

Early parliamentary elections in Serbia scheduled on May 11, 2008

In a few weeks to come, Serbia will be holding early parliamentary elections, which will decide on the country's future.

The pre-election campaign has already started and the first clashes between the democratic and nationalistic blocks have begun to appear. The atmosphere in Serbia and the rhetoric of both camps is becoming heated – incumbent Serbian president Boris Tadic of the Democratic Party (DS) even warned that elections could “bring Serbia back to the 90's” while the Radical Tomislav Nikolić called elections “vital for Serbian redemption”.

In these heated days, the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Javier Solana has announced a new initiative. He has stated that the EU must do everything in advance of the elections to support the pro-European block and thus mentioned the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) as one option where the EU should help¹.

The SAA was initiated in November 2007, and is now on stand by.

The conservative Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) and its leader Vojislav Koštunica has together with the Radicals called the signing of the SAA a direct recognition of Kosovo and denounced Solana's initiative as an attempt to interfere in Serbia's domestic politics.

Surprisingly, the same opinion is shared by some in DS, so Solana's initiative paradoxically united political elites in Serbia², excluding the Liberal-Democratic Party. DS' attitude is surprising because it was their minister, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, who initially asked for the signing of the SAA.

In the shadow of internal developments in Serbia, Pristina has adopted a new constitution³, which will be in force in Kosovo from the 15th of June.

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¹ http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=04&dd=08&nav_id=49209

² <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/main/news/9247/>

³ http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=04&dd=09&nav_id=49243