

# **U.S.-Montenegrin Policy Forum**

**Guest Speaker  
Mr. Ranko Krivokapic  
President of the Social Democratic Party of Montenegro (SDP)**

**Wednesday, October 31, 2001  
8:30 a.m. -10:00 p.m.**

## **Summary**

### **Events in Serbia**

According to Krivokapic, clashes in Serbia are intensifying on a number of levels: First, there are clashes, involving the chiefs of crime gangs; second, there are conflicts within the security structures; third, a struggle over the media, specifically BK television (President Kostunica lost his main media tool, which Prime Minister Djindjic took over); fourth, there is a significant clash within the state financial structures; and fifth, a conflict on the political level is also a possibility.

Currently, Kostunica has a problem with the Yugoslav army, because he will have to extradite some of the generals to The Hague, his popularity within the army has decreased in the last year. Also, there is a widespread feeling of political and even ethnic animosity towards Montenegro. For Kostunica, Yugoslavia is a nationalistic project, which he has been using for enacting assertive policies towards Bosnia, Montenegro and Macedonia.

### **Yugoslav succession**

The Federal (Yugoslav) Central Bank has been conducting negotiations with the London and Paris Clubs, showing its aspiration towards domination over Montenegro in both a financial and political sense. They have been using the power of the federation in order to show that the succession is not feasible.

### **Reaction in Montenegro regarding terrorism**

Pro-European and pro-U.S. Montenegrins proclaimed September 11, 2001 a Day of Mourning and have shown sympathy towards the American people. However, this was not the case in Serbia. Pro-Serbian forces in Montenegro were against the proclamation of a Day of Mourning. The SNP and the People's Party remained calm during this tragedy. Nevertheless, there are many who view the U.S. as an enemy. Montenegro has all the prerequisites for being a significant regional player. In this context, it could serve as a center for anti-terrorism.

### **Referendum**

We have the same model as in 1992, and we are ready to comply with it. The only, and the most important difference is, that in 1992, we were in a war. The new Referendum will be carried out under increased international supervision and transparency. What is interesting, and important, is that the public has always been voting for or against the government. Now they will have to vote for or against the state. Krivokapic presumes that 60-65% will vote for an independent country. The mere presence of the U.S. during the referendum will guarantee its legitimacy.

### **Relations with the U.S. and EU**

U.S.-Montenegro relations have improved since the Milosevic era. Montenegrins have to demonstrate that they are ready for reforms. In the next six months it is possible to have only legal reforms. After the referendum, all other reforms will be on agenda. The Interior Ministry is likely to undergo some changes and the Security Service is to be placed under the Prime Minister or President. Currently all files are being opened. On the economic level, there is a new tax law and there is significant technical assistance provided by the USAID. The EU has been focusing on infrastructure developments, rather than on the legal reforms, which remain largely a U.S. initiative.