

REPORT
ON
POLITICAL
EXTREMISM
IN
CROATIA

Special Report

Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Croatia

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Introduction

YIHR publishes this report in order to inform the relevant human rights and democracy mechanisms in the nation and abroad about the concerns arising from the activities of extremist political parties in Croatia. This report encompasses the analysis of public activities conducted by the political parties in Croatia which are following the principles and ideologies that target specific religious, ethnic, or other minority groups and which are denying genocide, crimes against humanity and other crimes committed during the conflicts in Europe through the 20th century.

Previous analysis has shown that political extremism in Croatia is mostly active on the far right end of the political spectrum. The characteristics of this ideology include nationalism, the idea of ethnic homogenization, plan for blending ethnic and state borders, anti-communism, denial of anti-fascism, Christian Catholicism as superior to other religions and religious communities, growing traditionalism and authoritarianism, resistance to the ideas of multiculturalism, open chauvinism and animosity towards LGBT population and traditional minority groups¹. Roots of this ideology can be found since the 1990s wars in Yugoslavia and Croatia.

This report encompasses an analysis of public activities carried out by four previously identified political extremist parties: Croatia Pure Party of Rights (HČSP), Croatian Party of Rights Dr. Ante Starčević (HSP AS), Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja (HDSSB) and Autochthonous Croatian Party of Rights (A-HSP). The analysis is based on media reports published in the timespan between 1 August 2015 and 1 August 2016, with the main sources of information being *večernji.hr*, *novilist.hr* and *index.hr*. Furthermore, this report includes an analysis of content retrieved from the official websites of the aforementioned parties.

YIHR recognizes that activities of the mentioned parties may negatively impact the process of reconciliation, as well as sustaining peace in the country and the region. Since the beginning of 2015 and the formation of the government which included far-right parties and politicians, Croatia experienced a rise of nationalism, attacks and obstructions against critical media and CSOs, historical revisionism, denial and relativization. That is why the main goal of the report is to point out activities of political parties which violate civic or human rights, or can may foster their violation.

Croatian Pure Party of Rights – Hrvatska čista stranka prava (HČSP)

The Croatian Pure Party of Rights (HČSP) is based on the legacy of the Party of Rights founded by Ante Starčević in 1861 and dissolved in 1929. In 1990, after Croatia became an independent country, the Party of Rights was renewed, but because of internal disputes it soon fragmented into several fractions, among which is HČSP, founded in 1992 by Ivan Gabelica. HČSP is a far-right nationalist party publicly known for having sympathy towards the Ustasha movement. As of June 2016, the President of the party is Ivan Pandža and the party's Secretary Luka Podrug.

On 26 September 2015, during the extensive migration of people through the Western Balkan route, HČSP organized a protest against the migrants' entry to Croatia and the migration policies of the European Union on Zagreb's main Square. One of the banner that they were carrying said 'Today refugee's tomorrow terrorists'. On 21 November 2015 during the commemoration of 24 years since the defense of Lastovo,



Figure 1: Official coat of arms of the HČSP party

¹Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia : Extremism: Recognizing a social evil, Helsinki Files, Vol. 34., 2014.

a war-afflicted village in Croatia with a significant number of Hungarian inhabitants, HČSP hosted the Hungarian right-wing extremist party Jobbik² that hold an anti-Semitic rally in Budapest in 2014³. After several Croatian media who have emphasized the fact that Jobbik has irredentist claims about certain parts of the Croatian territory, HČSP reacted by accusing these media of 'Chetnik⁴ propaganda'⁵. Previously, HČSP and its former President Josip Miljak have been prosecuted for sending an e-mail in 2013 to Nataša Jovičić, Director of the Memorial Site Jasenovac (former Ustasha concentration camp), in which they accused her as well of 'Chetnik propaganda'⁶.

In a public statement from 16 December 2015, HČSP accused Zoran Milanović, President of the Social Democratic Party (Croatian: Socijaldemokratska partija Hrvatske, SDP) of mentioning again HČSP „in the context of fascism, racism and other clichés“ as an attempt to discredit the Patriotic Coalition that HČSP is part of. They add that they cannot understand how Milanović dares „accusing someone of an alleged connection with one of the criminal ideologies,“ while members of his party should be prosecuted for all the crimes „committed by the Croatian Social Democratic Party since its foundation on 1 August 1937.“ They conclude by saying that, were they in the decision-making position, they would ban the SDP⁷.



