that the aim is strengthening of the legal framework and institutions dealing with human and minority rights, particularly at local level, as well as harmonization with European standards. She said that the project will take 18 months and will be implemented in 20 cities and municipalities in Serbia, and added that it is in sync with all the activities of the Government when it comes to the fight for zero tolerance for discrimination and strengthening mi-

nority policy. According to her, it is one of the first projects that Serbia has implemented under decentralized management. It is important, she said, that the beneficiaries of this project, together with the Office and the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, are going to be local self-governments and national councils of national minorities.

Paunović also pointed out the importance of this issue in the framework of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, as well as the fact that in the framework of that negotiating chapter there is a special Action Plan for minorities. The Commissio-

ner for the Protection of Equality, Branka Janković, reiterated that one of the objectives of the project is improving the respect for human and minority rights, primarily at the local level.

“The institution of the Commissioner’s most important goal is to increase the capacity of professional services, due to the increasing number of complaints from citizens who recognize discrimination”, pointed Janković. However, she said, the most important thing is that the project refers primarily to the local level, where everyday life takes place and where the citizens need the most support.

Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia, Oscar Benedict, noted that cases of discrimination continue to exist even in the countries of European Union.

Start of the EU Twinning Project “Support to the Promotion of Human Rights and Zero Tolerance for Discrimination”

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On the eve of the adoption of the Serbian Action Plan for Chapter 23, the EU and Serbia began with the implementation of the new Twinning project which aims to support the promotion of human rights and increasing the level of tolerance in Serbia.

Formal presentation of the project was held on October 19, 2015 in the “Club of National Deputies”.

Attendees were addressed by the Acting Director of the Office for Human and Minority Rights Suzana Paunović, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality Brankica Janković, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia Oscar Benedict, HE Austrian Ambassador Johannes Eigner, charge d'affaires at the Embassy of Slovenia Mateja Norčič Štamcar and Deputy Finance Minister Nataša Šimšić. The project, which will last for the coming 1.5 years, is funded by the EU in the amount of 1.2 million euros and co-financed by the Republic of Serbia in the amount of 60,000 euros.

The project will empower and advocate for the implementation of the relevant legal framework for protection against discrimination, protection of minorities and human rights defenders, and strive to harmonize it with the European standards.

One of the important elements of the project will be a commitment to the implementation of measures related to the basic rights of the Action Plan for Chapter 23 and focus on the principles of the fight against discrimination and the situation of socially vulnerable groups and minorities. The aim is also to strengthen the existing capacities of the Office for Human and Minority Rights, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and other key stakeholders to implement the principles of human rights and achieve greater efficiency in anti-discrimination policies at national and local levels.



The Office for Human and Minority Rights expects that the project will support the implementation of various action plans - such as the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection against discrimination for the period 2014-2018 which is already in force and the monitoring of the implementation team.

Currently, the drafts of multi-annual Strategy and Action Plan for the improvement of living conditions of Roma, as well as the Action Plan for the exercise of rights of national minorities are being prepared, the implementation of which will be partially under the jurisdiction of the Office for Human and Minority Rights.

The implementation of these strategic documents provides for inclusion of various stakeholders (such as national councils, police, judges, civil society or-

ganizations, cities/municipalities), which the project wants to address and provide assistance in activities to raise awareness of human and minority rights, about the necessity of collecting data and developing measures for the preclusion of discrimination.

The Institution of the Commissioner for the protection of Equality sees project activities as an opportunity to increase their visibility at the regional and local level, in order to ensure equal access to justice for persons who are victims of discrimination.

A special focus on strengthening mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by the Commissioner for the protection of Equality will contribute to the establishment of structures for effective preclusion of discrimination in the future. Fieldwork intended for national minority

This year, special emphasis in the context of human rights protection in Niš has been placed on the protection of women from violence and implementation of the provisions of the Convention of the Council of Europe

councils, works/municipalities and civil society organizations, and campaigns to raise awareness will support the development of a culture of the rule of law and reporting of cases of discrimination. The following outcomes are expected from the project:

- Recommendations for the harmonization of the relevant legal framework with the EU acquis, its visibility at regional and local level, in order to ensure equal access to justice for persons who are victims of discrimination.

