

SELDI

South–East Europe Leadership
for Development and Integrity

Title of the Corruption in Serbia: Ups and Downs since 2000 Presentation

Marija Djordjević
Center for Liberal-Democratic Studies,
Belgrade, Serbia



**This project is funded by the European Union
Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Civil Society Facility (CSF)**
The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission



A project implemented
by a consortium lead by
the Center for the Study
of Democracy

Before October 2000

- A mixed political regime: in the middle between competitive authoritarianism and illiberal democracy
- A mixed economic regime: though (legal) obstacles for private property and free market were removed, government intervention was ubiquitous
- International sanctions that were strengthened by restrictive trade policies
- Clientalism as the major vehicle for survival of the incumbent government: the emerge of the new business elite close to the Government

The first bout: till March 2003

- The constellation was not sustainable and it imploded in October 2000
- The clear sheet surfaced, but it was not entirely used
- The bout of economic liberalization took place (price liberalization, foreign trade liberalization etc.), decreasing room for corruption
- The issue of transition justice (half baked answers (tax on extra profit)
- Criminal groups around the (former) government and secret service were not dismantled, leading to the PM assassination

Evaluation of the first bout: the seed of the failure?

- A breakthrough in the area of economic policies, smaller room for corruption
- Political will: a lot of PR exercises, but virtually no commitment
- Institutional weakness: no effective effort on institutions building
- Crucial dilemma of institutional reform: building new, specialized or strengthening the incumbent (possibly corrupt)
- Looking forward or fixing previous injustices: no clear cut answer
- The old business elite survived and regrouped

The second bout: political consolidation

- The window of opportunity for deep economic reform closed
- No incentive for further change due to budget surplus created by massive one-off selling of the firms
- The issue of political parties finances and their links to the business elite
- Increased government intervention and virtual stop of privatization (preservation of big SOE)
- Institutional building wobbling continues
- Though some CSO proved being committed to the anti-corruption cause, vibrant CS on the issue is missing

The final bout: back to square one?

- Full consolidation of the government, no separation of power whosoever
- Being cooperative abroad, regarding the foreign policy issues, using that as vindication for domestic (corrupt) politics
- Widespread network of clients in the business elite
- Administrative corruption decreased, but political corruption becomes the central theme
- Administrative corruption exists in the areas of public sector that are not reformed, i.e. provision of health services
- Scandal regarding the Anti-corruption agency “Who will guard us from our guardians?”

The last moment development: the importance of being arrested

- The program of the new Government: arrest the former government people, arrest the business elite, improve political ratings in country in which hatred against powerfull is imence.
- Consistent and sustainable program? Long-term political commitment?
- Rather not, no development on the institutional front. Full consolidation of the government, no separation of power whosoever.
- CSO are still much more involved in human rights and war reconciliation than corruption.

SELDI

South–East Europe Leadership
for Development and Integrity

Thank you !

Name: Marija Djordjević
E-mail: marija.djordjevic@clds.rs



This project is funded by the European Union
Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Civil Society Facility (CSF)
The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission



A project implemented
by a consortium lead by
the Center for the Study
of Democracy