

Head of the OSCE Mission visited the victims of the Ostrovica incident

Fuentes: “Acts caused by hate lead nowhere”

by Nives Rogoznica and Kristina Medic

OSTROVICA - Jorge Fuentes, Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia, yesterday visited Ostrovica. In this way he showed his support to the victims who, during the night between Monday and Tuesday, were attacked by two unknown assailants. The Ambassador, as part of his first visit to Zadar County, condemned this and similar incidents, outlining that they damaged the image of the entire country. He assessed that Croatia, over the last years, had achieved great progress in securing peaceful coexistence for its citizens.

“This incident can damage Croatia in the short term, but the situation is not alarming. Acts caused by hate, regardless of their motives, lead nowhere,” Jorge Fuentes emphasised yesterday when addressing journalists and the inhabitants of Ostrovica.

The Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia did not want to comment on statements by Milorad Pupovac, who said that in the area of Zadar County terror against members of the Serb national minority continued.

During his visit, Fuentes talked to Cedomir and Milko Medic, elderly men of Serb nationality, who were injured by the attackers. He promised them that the entire situation will be solved soon and the attackers will be punished.

“We will do everything in our power to support you. I am visiting you to give you support and to condemn any violence,” Fuentes said to Cedomir and Milko Medic.

Cedomir Medic replied that a lot of time will pass until the entire situation is solved because his family does not feel secure any more and he is most concerned about his children.

Cedomir’s brother Milko was released from hospital, but he still felt bad. As he said, the biggest problem is that he has no transport to the medical centre in Benkovac where he has to go for bandaging. Fuentes promised Milko that he will try to organize transport for him to the hospital, based on an agreement with the employees of the OSCE Field Office in Zadar.

The Ostrovica inhabitants however outlined infrastructure as one of the biggest problems in their village. There is no public light and thus the attackers can easily enter the village during nights.

Fuentes stated that at the meeting with Zadar Mayor Dr. Zivko Kolega and Zadar County Prefect Ivo Grbic he emphasized the need to solve infrastructural problems. At the end he outlined that, despite such isolated incidents, Croatia is a tolerant and flexible country which is quickly progressing in realizing its goals.

Zrilic: Two attackers might be apprehended soon

Benkovac Police Chief Zoran Zrilic stated yesterday in Ostrovica that the Police was doing everything in its power to find the perpetrators responsible for the respective incident. Based on some information, the investigation about several persons is ongoing and the two perpetrators might be apprehended soon.

Lisane Ostrovicke Mayor Zeljko Mijic also condemned the incident and outlined that he wants to contribute to the identification of the perpetrators and as such is in constant contact with the Police.

AFTER THE FIRE IN BILJANE DONJE

Firemen intervened immediately

ZADAR – The Deputy Commander of the Zadar Public Fire Brigade, Josip Jovic, denied the statements published yesterday in *Zadarski list*, that the fire brigade came with delay to extinguish the fire at Sonja Kranjc's property.

He supported his statement by presenting *Zadarski list* a copy of the fire report, showing that the firemen were informed by police at 14:24 hours about the fire - where oak trees, bushes and abandoned houses were burning. As written in the report, the firemen came to the scene at 14:45 hours. The fire was localized at 16:03 hours and extinguished at 21:10 hours.

Apology to police employees and OSCE

ZADAR – In yesterday's edition of *Zadarski list* it was printed unintentionally by mistake that OSCE representatives were astounded about an improper comment by a police officer during an investigation into a fire in Biljane Donje. The police officer was reported to have said: "Serb villages are nicely burning". A passer-by made this remark and not a police officer and we apologize to Police employees and members of the OSCE Mission for the inaccurate information.