The following outcomes are expected from the project:

- Designed indicators and instruments to monitor human and minority rights,
- Provided input to strategic documents of the Commissioner for the protection of Equality using the results of surveys on awareness of discrimination,
- Strengthening the capacity of the Commissioner for the protection of Equality for field work at regional and local level,
- Implementation of preventive and promotional measures for the preclusion of discrimination at the local level,
- Building the capacity of civil servants (30), national councils of national minorities (40) and civil society organizations (60) for the purposes of promoting the principle of access to justice and improving the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups,
- Training of new trainers for judges and



Paunović: Implementation of the Twinning Project in the Fight Against Discrimination

The value of the Twinning Project “Support to the Promotion of Human Rights and Zero Tolerance for Discrimination”, which started on September 1, amounting to 1.2 million euros and is funded by the European Union in the framework of IPA projects. The project is co-financed by Serbia in the amount of 60,000 euros, and carried out by the Institute for Human rights “Ludwig Boltzmann” from Vienna and the Office for National Minorities of Slovenia, it was said at the official presentation of the project.

The aim of this project is to strengthen the legislative framework, strengthening the capacity of national institutions responsible for the field of human and minority rights, particularly at local level, as well as the harmonization with European standards. “This is an IPA project financed with EU funds in the amount of 1.2 million euros which will last for 18 months and will be implemented in 20 cities and municipalities in Serbia”, said the Director of the Office for Human and Minority Rights Suzana Paunović.

According to her, it is one of the first projects that Serbia has implemented under decentralized management. “What is very important for us is that we have the support of EU member states who will try to bring the best practices and standards of the EU to us, as a country candidate, as close as possible”, explained Paunović.

In addition to the project being implemented in 20 cities and municipalities, Paunović said that it is extremely important that the beneficiaries, together with the Office, headed by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, will also be the local self-governments. She said that the project is deeply synchronized with all the activities of the Government of Serbia when it comes to the fight for zero tolerance for discrimination and strengthening minority policy.

prosecutors (20) and police officers (20) for the implementation of the principle of protection of human and minority rights,

- Organization of public campaigns to raise public awareness on human and minority rights.

The project is implemented by the Institute for Human rights “Ludwig Boltzmann” from Vienna and the Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Slovenia, who have to offer the experience and knowledge gained in addressing various issues related to human and minority rights and anti-discrimination mechanisms that have been established in different EU member states.



Around forty experts will cooperate with the Office for Human and Minority Rights, the Commissioner for the protection of Equality and a wide range of stakeholders through the exchange of experiences, knowledge and skills in seminars, training in the workplace, through analysis of the institutions and making recommendations.

The formal presentation of the project was attended by the representatives of many embassies, the Council of Europe and UN agencies with offices in Serbia, Serbian stakeholders, including relevant ministries, national councils of national minorities, civil society organizations dealing with the protection of human and minority rights.

Udovički: Continuous Dialogue with Minorities Established

Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, Kori Udovički, expressed satisfaction that, after six years, the continuous dialogue between the Government and national councils of national minorities at the highest level has been established.

Udovički, who is the Vice President of the Council for National Minorities, opened the third session of the Council for National Minorities, and the topics were textbooks in the languages of national minorities, the privatization of the media and the work of mixed intergovernmental bodies.

“We are aware that there are problems that can be resolved more quickly”, said Udovički and proposed that in the coming weeks separate working meetings be held, in order for these specific issues to be resolved.

As the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the session was attended by all representatives of national councils of national minorities, as well as the relevant ministries.

Representatives of the national council praised the regular dialogue they have

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The Minister of Justice, Nikola Selaković, said that the Draft action plan for improving the position of national minorities is in public consultations and invited the national councils to seize the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions on this document.

As stated in the announcement, Selaković announced the next meeting of the Working Group that drafted this document for the middle of this month, when the suggestions received during the public consultation are going to be considered. Assistant Minister of Education, Milovan Šuvakov, said that there is already an information system being developed that will answer questions of representatives of national councils.

Šuvakov also stressed that the invitation for textbooks in minority languages has been prepared in order to provide these missing textbooks, and expressed hope that the implementation will start in December.

When it comes to media privatization, State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture and Information, Saša Mirković said that it achieved a very good result and that 36 media have been sold at auctions, as well as that talks with Radio-Television Serbia and Radio-Television Vojvodina were held in order to improve the program in the languages of national minorities.