Figure 2: members of HČSP protesting on Ban Josip Jelačić Square in Zagreb, Index.hr

This short statement encompasses several problematic moments. First, they reduced the condemnation of fascism and racism to 'clichés'. Second, considering their open usage of the Ustasha salute 'Za dom spremni' and honoring of some prominent members of the Ustasha movement, calling their connection with a movement that resulted in severe crimes 'alleged' may be interpreted as their negation of crimes committed by the Ustasha movement.

In January 2016, commenting the dispute between HČSP and HSP-AS caused by HSP-AS's accusations of HČSP's 'flirting with the Ustasha movement', HČSP's Luka Podrug said that considering patriotism as fascism is „adulating, traitorous and cowardly“⁸. In the same line, after President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović and Prime Minister Tihomir Orešković condemned the Ustasha movement and its Independent State of Croatia (NDH) during a meeting with Nicholas Dean, the representative of the US State Department for Holocaust issues in April, HČSP publicly

²<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/madarski-jobbik-u-mimohodu-za-branitelje-laslova-1039106>

³<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/hungary/10037377/Hungarys-Jobbik-party-hold-anti-semitic-rally-in-Budapest-after-ban-attempts-fail.html>

⁴Chetniks were a World War II movement in Yugoslavia led by Draža Mihailović. Amongst other military actions The Chetniks used terror tactics against the Croats in areas where Serbs and Croats were intermixed, against the Muslim population in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Sandžak, and against the Yugoslav Partisans and their supporters in all areas. Term Chetniks was also used to describe Serbian paramilitary forces during the war in Yugoslavia in early 90's.

⁵<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/madarski-jobbik-u-mimohodu-za-branitelje-laslova-1039106>

⁶<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/ukinuta-oslobadajuca-presuda-josipu-miljku-za-mail-ravnateljici-jasenovca-1087673>

⁷<http://www.vecernji.hr/izbori2015/hcsp-prijeti-sdp-u-zabranom-i-optuzenickom-klupom-1045460>

⁸http://www.novilist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Jos-jedna-stranacka-paravojna-postrojba-HCSP-osniva-Pocasni-pravaski-zdrug?meta_refresh=true

deprived them of their support, stating that „such constant and brutal lashing of their own people with certain historical myths of questionable plausibility is not only shameful, but also a national betrayal“⁹. In November 2015, Podrug complained about Croatian school books, media and culture being based on lies created by 'the winners of World War II'¹⁰. In July 2016, HČSP protested against the Serbian 'manipulation' and 'mythomaniac overstating' of the number of victims killed near Jadovno. After the protest, they have visited the grave of 'Ustasha Stjepan Devčić', as they explained¹¹. In all of these instances, the HČSP has explicitly denied crimes committed by the Ustasha movement and condemned anti-fascism as an anti-Croat ideology.



Figure 3: Members of HČSP at Stjepan Devčić's grave, hcsp.hr

Similarly to HDSSB's group for sports and recreation, in January 2016 HČSP founded their party section that resembles a paramilitary formation. *Počasni pravaški zdruq*, as they called it, is to perform only during formal protocols, especially when honoring important persons from the Croat history¹².

Reacting to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia's (ICTY) acquittal of Serbian paramilitary leader Vojislav Šešelj, HČSP's Frano Čirko reminded the public that his party does not acknowledge the legitimacy of the ICTY, since „it is absolutely unacceptable that the generals of the winning Croatian army, and thus the Republic of Croatia itself and the Croat people, are prosecuted in foreign political courts and that these courts judge whether we had the right to renew our country, to defend it and liberate it“¹³

After some Croatian citizens have interrupted the match between the Croatian and Czech representation during the World Football Cup in St. Etienne, France, HČSP issued a public statement in which they claim these 'hooligans' were hired by Zoran Milanović and Ranko Ostojić (politicians of the Social Democratic Party) and Vlaho Orepić (politician from parliamentary party MOST) – „an anti-Croatian ORJUNA¹⁴ group that cannot stand the joy of Croat people and stands full of Croat symbols“¹⁵. The HČSP used this

occasion in order to publicly connect parties of the left center with anti-Croat movements and thus negatively influence their legitimacy.

