

Bosnia Herzegovina: In the Republic of Srpska, So Far Another Orange Revolution Falls Flat

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*In the midst of several geopolitically important elections (Brazil, Bulgaria) which all took place on Sunday, the one in the Republic of Srpska may have gone somewhat under the radar. Arguably, however, it was no less important. The Republic of Srpska is the Serbian entity within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it wields considerable influence and veto power over key policies (generally exercised to the detriment of Western objectives). In the latest confrontation arising from the conflict in Ukraine, **it has taken a strongly pro-Russian position, preventing the creation of a solid anti-Russian front of satellite statelets in the Balkans and vetoing imposition of sanctions against the Russian Federation by Bosnia.***

For all these, as well as a number of other compelling reasons, **Srpska's government has been targeted for destruction by the West.** Destruction in this particular case is not an exaggeration since the ultimate goal is more than mere regime change. In the estimate of Western powers and their intelligence apparatus (correct in this case) the Serbian population which under the terms of the Dayton Agreement controls slightly under half of Bosnia is overwhelmingly pro-Russian and intuitively anti-NATO. Therefore, Western thinking goes, nothing approaching even limited statehood should be permitted to them, strategically situated as they are deep in the rear of the Western alliance.

The government in the Republic of Srpska, which since 2006 has been overseen in various capacities by **Milorad Dodik**, has no doubt been an irritant to the collective West, and it was often targeted for replacement by compliant local Serbian collaborators. While regime change in the Republic of Srpska was always the minimal objective, Western policy makers regarded systemic change as by far the preferred option.

In the Bosnian context, for Western powers that means **the dismantlement of the system of governance enshrined in the Dayton Agreement which in 1995 ended the armed conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

The Dayton agreement provided for two autonomous ethnically defined entities, the Serb

Republic and the Muslim-Croat Federation, and a weak central administration in Sarajevo with few effective powers assigned to it. Clearly, Western governments had viewed Dayton from the start as merely a transitional and not a permanent arrangement, leading relatively soon thereafter to the establishment of a strong central government, which they could more easily control, and with greatly weakened and diminished constituent entities.

The steadfast opposition of the Dodik government to these planned encroachments over the last decade and a half has been the central political drama in Bosnia. In seeking to preserve the status of the Republic of Srpska as provided by the Dayton Agreement, [Dodik has sought political allies, and he found them in the Russian Federation](#) and lately also in Orbán's Hungary.

For the collective West, this stance of the Republic of Srpska leadership is intolerable. In order to remedy the situation, it has used the standard instruments at its disposal to instigate an "orange revolution" at least twice around election time, in 2014 and 2018. The current attempt is the third in the series.

In order to accomplish their maximum objective, the abolishment of the Republic of Srpska, Western policymakers have relied on two principal tools. Firstly, they have used Hague Tribunal judgments about Srebrenica to argue that the Republic of Srpska is a "genocidal entity" which does not have the moral right to exist in the modern world. In addition, they have engineered a judgment in the international court at Strasbourg convenient to their objectives. The judgment overrides the Dayton Agreement and holds that ethnically based internal distribution of powers, even if originally agreed to by the parties, is discriminatory and therefore unacceptable. (Belgium's strikingly similar constitutional arrangements are never cited as a problem.) The Strasbourg decision, enshrined in the [Sejdic and Finci case](#), aims to overturn Dayton's principal restraining provisions and impose the one man - one vote principle, which obviously would favor Bosnia's more compliant non-Serbian majority.

Enter Jelena Trivić, candidate for president of the coalition of Republic of Srpska's main opposition parties, whose common denominators are close and frequent social contacts with principal Western embassies in Sarajevo and strident anti-corruption rhetoric of the sort that in Gene Sharp's playbook usually sets the stage for orange revolutions. Never mind that many of these "anti-corruption" champions are recycled operatives of former West-friendly or at least cooperative regimes who are themselves waist-deep in corruption.

Apparently, allegations of such nature have not bypassed Mrs. Trivić herself because two weeks ago [a letter emerged](#), composed in fairly decent (though not impeccable) English and on what purports to be official US government letterhead, requesting a transfer of the equivalent of about \$10 million to the Trivić campaign. The jury may still be out on the authenticity of the compromising letter, but it fits in neatly with the known modus operandi in similar situations.

The color revolution playbook was followed faithfully on Sunday evening when Mrs. Trivić, not bothering to wait for the votes to be counted, unilaterally declared victory and proclaimed herself the next President of the Republic of Srpska. This-in-your-face Balkan Guido moment was greeted approvingly by her followers who poured into the street from her campaign headquarters to celebrate victory.

As election results were coming in, it soon became apparent that the victory celebration was

a bit premature and that Dodik in fact held a comfortable lead. It should be recalled that according to Gene Sharp's ideal contested election scenario there should be [a tight race](#) in which the opposition candidate favoured by Western interests could plausibly be portrayed as the real winner, inflaming the outraged masses to demand he or she be immediately installed regardless of the actual vote count.

It seems that the plausibility of Mrs. Trivić's asserted victory soon became questionable over the course of the election night, so much so that the victory parade was mysteriously called off shortly after it began. The following morning, on Monday 3 October, the main opposition figures from Mrs. Trivić's camp congregated at the British embassy in Sarajevo. Presently, there is no reliable information about the topics they discussed with the deputy ambassador, but it may plausibly be surmised that tactics to jump start the stalled orange revolution in the Republic of Srpska may have been high on the agenda.

Things appear to be quiet in the streets of Republic of Srpska's main cities and towns at the time this is being written. A plausible electoral theft narrative has not yet been formulated but it should not be discarded that British specialists might come up with a storyline sufficient to inflame the discontented masses. The third time may not be a charm, but further developments in the Republic of Srpska should be carefully monitored.

Both the Dodik government and its Western backed and financed opponents (judgement still being reserved on the now famous \$10 million letter, but there is plenty of other evidence of foreign interference and financial corruption of the political process) are plagued by low quality cadres. The Dodik administration's lacklustre performance in most fields other than vociferous nationalist rhetoric and its inability to attract to its ranks young, educated, and competent persons who could infuse a new life into the institutions of government and help move the Serb entity forward has alienated large segments of the population. On the other hand, what passes for the opposition also consists of familiar old faces of ambitious but incompetent politicians who have nothing to show for their long-time parasitism in public life. They are being embraced and financed by Western interests only as a stepping stone to the destruction of the Republic of Srpska, after which they will be discarded like the used toilet paper that they are, to be replaced by the crop of subservient WEF "young leaders" who are undoubtedly being trained to take over a centralised Bosnia and neutered Republic of Srpska as this is being written.

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Featured image: Dodik with Russian President Vladimir Putin, 22 September 2016 (Photo by kremlin.ru, licensed under CC BY 4.0)

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