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ANTUN BERLEKOVIĆ, AIRCRAFT MODELLER FROM SOMBOR

Love of More than Half a Century

Antun Berleković is known to most of Sombor because of the nature of the business that he is engaged in, since more than four decades he is the owner of an auto electrical workshop. But this story is not about him as a master of electronics for the four-wheelers, but the one of his love to which he has been faithful to for more than half a century, and that is aircraft modelling. Just before this interview, Antun returned from Zlatibor where they held two world championships, where he was one of the judges.

JUDICIAL FUNCTION AS A RECOGNITION FOR WORK

The world championship in aircraft modelling was attended by over 80 participants from 12 countries from around the world. The Serbian team finished in eighth place.

"I participated as a judge and was one of the four men from Sombor, members of the Sombor Aero Club, who also had the role of judges in this championship. Also, Stevan Janović from Sombor, the selector of the national team, participated as a competitor and as a member of the senior national team he qualified for the 15th place in the world championship", says Berleković. He acknowledges that this placement deserves congratulations, given that it is a world championship, but adds that he could have been better if it were not for one small failure at the start. Not anyone can be a judge, because it takes many years of experience in this sport.

"It is achieved through hard work, by first becoming an assistant judge, and later a judge. Our job is to measure the time of flight and enter the time in a competitive card. The flight is followed

by two or three judges using stop watches, and the official time is registered as the mean of these three measurements", explains Berleković his judicial work. Our interlocutor also explained to us uninformed, how the aircraft modellers are engaged in the construction of models which they make themselves. Models vary from school ones to professional models, and these include free flight models driven by wind, models with an engine that is wound up and the ones with internal combustion engines and also free flight models, which are operated by a magnet.

FROM THE CLASSES OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION TO SIGNIFICANT AWARDS

Aero Club Sombor works within the National Technology in Sombor, and Berleković has been its member since 1965.

"I have not continuously been active all these 50 years, because there have been some small interruptions. This love of aircraft modelling comes from the elementary school and the classes of technical education.

It is more than love, because it takes a lot of free time, and also a lot of money.

The clubs receive fewer grants, thus many things we have to buy ourselves.

Today, the extra cost is electronics, which is more and more present, such as trackers which seek a model if it 'escapes', says our interlocutor and explains how the "escaping" takes place, which actually means that the wind can carry the model as far as twenty kilometres away. Although for the last fifty years, he participated in many championships both as a competitor and as a judge, he cannot set aside which is his favourite, and his success in championships is proven by medals he has in his collection.

The most significant award was the third place at the national championship in class F1E, and the second place in the Vojvodina championship in the same class. We found out how each aircraft modeller starts from the draft, and it takes a month or two for the draft to turn into a model, but not continuous work, because aircraft modelling is a hobby that Berleković engages in during his leisure time.

"Naturally, it happens that the model falls, and then the same thing happens as with a car, one does not throw it away but fixes it", he says. Today young people are not so interested in aircraft modelling, but more in rocketry or making rocket models, for which there are also special championships held.

"This is a sport in which there is no money and in my opinion this is the main reason why young people and their parents are not very interested", says Berleković.

A new championship in which our interlocutor will be in the role of a judge is expected soon near Sombor, on the slopes Rančevo. Aero Club Sombor will host the Bačka Cup and the National Championship in the class of free flight models F1A, B and C.

Immersing myself in a good book in the evening represents the best solution to escape from reality.



Pajtić: Stop the Privatization of Media in Minority Languages

President of the Vojvodina Government, Bojan Pajtić, said in Brussels that it is important to stop the privatization process in those media that broadcast programs in languages of national communities. In an interview with Catherine Vent, who is responsible for Serbia in the European Commission, Pajtić said that the process of privatization of the media, which is being implemented at the level of local self-governments in Serbia, must be transparent and without the influence of any political party, it was said in a statement of the Government Public Relations Bureau.

At the meeting with Catherine Vent, the delegation of the Provincial Government pointed out that it concurred with the process of privatization of the media, but at the same time pointed out that it “must be transparent” and that it cannot involve “political influence of a political party in Serbia”, said Pajtić.

As stated in the announcement, Pajtić added that the process “cannot be absolute”, and cannot refer to those media that broadcast programs in languages of national communities. “If we get into a situation that private owners take over these media, they will not recognize an economic interest in broadcasting in minority languages and will cease to broadcast such programs”, said Pajtić.

In this regard, he added, “in order to protect programs in the languages of national minorities, it is important to stop the

privatization process only in those media that broadcast programs in languages of national communities”.

