

Eleventh OSCE Economic Forum
20/23 May 2003, Prague

ENGLISH only

Statement by Dejan Hinic,
First Counsellor
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Serbia and Montenegro

I know that what I am going to deliver today presents a kind of General statement, but I think that you will see that my basic aim is to bring to your attention the importance of fight against organized crime, including all forms of illicit trafficking, in Serbia and Montenegro, that is so closely linked with the efforts of the state union and its members to develop economy and to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement with EU.

On March 12, with the assassination of the late prime minister of Serbia, Mr. Zoran Djindjic, the actors of organized crime and their supporters tried to push democratic forces of Serbia and Montenegro into the despair and to change the future, including economical development of country, and its way toward the Euro-Atlantic integrations. On the contrary, this brutal act even more strengthened our determination to perform, the already prepared action aimed to uprooting of the organized crime. We are close to bringing action to successful completion without breaching international norms and standards in the field of human rights. Proper implementation of the state of emergency, with the full respect of provisions of the OSCE Moscow 1991 document, clearly demonstrated that the democratically elected authorities in Serbia were in full control of the country's law enforcement instruments. The action undertaken disclosed the activities of organized crime in trafficking of arms, drugs and human beings.

Organized crime, all forms of trafficking, insecurity related to legal system act as a key factors in discouraging investors and economic development not only in Serbia and Montenegro, but in the region of SEE as whole. The consequences of inadequate action in responding to the challenges of organized crime are best seen in the economic area. Threat of crime is a negative message to interested businessmen. In such conditions, the society begins to fall behind economically and that, in turn, is the most fertile ground for crime to thrive.

Combating organized crime constitutes a basis for further development of a society. Serbia and Montenegro is ready to double its efforts and cooperation with neighbours and within international and regional organizations and initiatives, to reach, implement and comply with European standards in this field.

We are firmly supporting efforts of OSCE, including the Mission in Serbia and Montenegro, cooperation of the missions in the region, in the fight against organized crime. Trafficking, as the central issue of this years Economic forum, was the right choice, and we consider that good work was done. At the same time we are of the opinion that the issues of organized crime and trafficking should stay high on the agenda of OSCE in the future.

I will take this opportunity to notice that one country report, prepared for this meeting, made of Serbia and Montenegro, in the list of countries, three countries, I hope not intentionally. I kindly ask for proper use of name of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro, including the name of Kosovo, in accordance with UN and OSCE documents.