

Glas Srpske: Interview with Principal Deputy High Representative Roderick Moore

By: Željka Domazet

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This is what the Principal Deputy High Representative in BiH, Roderick Moore, said in his interview to "Glas Srpske". He stressed that no one denied the political deadlock in the FBiH, nor was anybody trying to sweep the seriousness of the situation under the carpet.

- The situation in the RS is much better organised in the RS. I would not say that it is a paradise, but it is clear to all that the RS is functionally better than the FBiH - stressed Moore.

Glas Srpske: After a session of the PIC Steering Board last week, High Representative Valentin Inzko said that the OHR had never been closer to using the Bonn. For which reasons and because of whom was that option considered?

Roderick Moore: The mood in this session of the PIC was significantly different than the mood six months ago and earlier. There was an atmosphere of deep disappointment in the conference room and that could be seen in the tone of the communiqué. People rightfully wondered how come Belgrade and Priština can resolve the important and difficult issue of Kosovo, and yet Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Mostar cannot agree on a solution for the implementation of the "Sejdić-Finci" ruling. In that context there was a general question whether it works to put all actions into the hands of the local leaders and whether it will function, or whether the international community should also consider other means that are at its disposal, and one of them are the Bonn powers. I would exaggerate if I said that there were concrete and tangible intentions to move towards the use of the Bonn powers at any foreseeable time in the future, because we believe that they are the last and not the first resort.

Glas Srpske: Russia did not support the complete communiqué, and Russian Ambassador said that they were particularly dissatisfied with the passage that spoke about the reform of the FBiH, and that it is the causes of the problem that should be eliminated, instead of merely extinguishing the fire. What, in your opinion, is the cause of problems in the Federation?

Roderick Moore: There is no dilemma that in the FBiH there is a big political issue. Nobody denies the political deadlock in which that entity finds itself, and which has much wider consequences. Nobody is trying to sweep the seriousness of the situation under the carpet. Had you by any chance been in the PIC session, and asked who were the culprits for the deadlock in the FBiH, I think that the answer would be unanimous - stubborn local politicians. I know that it is a kind of fashion for local politicians to blame the international community for these problems that are not being resolved, saying that that the international community had produced them, but I also know that the international community made a lot of effort to help the problems be solved.

Glas Srpske: Do you believe that a great part of the blame lies with the High Representative because of his decision to suspend the decisions of the Central Election Commission (CEC) with regard to the formation of government in the FBiH?

Roderick Moore: In politics, if you repeat a lie a thousand times, it becomes the truth. The international community and the OHR intervened trying to find a solution through mediation.

Glas Srpske: Since that decision, the situation in the Federation of BiH has been getting more complicated every day.

Roderick Moore: Two political parties violated the Constitution of the Federation of BiH and the High Representative reinstated law and order by his decision, and enabled the establishment of a well-functioning

government. It is wrong to claim that the decision of the High Representative is the source of all problems. It is not about avoiding responsibility but about facing the truth of what has been going on in the Federation in recent years.

Glas Srpske: The Central Election Commission is the top democratic institution in every country. By the way, the CEC was established on the insistence of the international community, but we had a situation that the High Representative suspended CEC's decision?

Roderick Moore: I understand your argument. I believe that this argument is a reason that the High Representative acted very reluctantly but we have to have in mind the fact that in making that decision the High Representative had the support of the country members that are the greatest democracies with decades-old democratic tradition.

Glas Srpske: Is the situation functionally better in the RS or the Federation?

In the RS. I think everybody is clear about it and the High Representative mentioned it in his report before the UN. Of course, I would not go as far as saying it is paradise in the RS but everybody is clear that the RS is functionally better than the Federation of BiH.

Glas Srpske: How do you comment assessments that the OHR did not work on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement but on its deconstruction, and that the PIC is not a category established by the Dayton?

Roderick Moore: I absolutely disagree with such claim. It is true that the PIC did not exist in Dayton and that it came up some time latter. However, claims that the PIC does not have a status and that it is not valid is a non-valid argument. We often hear from Banja Luka that the OHR does not work on the implementation of Dayton and that it is deconstructing the Dayton. I am not pleased that I have to say that such claims are ridiculous. *Raison d'être* of the OHR is to ensure the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Claiming that the OHR acts against the Dayton actually means claiming that the international community works against the international treaty that it helped, in terms of getting it agreed between the parties. I am afraid there are some politicians who see the Dayton as some sort of a menu. They take what they like from it and reject what they dislike. It is unrealistic to expect that once the Constitution gets adopted time stops and that the Constitution will never be developed afterwards, as required. The Constitution of my country was enacted 225 years ago and it has also been changed since then.

Glas Srpske: But there are no foreign national holding positions in the Constitutional Court in your country, as it is the case in BiH where we have three foreign nationals?

Roderick Moore: All parties-signatories to the Dayton Agreement agreed with the engagement of foreign nationals in the Constitutional Court.

Glas Srpske: The obligation to establish the IEBL is also deriving from the Dayton. What is the reason that the international community has failed in fulfilling that obligation?

Roderick Moore: I know that the NATO and the EUFOR take that obligation very seriously but I believe their attitude is similar to the overall attitude of the international community at the moment. They want local parties to offer a solution.

Glas Srpske: The obligation to expel foreign nationals who fought in the war in BiH is also deriving from the Dayton. However, those people are still here?

Roderick Moore: I cannot speak about that with authority, since I am not aware of all details. Some of my colleagues who are still working here have been proudly underlining that the revision process of citizenships granted during the war was successful. I do not want to create an impression that the international community has made no mistakes in BiH, that it does not and cannot make any mistakes. The international community has made many mistakes in BiH and I am sure that we have also made mistakes during my stay here, however, I don't think that we have made any mistakes when it comes to major issues.

Glas Srpske: Is BiH closer to the closure of the OHR?

Roderick Moore: Interesting question. I have been here for three years already and I can say that I expected that

at this time we will be in some other place. There is a “five plus two” package of conditions and objectives that have to be met. However, there is a deep-rooted logic that as BiH is closer to Brussels and moving further towards it, the smaller role of OHR is.

It is also logical that BiH that is faster moving towards the EU is BiH that is implementing Dayton Agreement. Simply, BiH that is not committed to Dayton will never reach the EU. And progress towards the EU means that a set of priorities has been accepted. In this light you would not need High Representative who is sitting in Sarajevo and intervening from time to time. I regret to say this – that world I have depicted does not exist at the moment and I am not sure that it is in sight. I could not say that we are today closer to the closure of the OHR. But the opinion of the international community on this issue could be easily changed.

Glas Srpske: When are you leaving BiH and who will be your successor?

Roderick Moore: I will leave BiH at the beginning of July. I know who is the candidate and the only I can say is that he is a good friend of mine, very experienced diplomat and a man with broad experience in the region, but I cannot tell you his name.