Catherine Vent and her associates pointed out that it would be important and useful for the representatives of the Province to participate in the negotiations between Serbia and the EU, in chapters 23 and 24, in the parts relating to the protection of minority rights, said Pajtić.

In their view, the protection of minority rights in Vojvodina is on the level of protection of these rights in the most developed European countries and therefore the experience of the provincial administration in this field is very useful.

Head of the Department for Serbia at the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, in relation to what Pajtić has said, expres-

“If we get into a situation that private owners take over these media, they will not recognize an economic interest in broadcasting in minority languages and will cease to broadcast such programs”

Bojan Pajtić

sed her satisfaction over the fact that Vojvodina has attracted about 90 percent of funds from cross-border cooperation, which were designed to Serbia. “Catherine Vent has particularly expressed her satisfaction due to the fact that Vojvodina, among the 54 regions of medium size, last year received an award as the best region in Europe for attracting foreign investments”, reads the statement.

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MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA BROUGHT TOGETHER REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

Dačić familiar with the problems of the Bunjevac

Ivica Dačić, the First Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia and Minister of Foreign Affairs, brought together at the joint meeting the representatives of national minorities living on the territory of Serbia. It was an opportunity to hear information regarding the Action Plan for Chapters 23 and 24 within the framework of the accession negotiations for membership in the European Union, to hear the issues of national councils, which are the same for all minorities, but also to hear what are the specifics, and the special issues of individual national communities.

The Bunjevac community was represented by mr Suzana Kujundžić Ostojić, President of BNS, and Mirko Bajić, President of the Executive Committee of BNS.

- The meeting was attended by the representatives of national councils, whose home countries are located in the European Union, but also those, whose home country, like in our case, is in Serbia. The meeting was held in a very open and friendly atmosphere, with a visible desire and will to cooperate and fix the current state - said mr Kujundžić Ostojić, who reflected the details related to the representation of the Bunjevac community at this meeting:

- On that occasion, I pointed out that the Minister is certainly familiar with the problems of numerically large communities, those with a home state in the EU, and which regardless of that have problems in the implementation of defined objectives, thus one can only imagine the kind of problems we have to face. The President of BNS pointed out that

one of the bigger issues is the fact that only the speech of the Bunjevac community has been recognized, and not the language, which stems from the fact that a large number of law guaranteed rights cannot be realized. She also discussed other fields, such as school, employment, and the role of the Bunjevac in the home country.

- I pointed out that throughout the centuries, and we have been present here for three centuries, we have contributed to this country's history as much as one people can. Also, I said that a 100 years ago there were about 100,000 of us, and that now there are only about 16,500, that our young people continue studies in a very small percentage, and that we classify in the ranks of minorities who in many respects are very endangered.

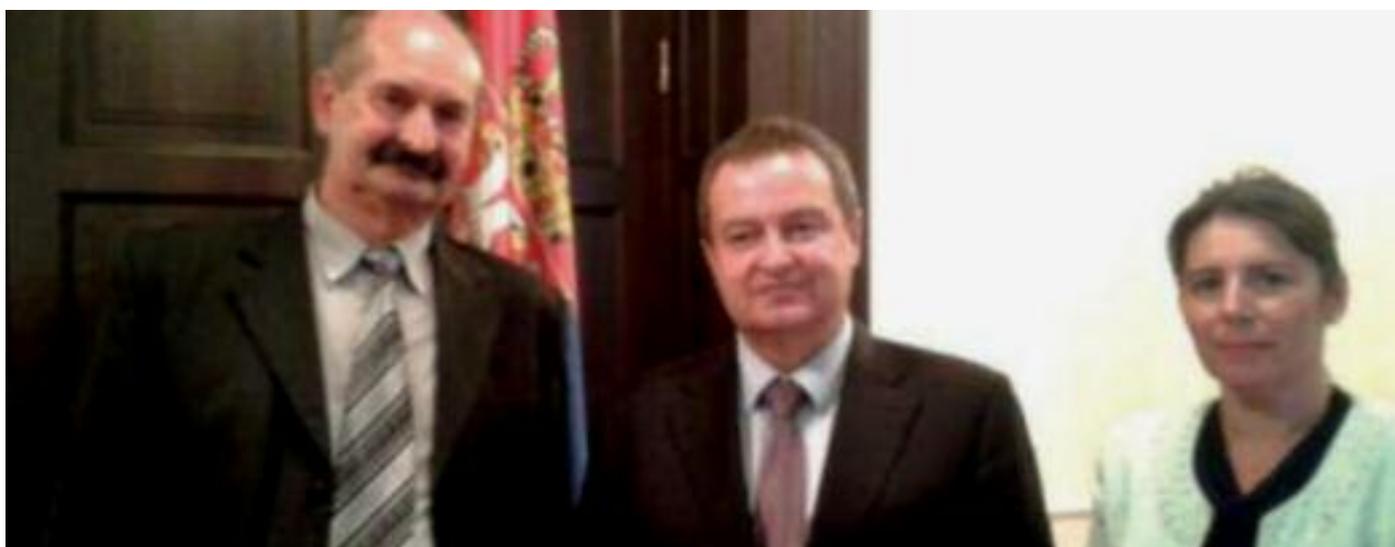
We are witnesses that many minorities insist on positive discrimination, and so we have to ask the state to pay more attention to us, of course, if we believe that we have a future in this place. Serbia

