



DP REACTION TO THE VIOLENT RIOT OF JANUARY 8TH

The DP Presidency after an overnight meeting between Monday and Tuesday took strong stand as a reaction of the violent riot of January 8th against the institution of DP HQ by the organizers. In a declaration it is emphasized that “*the violent and pre-planned January 8 attack on the Democratic Party HQ, which seriously endangered the lives of members of the Presidency, the Parliamentary Group, the National Council, the National Assembly, and the party members themselves who were called to a protest that was announced as peaceful but was prepared to cause bloodshed among Democrats*”. The Declaration acknowledges that after the unprecedented destruction of the DP HQ, by individuals with criminal records and without any connection to the DP, ordered, organized, and instigated by the protest organizers; after the attempt to impose on the decision-making of most of all party institutions through acts of violence and threats of destabilization.

It decided to:

*“1. Strongly condemn the acts of violence, divisive language and rhetoric that incite conflict between DP members.;
2. **The expulsion from the DP**, and where applicable from all executive functions and from the Parliamentary Group of the DP, of members who have organized, incited, ordered, or exercised violence to **MP Sali Berisha and other former DP representatives**. Also it invited other DP representatives to publicly distance from the acts of violence against the DP and actions that harm interests electoral or political party of the DP.”*

Also since last Saturday of January 8th members of the DP Parliamentary Group, of the Presidency and National Council that were present during a meeting at the HQ or were harmed physically by protesters as the case of DP Secretary Roland Bejko, provided [publicly a personal testimony](#) they faced during that day. Through their testimonies they made a refutation to the claims of Berisha that the protest was peaceful. In fact, they provided personal experiences of the violence and harm they were faced. Also they evidenced the happenings with [video footage](#) where were seen the destruction of outside cameras on purpose by the violent protesters, the breaking of glasses, used of construction materials such as iron bars to destroy windows and break doors in their attempts to get at the upper floors of the DP HQ.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS FOR THE RIOT OF JANUARY 8TH

The violent protests of January 8th led by supporters of MP Sali Berisha and some former party representatives has started to be investigated by the Prosecutor Office in Tirana. In total 34 arrested suspected for violence where presented in the first hearing on last Wednesday. The Prosecutor has asked for 29 suspects the “obligation for appearance” while for 5 “house arrests”. The Court decided to put the majority of suspects under the “obligation for appearance” while for the rest it withdraw any coercive measure despite the fact of the unprecedented violence that occurred at the DP Headquarter on January 8th.

Meanwhile the Court evidenced clearly the fact that DP internally didn’t use any force or violence during the episode of violence by Berisha’s supporters. It concluded that after the inspection by law enforcement institutions there weren’t any illegal tools or substances that was used.

The judgement will continue for the majority of the suspects after the investigation of the Prosecution Office of Tirana for various [criminal offenses](#) such as "Property destruction" under Article 150 of the Criminal Code, "Disturbance of public order" under Article 274 of the Criminal Code, "Violation of rules on explosives, incendiary and radioactive substances" under Article 282 of the Criminal Code , "Illegal possession and production of weapons, explosive weapons and ammunition" according to Article 278 of the Criminal Code and "Unauthorized production, possession, purchase or sale of cold weapons" under Article 279 of the Criminal Code.

MP Berisha and MP Noka were summoned to testify on Thursday before the Prosecution Office in Tirana. hours Berisha [declared that](#) “My claims are true because no one can oppose me.”. he continued to reiterate that the protest



called by him was not violent, while he made some accusations using a language with reminiscences of a far-right politicians and used hate speech against ethnical and religious communities in North Macedonia and Kosovo. Despite his accusation for complicity to Basha of presumable terrorists and former ISIS fighters, the Prosecution Office of Tirana found out that there were only 5 citizens from Kosovo that were arrested as supporters of Berisha for suspects of violence against the DP HQ.

Also DP chairman Basha and DP Gen. Secretary Bardhi were [summoned to testify](#) a day later before the Prosecution Office in Tirana. After two. A day later Lulzim Basha and Gazmend Bardhi testified in front of the prosecution for two hours, later on Mr. Basha declared for the [media](#) that court should “*bring to justice those who organized, inspired and perpetrated acts of violence against us and incited fratricide*”.

DP has [called](#) the National Council meeting over the January 8th riot and party reorganization.

ESCOBAR INTERVIEW

After the January 8th protest US Special Envoy to Western Balkans, Gabriel Escobar, had an interview with Voice of America where he condemned the violence at DP [headquarters](#). “I think it’s deplorable that anybody would resort to violence and not the ballot box in an effort to take over a political party. And quite honestly, we condemn it.” Escobar said in an interview for [Voice of America](#).

SOCIALISTS DELAY THE WORK IN INQUIRY COMMITTEES

The work of the inquiry committees continues to be blocked by the majority. SP refuses to approve the work plan of the incinerators investigation commission. On the other hand, after the arrest of former Minister Lefter Koka, other data have emerged which require more time to be analyzed and discussed in the investigative commission. But the majority refuses to extend the time of the commission of inquiry.

The Parliament has established a special Inquiry Commission for the Incinerators after a request of Democratic Party. The investigative committee has sent requests for information from 12 institutions and is requesting to have presence of Prime Minister, previous ministers Gjijnuri and Cani and actual deputy prime Minister Ahmetaj. In addition, member of SP parliamentary group Alqi Bllako and Mayors Veliaj, Sejdini and Subashi have been requested to be questioned. The opposition has been denouncing this affair since 2016 and in 2018 a Parliamentary discussion happened between Jorida Tabaku and former Minister Gjijnuri!

TIRANA COURT RELEASES DATA LEAK SUSPECTS

A Tirana court has released the four individuals charged with leaking the personal data of over 690,000 Albanian citizens and residents in mid-December. Three were put under house arrest and the other under obligation to appear. The judge was previously the head of Lushnje Court in the 2000s where he oversaw the controversial Lushnja Gang case, before working in Kavaje, Elbasan, and now Tirana. He was also subject to a 2006 case for breach of duty and irregularities in declaring assets but the case was dismissed. The leak consisted of various Excel files including data such as name, age, phone number, ID card, salary, employer, and car registration.

DP CHAIRMAN BASHA MEETS WITH THE MEMBERS OF DP

DP chairman Lulzim Basha have started a tour of meetings with members of the Party and other group of interests. On Saturday Basha [met](#) with members of DP Youth Forum, when he [stressed](#) that the Albanian future belongs to the youngsters, and the moment that they take over “it will be another Albania”. He added that the youth should break the mentality on order for things to change in the country.



While on Sunday, Basha [attended](#) a meeting with members of DP branch of Fier district in an open talk with professionals, youngsters and party structures. Mr. Basha [stressed](#) that “DP members have been freed by the shadows of the pasts and the dinosaurs of the transition that have kept us hostage for a long time. Democrats have chosen the future, with hope and believe that through the values and the vision of DP, we would bring the change that all Albanian citizens expects and deserves.”



INTERNATIONAL MEDIA SHOCKED BY THE JANUARY 8TH VIOLENT PROTEST

The violent protest of January 8th shocked not only the Albanian public opinion but it was broadly [broadcasted and published](#) by numerous international media outlets. Among them [Reuters](#), [The Washington Post](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Breitbart](#), [The Jerusalem Post](#), [ABC news](#), [The Guardian](#) and many others with their objective reporting emphasized over the use of unprecedented violence and force by the demonstrators as supporters of Berisha to storm at the DP HQ and remove forcibly the elected chairman. Most of the international media argue that such actions of Berisha and his supporters came after he excluded by his party following a designation as non-grata for extensive corruption by the US.