



Република Србија | **The Republic of Serbia**
СКУПШТИНА ДИЈАСПОРЕ | **THE ASSEMBLY OF DIASPORA AND SERBS**
И СРБА У РЕГИОНУ | **IN THE REGION**

Mr Herman Van Rompuy , President of the European Council
Baroness Catherine Ashton , High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Mr Ivo Josipovic, President of the Republic of Croatia
Mr Tomislav Nikolic , President of the Republic of Serbia
Members of the European Parliament

Dear Sirs,

The Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region, as the highest official representative body of the Serbian Diaspora expresses its grave concern over the violation of minority rights of numerous Serbian communities in Vukovar and throughout the Republic of Croatia.

The Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region appeals to the state agencies of the Republic of Croatia and the international institutions of the European Union to ensure the implementation of the constitutional law on national minorities, and consequently the implementation of the international conventions and declarations in accordance with which the law was enacted.

Croatia has pledged to safeguard and defend stated European values: the right to diversity, tolerance, language and all other rights recognised by international norms and indeed the process of reconciliation in the Western Balkans.

Since its inception, the European Union has declared itself the guarantor of peace and stability for all its citizens. As such, it is the guarantor of the right to freedom of movement, freedom of expression, religious affiliation, the right to diversity and equal respect for the rights of minorities and immigrants. Croatia became the 28th member of the European Union and therefore we expect that it applies all the existing standards of the aforementioned community, and in particular with respect to the rights of its minorities.

The protests of extremist groups and the violent removal of bilingual public signs in Vukovar, where Serbs account for 34.8% of the population according to the previous census, and the recent attacks and graffiti in Split and Dubrovnik, show an alarming degree of intolerance towards Serbs, which borders on racism and further burdens efforts of the Serbian community in Croatia to pursue a process of peaceful coexistence and reconciliation in the region.

The Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region also appeals to the Republic of Serbia to protect Serbs in Croatia and in this regard we welcome the statement issued yesterday by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia as well as the advocacy on this issue from the Government Office for Diaspora and Serbs in the region.

President of the Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region

Dragan Stanojevic

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