should be as fair as possible towards us, since it is our home country, which is indebted to us through numerous wars, annexation of Vojvodina, but also through peaceful periods.

There have been numerous times when we showed who and what we are. As pointed out by mr Kujundžić Ostojić, it is evident that Minister Dačić is well informed about the issues of minority communities, including the Bunjevac and open issues.

- We saw the willingness to help and get something done. Of course, nobody expected that the help would arrive overnight, but we must know that we have to be the ones who push, and who insist. Only if we show initiative, we can expect a shift. We are determined, we try many doors, and if at least one gets open, it would be a step forward. Serbia is on its way to the European Union, and it must take care of its national minorities, and there is no reason for these laws not to come into force before entering the EU.

To all of us, both the minorities and the majority people, it is important that we live in an ordered society. We will fight to fulfil the rights of minorities, the rights of our community, so that an average Bunjevac can experience the benefits of belonging to a national minority in Serbia.



SECOND COORDINATION MEETING OF NATIONAL COUNCILS HELD IN KOVAČICA

Teamwork of NMCs Crucial for All Communities

The first Coordination meeting of national councils confirmed that members of all national minorities in Serbia must work together, as they face similar problems. In order to further improve the position of minorities, and to talk about the issues, but also about the plans, on Saturday and Sunday, 19th and 20th of September, the second meeting of this body was held in Kovačica.

During the two days of work, the emphasis was on education, culture, information and official use of language and script, on issues that the councils deal with, but also on the Action Plan for Chapter 23, one needed for Serbia's accession to the European Union. - The second Coordination meeting was an opportunity to discuss the Action Plan for Chapter 23, to see what it is that the state offers to national minorities, while preparing to join the EU, and to see how it suits the national minorities.

The conclusions of the first Coordination were used as the initial version of the proposal of the Republic of Serbia.

The unsatisfactory situation in the field of information, i.e. the Ministry of Justice, is that it only confirms that we were very realistic in our demands at the first meeting - said mr Suzana Kujundzić Ostojić, the President of the national council of the Bunjevac national minority, and along with her the meeting in Kovačica was attended by Mirko Bajić, President of the Executive Committee of BNS, Mirjana Savanov, President of the Committee for Education, Kata Kuntić, President of the Committee for Culture, and Tihomir Vrbanović, President of the

Committee for Information at BNS. In Serbia, there are currently twenty one acting national minorities, certain problems are common to all, but there are also specific ones. As we found out, the specifics of the Bunjevacs have been adopted in meetings with the representatives of other councils.

- One of the problems in our community which is holding us back, lies in the fact that the laws in Serbia, including the European Union, are protecting the mother tongue, i.e. the study of the subject of mother tongue in schools. We, unfortunately, only have the Bunjevac speech-recognized. With the support of the Coordination, with only one abstained member, the proposition is that the state should protect the mother tongue/speaking.

The Bunjevacs are not the only ones interested in it. Namely, in Serbia there are ten of minority languages in official use, and what is with those remaining eleven minorities? If viewed from the standpoint that most minority rights require to have their language recognized, then it turns out that 80% of the rights of minorities cannot be realized. This is certainly one of the biggest shifts that was

made at the Coordination meetings.

At the Coordination meeting the work is in groups, the conclusions are adopted, and then the delegations leave for talks with the relevant ministries of the Republic of Serbia. As pointed out by mr Kujundzić Ostojić, these conclusions are very useful.

