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## **The District Prosecutor's Office Banja Luka will not conduct any investigation against Dodik**

*The Prosecutor's Office brought a decision not to conduct any investigation against Milorad Dodik in a very short time, while Dodik's speech given at the opening of the University Clinical Center Banja Luka was characterized as a pre-election meeting, without considering the allegations from the complaint and the controversial situation in which specific threats were directed to health worker.*

**Banjaluka, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018** – In a very short time the District Prosecutor's Office Banja Luka brought a decision not to conduct any investigation against Milorad Dodik upon a complaint submitted by Transparency International in BiH (TI BiH). The Prosecutor's Office issued an Order on non-conducting the investigation in which it stated that the reported offense cannot be considered criminal offense, but only a violation of the Electoral Law since the candidates and political subjects are free to express their political view at pre-election meetings.

TI BiH filed a criminal report against Milorad Dodik due to his statement made on the occasion of opening of the northern part and central block of the University Clinical Center Banja Luka that he was the one deciding who would get the salary increase, and that those who supported the strike of health workers would not be given the salary increase. In TI BiH opinion, Dodik thus committed the criminal offense of Violation of Equality of Citizens since, on the basis of the difference in personal status of citizens (membership in the Professional Union of Doctors of RS) he denied and restricted freedoms and rights to a person although they have been guaranteed by the Constitution, Law and ratified international treaty. In this case it means the right to salary and the right to freedom of union organization.

The Prosecutor has not considered the controversial situation at all, nor has she given any explanation regarding the allegations from the complaint. She immediately concluded that this issue is under the competence of the Central Election Commission. It is particularly interesting that the explanation treated the speech given by Milorad Dodik on the occasion of opening the University Clinical Center Banja Luka as a meeting of a political subject or candidate for a purpose of pre-election campaign, and that the candidates are free to express their political views at such gatherings, although in this case it was a speech of the President of RS given during the event organized by a public institution.

TI BiH particularly emphasizes that the Prosecutor's Office made a decision not to conduct any investigation against Milorad Dodik in a record time of 20 days, which is highly unusual, especially if we take into account how much time it is needed to make decision in other cases. TI BiH filed a complaint against such decision, and specifically emphasized how unacceptable is the opinion of the Prosecutor who defined the ceremonial opening of hospital as a political gathering within the pre-election campaign, and that even if it was a political gathering, it does not exclude the commitment of a criminal offense of depriving citizens of their rights and freedoms.

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