

SDS holds a press conference in Banja Luka following the return of its delegation from Belgrade

SDS – Dragan Kalinic, President and Dragan Cavic, Vice-president of the SDS Presidency

SDS called press conference today to talk about two subjects:

- 1) Protocol on cooperation between DSS and SDS signed in Belgrade on Monday
- 2) Yesterday's visit of the RS delegation led by PM Ivanic to Serbian Government in Belgrade

Kalinic said that the **Protocol signed between the two parties** was welcomed by many party members and followers of both parties in RS and FRY, and caused unnecessary worrying to their opponents. He said that the Protocol is completely transparent and is not against the BH, the IC nor any other party in the RS. "The main reason is that the parties are informally cooperating for years, our politics are compatible and will contribute to the democratic transformation of FRY and RS/BH. This cooperation will be completely transparent for the public", said Kalinic. He added that he does not believe that this Protocol is damaging for the DSS nor anyone else. He said that the SDS has no intention to change their name into DSS, he said in reply to a journalist, adding that however, the Main Board had made changes to the party statute and that SDS must adjust to the new situations.

Cavic talked about the yesterday's visit to Belgrade with the official delegation from the RS, led by Ivanic, which included

directors of RS banks and companies. He said that they talked about various subjects and tried to identify the main obstacles to a more successful economic cooperation. They concluded that the second meeting will be held in Banja Luka in mid September, and until then the FRY leaders would strongly initiate the signing of the agreement on trade between BH and FRY. At the meeting the delegations agreed to form a working body which would make an elaborate on all administrative and trade barriers, and then work on the preparation of the Annexes to the Special Relations Agreement in cooperation with the OHR, as stipulated in the Agreement.

Cavic criticized the initiative of Sejfidin Tokic (SDP) to question constitutionality of prefix "Serb" in the names of towns in the RS and the issue of the status of Serb Sarajevo. He said that this is obviously the sign that the Alliance for Change is not making results so Tokic is trying to create an independent image. It is also an effort to transfer the Federation problems – such as the boycott of Croatian representatives – to the RS, he said. "The question of names of towns is regulated by the Law on Local Self-Government and it is in the competence of the entities. The prefix Serb is not what is preventing return, it is the issue of human rights, education, employment, roads – and these are the problems of local communities", Cavic said.

The reason that the SDS voted for the Draft Law on cooperation with the ICTY was a realistic approach towards an obligation overtaken by the GFAP, said Kalinic in reply to a journalist's question. Considering the extradition, i.e. transfer of Karadzic and Mladic, he said that it is not up to parties, but institutions. "This will be regulated by the Law, when it is adopted as a proposal. The SDS will demonstrate its readiness for extradition with the vote on the law", said Kalinic.

"After all, Milosevic is in Hague already, and he signed the GFAP, which including the obligation for cooperation with the ICTY", Cavic added.

When asked to comment the departure of US Ambassador Miller and his mandate, Kalinic said he wished all the best in his new mission, and said that SDS was not happy with his behavior and relations in BH. He said he hoped that the new ambassador would have more tact and diplomatic skills to hear the strongest party in the RS and have normal communication with the representatives of the institutions.

When asked whether there will be a re-form of the RS Government, Kalinic said that the Government is on leave, therefore it cannot be re-formed. "But when they are back from holidays, we will see who stays and who goes", he said.