-In the committees of permanent delegations there are also representatives of our community, which is important, since this way we can fight for the problems of all national communities to be heard, including those of the Bunjevacs. Right now, the problem arising is the funding in the field of information.

There are problems with the implementation of the Law, and I hope that in the next three months we are going to get answers for our issues. Also, a lot has been done in the field of culture, where the idea is to make a general plan on the level of Coordination, to create a strategy for the culture of national minorities in Serbia.

This is exactly what we do at the BNS. We have a lot of Cultural and Artistic Associations, we give our best so that everything is at a decent level in relation to the received funding. However, it is clear that without a strategy in culture, in all fields, including the council itself, we cannot move far away. Creating a strategy is a big job that awaits us in the next couple of months, we must choose



Namely, in Serbia there are ten of minority languages in official use, and what is with those remaining eleven minorities?

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the path which we will follow and harmonize with all the others. According to the words of the President of BNS, meetings and quality time spent with our “fellow sufferers” from other national councils is precious.

– It is nice when people from the same fields get together, when they exchange experience, advices and find out where we are in relation to others. As far as the Bunjevac are concerned, I might be sub-

jective, but I think we are in the upper half of the councils in Serbia.

We have certain constant problems, already known, such as recognized speech instead of language, extremely small funds with which we operate, but we rank rather high. We are very clear in what we seek, we seek our rights, not attacking anyone else. Proposals that have arrived from the Bunjevac community have been accepted as constructive, we

have pointed to possible legal solutions, to improving certain parts of the law, we aspire that they are mutually consistent...

I believe it is no coincidence that through their work in the Coordination our representatives deserve a place within permanent delegations - underlines in the end the President of the national council of the Bunjevac national minority.

Unsatisfactory situation in the field of information

During the Coordination meeting a lot was discussed on the topic of the right to information in the languages of national minorities. –The Committee for Information of the Coordination of national councils pointed out that the information in minority languages is one of the most important fields and that the current situation is not satisfactory, especially having in mind the fact that the rights in this field are not as nearly as uniform for all national minorities. The situation in Vojvodina is better, as the most national minorities that have their seat of the national council in Vojvodina are entitled to funding of at least one printed media - emphasized Mirko Bajić, President of the Executive Committee of BNS, and also the Director of the Newspaper Publishing Institution “Bunjevački informativni centar”. Problems in this field stem from earlier, and it seems that the privatization of the media leads to the impairment of the right of minorities to information in their own language. - It has been estimated, too, that the privatization of the media, and the prohibition of financing from public sources of the media that convey information in minority languages and that are founded by the local self-governments, or the financing made by the local self-government, is devastating for the exercise of right to information in minority languages. The joint conclusion, which is supported by all national councils, is to seek suspension of the privatization of such media in the Action

Plan for the rights of minorities in Chapter 23 and to seek the amendment of the Law on Public Information in order to allow local self-governments in ethnically mixed areas to establish media as local public services. Also a conclusion was reached, which for us is very important, that the public service RTV must form editorial offices for those minorities that do not have one yet, and that legal basis must be made for the financing of institutions which are in accordance with the Law on Public Information of media publishers in minority languages, and that the project financing of production in minority languages must be determined for at least three years continuously, and that in deciding on project financing at competitions, the proposal, or the opinion, of the national councils must be respected. All these conclusions were adopted unanimously and they went into the text of the proposal for the Action Plan. It remains to fight to enter these conclusions in the final text of the Action Plan for the rights of minorities when it comes to the information in minority languages. There is a team that will hold talks in this direction with the representatives of competent ministries and other entities to endorse the Action Plan and represent the views of the Coordination and conclusions that were made. As we found out, Bajić won the trust to be in this team, and as he emphasizes in the end, he hopes that the set goals are going to get realized.



State Must Solve the Crime in Sjeverin

It has been 23 years since the abduction in Sjeverin, when 16 innocent citizens of the Republic of Serbia of Bosniak nationality were abducted, tortured and killed.

On October 22, 1992 in the early morning, 16 Bosniak workers, who were traveling to work in Priboj, were taken out from the bus on the line Sjeverin – Priboj in Mioče. Abduction was committed by people in uniforms with Serbian traits.

On the same day, the abductees were taken to Višegrad, on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where on the banks of the River Drina they were tortured and killed, and then thrown into the Drina. For this monstrous crime only four direct perpetrators were sentenced while the investigation into the apparent involvement and the role of state authorities in the preparation, organization and execution of the crime has not yet been launched.

