

February 2011

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the beginning of every year since my appointment as President of the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, I submitted to you a report on what had been done in the previous year. It's my pleasure to inform you by this letter of the important results in the Coordination Body's work.

Our most important success is the establishment of a multiethnic government in Bujanovac. Upon more than two years from the most recently held local elections, representatives of the local Serbian community got involved in the solving of citizens' issues. That is a great step forward in the local peoples' life together and it's a precondition for the local community's progress. We are also proud of our support to the establishment of the Albanian National Council, which deals with the issues of the language, information, education and culture of the said ethnic community. Cooperation between the Albanian National Council and the Coordination Body, primarily the one regarding resolving the issues in education, was established.

In accordance with the above, a Special Working Group (SWG) for Providing Conditions for the Opening of Institutions of Higher Education in Presevo and Bujanovac was set up, the task of which is to examine the possibilities for the opening of institutions of higher education in South Serbia. The SWG includes representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body, the Albanian National Council, a domestic expert in the issues of university education and an advisor to the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities. As part of the UN program, the Coordination Body organized a study visit to Vojvodina for representatives of the SWG, the Albanian National Council and the Serbian community, so that we could get an insight into various models of organizing higher education in multiethnic environments. During the said visit, members of the SWG met with representatives of Novi Sad University, as well as with representatives of the Hungarian, Romanian and Slovak National Councils. Planned for this year is the opening in Bujanovac of a department of Nis University's Faculty of Economics for 80 to 100 students.

Also established is the Working Group for solving the issues of textbooks that are used for classes held in Albanian, the Chairman of which is Assistant Minister of Education.

As regards students coming from the Albanian ethnic community, those that enrolled in the second year of studying at the Medvedja-based department of Nis University's Faculties of Economics and Law, the Coordination Body had provided textbooks in their mother tongue for them. Also, every student that had enrolled in the second year of studying received 7,000 dinars from the Coordination Body.

With the aim of strengthening the economies of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, the Coordination Body invested 229,278,000.00 dinars in infrastructural projects in 2010.

Regarding the municipality of Presevo, 91,948,590.00 dinars were invested in reconstruction of the city center, in paving with asphalt and reconstruction of the roads in the villages of Reljane, Miratovac, Cakanovac, Aligerce, Oraovica, Norca and Slavujevac, in paving with asphalt of the local Zujince-Bustranje road, in adjustment of the river-bed in the village of Rajince, in reconstruction of the roads in the village of Crnotince, in reconstruction of the streets in the "Zeleznicka stanica" (Railway station) neighborhood, in renovation of the "Abdula Krasnica" community center for the needs of RTV Presevo and the faculty, as well as in construction of additional floors in the secondary technical school "Presevo".

As for the municipality of Bujanovac, 100,341,068.00 dinars were invested in improvement of power-supply in "Sector 6", in asphaltting the roads in the village of Biljaca, as well as in asphaltting the Lucane-Dobrosin road, in a better maintenance of the roads in the villages of Dreznica, Sveta Petka and Kustica, in replacement of wood joinery in the "Branko Radicevic" elementary school, in construction of a new unit at the "Sezai Suroi" secondary school, in improvement of farming activities and in the works on the "Zbevac" water-supply.

As regards the municipality of Medvedja, 39,241,650.00 dinars were invested in construction of the local Petrilje-Mrkonje road, in construction of a promenade and two streets, in construction of the Medvedja-Crni vrh section of the road and in maintenance of local and rural settlement roads in the territory of the municipality.

6,381,184.00 dinars were earmarked in NIP (National Investment Plan), out of which 2,996,728.00 dinars are for Presevo and 3,384,456.00 dinars are for the municipality of Medvedja.

Like it did in the previous years, the Coordination Body, this year, too, provided over 50 million dinars for civil society projects, financial assistance for the most socially handicapped persons and for the media.

In cooperation with the republican institutions, we enabled the opening of 62 workplaces at the customs, tax administration, inspection bodies and other governmental institutions in the municipalities of Presevo and Bujanovac.

Scholarships for 206 secondary school students from the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja and the funds necessary for purchasing school equipment for first-grade students from these municipalities were provided this year, too.

The Coordination Body assigned two million dinars to each of the three municipalities, which are to be used for the most socially handicapped persons.

The last year's play "You and I are We" resulted in establishment of a multi-ethnic youth center in Bujanovac, which has the same name as the aforementioned play. The young from Kikinda, Bujanovac and Presevo were involved at the youth center in working on the "We are the Whole World" play, which was performed in Belgrade, Bujanovac, Kikinda and Ljubljana. Also, the "You and I are We" youth center published two issues of the "Viva Bu" multi-ethnic magazine for the young.

I would like to point out that 47,800,000.00 dinars were earmarked last year in the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government's fund for development of local communities in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. 16,900,000.00 dinars were earmarked for Presevo's local communities of Cakanovac, Slavujevac, Strezovce-Maminci and Zujnice. 16,900,000.00 dinars were invested in Bujanovac's local communities of Rakovac, Srpska kuca, Levosoje, Konculj and Nesalci, as well as in "Branko Radicevic" and "Naim Fraseri" elementary schools and in "Mladost" sports center. Out of this fund, 14,000,000.00 dinars were invested in Medvedja's local communities of Rujkovac and Sijarinska Spa.

Those are some of the successes that we jointly achieved in 2010.

I would like to say that two important activities are going to be taken this year. Taking into account that last year, we successfully completed an open competition for filling the positions of customs officers, this year we'll go on with announcing open competitions for filling the positions at tax administration, the customs and inspection bodies.

Having identified improvements in education as our strategic priority, we decided to provide scholarships to students from Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja that wish to receive education at universities in Serbia.

In the end, let me assure you that the policy of the Government of the Republic of Serbia that is channeled towards achieving improvements in the living conditions of all residents of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja enjoys the support of our international partners. That is why I am convinced that we'll achieve the goals set for 2011 more successfully than we did in the past.

I wish you a successful 2011.

Yours faithfully,
Milan Markovic
President

