

## **New government formed**

Serbia finally has a government. Two months after the snap May elections, an agreement was reached between the party-grouping surrounding President Tadic's 'For a European Serbia' election coalition, and the three-party coalition of Ivica Dacic's SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia).

Although this seems like a strange choice of partners for government, all sides appear to be committed to the common goal of EU integration.

The EU welcomed the move, albeit with a caveat on the need for further ICTY cooperation if progress is to be made towards EU integration.

There is concern that further moves to find and arrest the final ICTY indictees such as Karadzic and Mladic, would be hampered by the choice of SPS leader Dacic as the new Minister of Interior.

Ollie Rehn, the EU Enlargement Commissioner, whilst actively welcoming the new government, warned that "in order to start the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, Serbia must reach full cooperation with The Hague tribunal."

*For a detailed analysis of the prospects for longevity of the new government, see the latest Pontis paper entitled 'Serbia's New Government: A Marriage of Convenience', realised 8<sup>th</sup> July. The analysis can be found [here](#).*

## **Belgrade Local Government yet to be decided**

Despite agreement on the central level of government, the Belgrade Mayor position continues to be fought over by the parties who were voted onto the city's municipal body following the May local elections (which were held alongside the parliamentary elections).

The SPS originally signed a deal with Kostunica's DSS (Democratic Party of Serbia) and Nikolic's SRS (Serbian Radical Party).

However, as part of the agreement to enter central government, the SPS was forced to back-out, leaving Serbia's capital city with no governing coalition. According to the latest reports, if no coalition agreement is formed in the next few days, new elections must be called.

Marko Blagojević from the Center for Free Elections and Democracy told B92 that according to the law, Belgrade will be under temporary administration until new elections can be held in February.

New elections could cost a huge amount of money, with investments in the capital on hold until this stability is over. The pressure is now on all parties to come up with a new coalition for administering Belgrade, to stop the need for new elections.

Sources: B92, Tanjug, BIRN, Beta Agency