The Bosniak national council in all discussions with national and international institutions, insists on resolving this and

all other crimes committed against Bosniaks in Sandžak.

As the Council with full legality and legitimacy we have been protecting the interests of Bosniaks for the past 24 years, and we must not and will not allow the future generations of Bosniaks in Serbia every month of the year to remember the unsolved crimes against their loved ones and compatriots which were committed by the military, police and paramilitary formations of this country, while fearing the new wave of state terror against the Bosniaks.

The Bosniak national council supports the law state, legal safety, the rule of rights and equality before the law as achievements to be pursued if we want to become a modern European country, and not a country in which there is intentional silence regarding the serious war crimes committed against its citi-

zens just because they are Bosniaks.

We believe that only a common approach of the two states, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina can facilitate the solving of this crime and we believe that all this gives hope that truth and justice will finally be satisfied, and that the families of the victims and the entire Bosniak people in Serbia will finally get some peace.

The Bosniak national council will require from the competent state authorities to urgently start resolving this and all other crimes committed against Bosniaks from the nineties to the present, to find and punish all participants, primarily the originators, perpetrators and accomplices.

All this is necessary in order for Bosniaks, as the citizens of Serbia, to be provided peace and a bright future. For all these reasons, it is inevitable to establish stable institutions and mechanisms in the Republic of Serbia with which Bosniaks can protect their basic rights, the right to life, the lives of family members and property.



DR. SC. JASMINKA DULIĆ GAVE LECTURES AT THE PILAR INSTITUTE IN VUKOVAR

The Values and National Awareness of Croats in Vojvodina

Celebrating the 9th Anniversary of work, the Regional Centre of the Pilar Institute in Vukovar, in cooperation with the Institute for Culture of Vojvodina Croats, organized in Ružička house in Vukovar a lecture by the sociologist Dr. Sc. Jasminka Dulić titled: The values and national awareness of Croats in Vojvodina.

Dr. Sc. Jasminka Dulić pointed out that more extensive and deeper research on ethnic attitudes, especially when it comes to national minorities in Serbia, are very few, and that without such research the uncritical use of the concept of multiculturalism and interculturalism remains only in the domain of debate about the normative framework without contact with the social reality.

“Without knowing the real attitudes of minority and majority in the society, the consequences of certain minority policies on social cohesion and inter-ethnic relations are hard to predict”, said Dr. Sc. Dulić.

In the lecture she presented some results of research on social and ethnic attitudes, values, and some personality traits of Croats in Vojvodina and Serbia, which were conducted by the Institute

for Culture of Vojvodina Croats and the Croatian Newspaper Publishing Institution Riječ. Results have shown how in the background of expression of national self-respect there is national affective attachment, but nonnational exclusiveness, prejudice and bias in social interactions.

The research showed that younger and more educated people perceive ties to the national group as opposing the realization of the value of openness, but also the materialistic values as well as good relations with the surrounding. These findings indicate that there is a certain value conflict within the Croatian national community and that minority policy that insists only on preservation of traditional values may affect the withdrawal from the activities of their own ethnic communities, especially of the younger population that places the

value of self-realization first and that finds it important to fulfil the prevailing social expectations.

Welcoming the participants, the Head of the Regional Centre of the Pilar Institute in Vukovar, Dr. Sc. Dražen Živić said that the lecture is held in the spirit of the current very successful cooperation with the Pilar Institute with ZKVH, but also in the context of the relocation of the Regional Centre into the new premises, the birthplace of the Croatian and Vukovar Nobel Prize winner, Leopold Ružička.

The lecture was, among others, attended by the director of ZKVH Tomislav Žigmanov, Head of the Department of Education and Sport of Vukovar-Srijem County Dr. Sc. Jadranka Karlić, Head of the Department of Social Services of the City of Vukovar, Ana Ivanović, Director of the Memorial Centre of the Homeland War of Vukovar Zoran Šangut, Director of the State Archives in Vukovar Stjepan Prutki, Head of the Institute for Scientific Research and Artistic Work HAZU in Vukovar Henrik Ivan Damjanović and others.



Without knowing the real attitudes of minority and majority in the society, the consequences of certain minority policies on social cohesion and inter-ethnic relations are hard to predict”



Centar za istraživanja migracija
Center for Migration Studies

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