



“PRONËSI ME DREJTËSI” ASSOCIATION

Defending Property, Pursuing Justice

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January 15th, 2012

OPEN LETTER

Her Excellency Baroness Catherine Ashton, European Union's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

His Excellency Mr. Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

His Excellency Mr. Pierre Mirel, Director of the European Commission's DG Enlargement Unit for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo Issues

His Excellency Mr. Ettore Sequi, Ambassador of the European Union to Albania

His Excellency Mr. Alexander A. Arvizu, Ambassador of the United States to Albania

Her Excellency Ms. Fiona McIlwham, Ambassador of United Kingdom to Albania

Her Excellency Ms. Carola Müller-Holtkemper Ambassador of Federal Republic of Germany to Albania

His Excellency Mr. Hasan Sevilir Aşan Büyükelçi, Ambassador of Turkey to Albania

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. FLORIAN RAUNI, AMBASSADOR OF AUSTRIA TO ALBANIA

Her Excellency Ms. Yvana Enzler, Ambassador of Switzerland in Tirana,

His Excellency Archbishop Ramiro Moliner Inglés, Apostolic Nuncio of Apostolic Nunciature of Holy See to Albania

On behalf of the National Association of the Expropriated Owners "Defending Property, Pursuing Justice", which has been asking since 1991 the restitution of the inherited property to its rightful owners who were unlawfully expropriated and maltreated by the former Albanian totalitarian regime, we would like to bring to your attention the following:

We have been reiterating this appeal on behalf of the principles under Copenhagen criteria: the respect for fundamental human

rights, the rule of law and democracy through law. With this appeal, we would like to ask you to review your attitude towards the property rights in Albania in compliance with Article 181 of the Albanian constitution, and the Council of Europe's reiterated requests, specifically Document No. 11115 on Albania (Article 191) of December 20, 2006.

Our association and the property owners community of every **town and** city can assist the Albanian government to physically restore the property to its lawful owners thus closing the most major source of corruption and illegal enrichment of the Albanian politicians and government officials who have usurped the public administration and the judicial system and is used as propaganda on the eve of any election campaign.

Our association, which represents the expropriated owners by the communist regime, has never been invited by the Albanian government to have its say on solving the property-related issues. Unfortunately, the international institutions as well as representatives of foreign democratic governments in Albania have accepted the solution to the property-related issues as it is propounded by the Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha who, in fact, is the cause, the epitome of the anarchy with the properties as well as the main opponent to the expropriated, rightful owners and an ardent defender of the fake property owners and invaders of properties created by his own policies since 1991. He and his party have ruled Albania the longest after the collapse of communism, he has ruled singlehandedly, uninterrupted from any challenge at all from his own party and, though both parties and most, if not all, the political class is culpable and beneficiary from the anarchy with the properties, he is the most responsible person because of the sheer power he has had and still have, because of his long, uninterrupted stay in power and his lack of understanding and unwillingness to solve this issue. Don't be mistaken, the same can be said for the previous and current Socialist Party leaders, we have no illusion of it, because the political class has no interest in solving this issue because this is the number one source of corruptive enrichment for most of them, because the leaders of both parties, when they have been in power at the local or national level, they both have shown total disregard for this issue worsening it over the years and showing they are totally incapable by themselves of solving it. It stands to reason that they would rather maintain the anarchy with the properties rather than restoring them to their rightful owners.

Unfortunately, the representatives of international bodies and of the foreign democratic governments in Albania continue to be deceived by the Albanian government. To date, none of them has yet called the Albanian government to account for the 8000 Albanians who are reported by the National Reconciliation Committee to have been killed because of the anarchy with the properties.

Paradoxically, but understandably why, on one hand, the Albanian government requests the offenders who occupy the rightful owners' lands and illegally construct buildings on them, to provide the government with only an affidavit and a photo to legalize them within a 45 days period. On the other hand, the same government requires the rightful owners, who were unlawfully expropriated for 45 years by the former Albanian totalitarian regime, to provide a list of over 30 documents, many of them from over 67 years ago that cannot be found, requests them to go, endlessly and pointlessly, through a corruptive judicial system, from one level to the other and the other and back to the first level, in a perpetuum mobile calculated move, to prove something that does not even exist (i.e. the maps of properties from over 67 years ago).

Even those owners who manage to provide the numerous required documents are hindered again from getting back their property from the Property Restitution Agency which subjects itself to hindering government policy instructions and to corruption. Consequently, the owners fail to get back their property rights even after many years and decades of a calvary of delays and torments. The so called compensation is a farce intended to mask the existing problems, and the more this compensation fraud scheme continues, the more social imbalances and negative developments will create. This is totally inconceivable for any logical mind that has the most basic human rights and the most basic fairness in mind.

We strongly believe the issue of restitution of the ownership rights to its lawful owners is easy to solve and it would be almost costless to the Albanian government because only the nationalization documents of the expropriated properties, which can be found in the state archives, would be enough to solve it. We do have an actionable plan on how to solve this issue, point by point, and we would be happy to offer it to any interested party.

The recent mafia-type assassinations of judge Skerdilajd Konomi, who was in conflict with the political property-related mafia, and of a National Intelligence Service officer, who was in charge of uncovering the corruption among the Albanian politicians and government officials who were involved in the illegal transferring of the Albanian properties to foreigners, is an indication that this mafia has infiltrated the political decision-making bodies and is tied up with the political interests of other countries, a mafia that has been working not only against the economic and social stability of Albania, but also against the EU interests in the Balkans.

Unfortunately, the indifferent attitude maintained by the leading ambassadors accredited to Albania has only favored this organized crime at political and government levels, which has created secret alliances against Europe and the Euro-Atlantic Alliance. Remembering Martin Luther King Jr. saying that “an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” and Frederick Douglass’ saying that “more men you make free (i.e. give them their basic human rights), the more freedom is strengthened, and the more men you give an interest in the welfare and safety of the state (i.e. by respecting their basic human rights), the greater is the security of the state (i.e. Albania, Balkans, Europe), we appeal to your most inner and intrinsic, most honest, fairest and most democratic institutional and personal conscience. This is the truth, it may not make us rich but it will set us free.

We will never give up our fight for our basic human rights and, under this light, we appeal you to urge and exert pressure on the Albanian Prime Minister and all the Albanian political class to prioritize and offer a real solution to the property-related issue, a solution that will restore the fundamental right of owning and preserving a property, a solution that will provide clear ownership titles and prevent the loss of other human lives. In the end, there is no property problem. The problem is whether the current Albanian political class have loyalty enough, honor enough, patriotism enough, humanity enough to live up to its own constitution and to the aspirations of humankind for the most defining, most universal and most natural, imprescriptible rights and values pertaining to human nature itself.

Thank you for taking your time to review and consider our appeal. Looking forward to hearing from you, we remain.

Respectfully,

Rrapo Danushi, Chairman

Albania’s National Association of the Expropriated Owners

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