



**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
REPUBLIC GEODETIC AUTHORITY**

Date: March 21st, 2019
Bulevar Vojvode Misica 39
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Attn:

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

5, Boulevard du Roi Albert II
B-1210 Brussels, Belgium

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

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European Public Service Union

40, Rue Joseph II
Box 5
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Sirs,

This letter is prepared by management of Republic Geodetic Authority (RGA) as a follow up and a response to letter addressed to you on March 13th, 2019 by Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Serbia, Trade Union Confederation "Nezavisnost" and Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions. It is opinion of RGA management that you would appreciate to have information from both sides. RGA management regrets that you were misled in the letter sent to you by trade unions and that their leaders have put European Public Service Union (EPSU) in the position to embarrass themselves in front of the Government of Serbia by sending letter of support for strikers among which there are those who made criminal offences.

Here are our responses point by point:

1. RGA respects international conventions such as ILO conventions 87 and 98 and all trade union rights. RGA management have dedicated offices in Kraljice Natalije Street, in Belgrade, in order to provide trade unions business premises to work and organize their activities freely. In addition, one company vehicle is also dedicated to support trade union activities. Unions can also freely organize their activities outside of Belgrade, in local cadastral offices around Serbia and they are doing so. It is said that there is "drastic violation of fundamental labour rights and freedom of trade union activities", however, in the letter sent to you by trade unions there are no arguments to support this claim.

2. Trade unions letter states that “agreement was violated immediately upon next payment of salaries”, however, there are no arguments to support this. There were no complains in written to calculation of salaries. Finance Department had calculated the employees’ salaries according to the Law on Civil Servants Salaries and the “Agreement on ending the strike” signed on January 21st, 2019. This has been checked multiple times, and the RGA’s Finance Department has not received any complaints until 15th of March 2019. when 8 employees, From Novi Sad and Pancevo, have submitted additional documentation to support payment of their overtime hours. Documents were immediately accepted by finance department and salaries were recalculated on the same day. **Head of one department in Novi Sad, who is also the presiding of the strike committee, Tatjana Samardzija, had refused to sign the overtime verification and her employees have not been paid overtime hours as there was no legal basis for that.** She also had enticed other employees in RGA to breach the provisions of the Agreement, which is the basis for the legitimate calculation of salaries (letter attached).
3. Director did not lay off trade union president Mirjana Jovanovic and her son Milos Jovanovic. Long-term leader of the JOS union whose mandate as a president has expired in 2018. **Mirjana Jovanovic** has been **sentenced to 8 months in prison for the criminal act of work ethics breach, after agreeing to plead guilty by the court,** and has been fired according to the law (court decision in attachment).

Her son Milos Jovanovic was not laid off, but his temporary contract that was signed until 31st of December 2018. has expired.

4. In their letter trade unions have claimed that there were “physical assaults on strikers”. RGA premises are covered with video surveillance and it is possible to follow up and see that there were no physical assaults on strikers.

Unfortunately, there are individuals sabotaging the RGA’s operation and embarrassing the unions and workers. **Members of strike committee Dijana Konstantinovic and Predrag Miljkovic are going so far to physically prevent the citizens to reach the front desks** in the largest front office in Serbia, in spite of earning their living from those very citizens, thus having the obligation to be at their service. The employees in the local offices are also staggering from forceful acting of the strike committee, who are barging into the offices of the Heads of local offices, without calling ahead or a simple knock on the door. In some areas, the employees wishing to work are subjected to verbal violence, being called immoral by the strikers.

5. It is also misleading from trade unions to you that they are expecting director to come to table to discuss and find solutions.

State (Republic of Serbia) is employer of RGA employees and salaries are defined by The Law on Salaries of State Employees thus salaries could be negotiated only with Government of Serbia (GoS), not with RGA director. This why The Agreement on ending the strike has been signed by Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs who was delegated to represent GoS.

The Agreement on ending the strike has been submitted to the Government of Serbia by the strike committee as the final document, without the option to negotiate, under the “turnkey” system. The Government had accepted and signed the document as-is, thus fully accepting the demands of the strike committee. Agreement approve RGA employees to have extended

overtime hours and request detailed documentation to be submitted. The RGA's management had fully adhered to the agreement when calculating the salaries; however, the strike committee had opted to divulge from their own demands and requested employees not to submit all necessary documentation necessary to legally calculate salaries. RGA management cannot provide the answer why trade union leaders have done that.

It is correct that there are around 3000 employees engaged in RGA, however it is only 40 who have not submitted complete documentation for calculation of overtime hours.

Out of 170 Cadastral Offices in Serbia only 22 declared that they are on strike, thus strike committee does not have the support of majority of employees.

6. Assistant of Director for Strategic Development and Head of Legal Department have been delegated to discuss with Strike Committee on behalf of the RGA Management about all issues related to salary calculations and other open questions, but no one from strike committee have contacted them yet.

The lack of foundation for this strike is notable from the fact that the RGA Director, Borko Draskovic, was noted the Reformer of the Year (attached). System-wide solutions were introduced in the working procedures of the cadastre to block the room for corruption and malfeasance, thus making the cadastre transparent, reliable, efficient and easily accessible, even though the mobile phones, for all citizens and businesses of Serbia. According to the latest Global Transparency Index in the real property field for 2018, Serbia had reached first place in Europe and fifth place globally regarding the progress made since 2016.

The RGA Director Borko Draskovic is the creator of the Crowd SDI idea, which was presented on the First UN Conference on Geospatial Information in China and the member of the United Nations experts commission on global geospatial information data management (UN-GGIM).

The address register has been improved by using the innovative modern technologies of global interest, and foreign universities are sending the proposals to get internship for their students in the Republic Geodetic Authority. Cadastral maps have been digitized for the entire Serbia, and all land registries have been scanned and stored in the RGA's Digital Archive database.

The World Bank had recognized the role of the RGA in the reforms of legal framework, with the objective to increase the number of women with the access to land and property ownership, and Borko Draskovic was recognized for contributing the study "Women, Business and Laws 2018" (attached).

One of the most significant achievements of the RGA Director is publishing two competitions for permanent employment in the RGA: 455 positions in April 2018 and additional 107 positions in December 2018. Additional 620 professionals were hired under the World Bank funded "Real Estate Management Project in Serbia". Another special achievement is regular organizing blood donations twice per year, for which the RGA was granted a special recognition by the Institute for Blood Transfusion of Serbia.

RGA management invites representatives of International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and European Public Service Union to visit RGA in order to personally check that trade unions' allegations are not true. All reforms implemented in RGA are according to EU standards and Contract signed with The World Bank. RGA goal is to make the cadastre transparent, reliable, efficient and easily accessible, however there is some resistance to those changes and it is articulated by union leaders and members of strike committee. Once again RGA

management regrets that you were misled by individuals that are not honourable representatives of unions.

This letter will also be forwarded to The World Bank, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, representatives of unions in Serbia and in RGA and to Serbian media.