

Interview: Hanns H. Schumacher, Senior Deputy HR"Unreal Dreams Of Separation Of The HDZ Hard-liners"

UNREAL DREAMS OF SEPARATION OF THE HDZ HARD-LINERS

HR deputy Schumacher won the sympathies of at least one part of the BiH population after his visits to Stolac and Drvar. However, just after his visit to Stolac, speculation has arisen that Ambassador Schumacher has exceeded his authorisation, come into conflict with HR Principal Deputy Jacques Paul Klein, and that he has already typed his resignation. Ambassador Schumacher has strongly refuted all these allegations, and spoke to our paper about the problems of Stolac, the replacement of its Mayor, and the role of HDZ in DPA implementation.

POLEMICS

How do you explain the fact that replacement of a mayor has caused so many polemics, and why resolution of this problem had to be raised to the highest level, Westendorp-Tudjman?

SCHUMACHER: It is not only about the replacement of a mayor. First of all, it is about return of refugees to a community that does not accept returnees in its environment. The second is that you must know that replacement of a mayor is only one side of the coin, the other is the creation of an environment that will support and speed the return of refugees. Thirdly, Stolac is not an isolated case. We have problems in many

municipalities where mayors and municipality authorities do not show any readiness to implement [Annex 7](#) of the DPA. This means the action in Stolac will be an example and a precedent for all such municipalities, and this is why we have to consider our steps very carefully, in order to avoid quick, short-term solutions. Replacement of Mr. Raguz is only one element, but other elements must also be considered.

Besides replacement of Mr. Raguz, you also mentioned other elements that have to be considered. What are these elements?

SCHUMACHER: One of the reasons we have not yet made a final decision is that we are still considering how to proceed. Namely, one of the elements of our strategy is to put pressure on those who can make changes in Stolac. This means not only to replace the Mayor, but also to make sure that his successor is far more co-operative and more ready for action.

HR Westendorp started to use his authority in accordance with the DPA after the Bonn conference. Why does he not use them completely in the case of Stolac?

SCHUMACHER: HR has a reasonable approach and appeals to responsible people to face up to their obligations. Namely, there is an impression that many people in BiH are trying to off-load their responsibilities on to us. Mr. Raguz is a member of the HDZ, and it is clear that he did not fulfill the obligations of the DPA. If the HDZ seriously intend to implement their obligations from the DPA, then their officials have to take action to replace politicians that become a burden. The least we can do is to wait and see whether these officials are ready to fulfill their obligations, which does not release us from the obligation to act when necessary. The way in which the HR handles this matter only shows that he uses the new instrument of his mandate – the arbitration – with great responsibility.

COOPERATION

This means the HDZ has an obligation to replace the Mayor of Stolac. We trust that there were discussions on this subject with Presidency member Kresimir Zubak, after you returned from Stolac no result. What next?

SCHUMACHER: After the elections of the new RS Government, I said that the focus of the International Community would be towards unresolved problems within BiH. The main problem is an increasing tendency inside HDZ circles not to resolve problems in a cooperative way. This is especially with regard to implementation of the local election results. This is the problem with the HDZ and one of reasons for the high level delegation to President Tudjman. It has been said that this situation must be sanctioned and that it will reflect the Croat position in BiH. President Tudjman was asked to use his influence on the HDZ in BiH so that they would show the will to resolve, and not to create, problems.

TUDJMAN'S INFLUENCE

President Tudjman was asked to use his influence; however, according to his public appearances, it is difficult to believe that this will bear fruit. Therefore, the question is: will IC officials and OHR consider the possibility of applying the same 'therapy' in the case of the HDZ as for the SDS in the RS?

SCHUMACHER: There is no reason for HDZ isolation. We have shown that we can break the resistance of the hard-liners in the SDS. Today we can clearly see reforming tendencies in this party, and the best example is the statement of Mr. Buha that the SDS is considered an opposition party in the democratic Parliament, which was unimaginable few months ago. The HDZ will face the same process and the same pressure, in our quest to make the hard-liners see sense – those that still have divergent political ideas to the Peace Agreement and who prefer political structures that we do not support. We will persuade them with constant political pressure that the dreams

of separation are unreal and that this country will maintain its territorial integrity.