After the Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, acting Prime Minister Tihomir Orešković and acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Miro Kovač have unblocked the Serbian negotiation with the European Union, HČSP publicly

⁹<http://hcsp.hr/hcsp-uskratio-potporu-kolindi-i-oreskovicu-sad-jos-danas-odbija-ispricati-se-za-hirosimu-ali-zapovijeda-hrvatima-da-po-stoti-put-osuduju-ndh>

¹⁰http://www.novilist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Luka-Podrug-bi-mijenjao-povijest-jer-su-je-pisali-pobjednici-u-II.-svjetskom-ratu?meta_refresh=true

¹¹<http://hcsp.hr/hcsp-na-prosvjedu-u-jadovnom-protiv-sustavnih-velikosrpskih-lazi>

¹²<http://www.novilist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Jos-jedna-stranacka-paravojna-postrojba-HCSP-osniva-Pocasni-pravaski-zdrug>

¹³<http://hcsp.hr/reakcija-hcsp-a-na-presudu-seselju-naivni-smo-ako-jos-uvijek-od-zapada-ocekujemo-ispunjenje-nase-pravde>

¹⁴Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists, a political organization that existed between 1921 and 1929 and was against communism as well as against Croat and Serbian nationalism.

¹⁵http://www.novilist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Pandza-Nakon-svih-srpskih-lazi-Kovac-i-Oreskovicu-bila-je-dovoljna-rijec-Seseljevih-ucenika-i-oni-su-odmah-odblokirali-Srbiju?meta_refresh=true

attacked these politicians on 6 July 2016, stating that the HČSP is against Serbian membership to the European Union „because then we will live with them without borders and they will be able to freely inhabit our Adriatic [coast] and other parts, as they did during both Yugoslavias“¹⁶.

On 26 July 2016 HČSP issued a public statement against a music event that had to be held in the Spaladium Arena in Split and host some Serbian 'turbo folk' stars. HČSP described this event as 'anti-Croat' and as a 'Serbian party'. They stated that these singers represent the Serbian and Chetnic aggression in Croatia. „While the Croat Patriot Marko Perković Thompson is forbidden to have concerts through which he spreads love towards God, family and fatherland, we are hosting those who disseminate hatred and intolerance and whose compatriots caused sufferings of the Croat people,“ they wrote ¹⁷. By depicting every Serbian citizen as the 'representation of Serbian and Chetnik aggression' and connecting every Serbian citizen to those who have committed war crimes in Croatia, as well as depriving the collaboration between Serbian and Croatian politicians of support, they promote further intolerance between the two countries and interfere with the process of reconciliation in the region. In addition, Croatian singer Marko Perković Thomson is famous for using Ustasha symbols in his performances.

Following their years-long practice, most of HČSP's public letters and statements issued between 1 August 2015 and 1 August 2016 end with the salute used by members of the Ustasha movement – 'Za dom spremni!', and the same phrase may be found on their party symbol.

To summarize, in this period HČSP has several times celebrated the Ustasha movement and denied crimes committed by its members, relativized antifascism and antiracism and equalized them – as well as left center parties – with anti-Croat ideas, fostered hatred towards Serbia and Serbian people and acted against reconciliation in the region.

Croatian party of rights dr. Ante Starčević – Hrvatska Stranka prava dr. Ante Starčević (HSP AS)

Croatian party of rights dr. Ante Starčević (HSP AS) is a right wing nationalist party founded in 2009. First President of the party was Ruža Tomašić, conservative politician from Croatia, also a representative in the European Parliament. The party was named after Ante Starčević, a Croatian politician and ideologist from the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century who founded the first Croatian party of rights. His politics was aimed towards Croatian independence from Austro-Hungarian Empire and thus he is considered a founder of Croatian nationalism and is often referred to as "Father of the Homeland".



Figure 4: Official coat of arms of HSP-AS

HSP AS had one representative in the Croatian parliament (out of 151) from 2011 to 2015. The party got into coalition with Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) for the 2015 election, the biggest center right party in the country. After the post-election coalition with the party MOST, they were a part of the new coalition government which was the biggest political success in HSP AS's history. They had three party representatives in the Parliament: Ivan

¹⁶http://www.novilist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Pandza-Nakon-svih-srpskih-lazi-Kovacu-i-Oreskovicu-bila-je-dovoljna-rijec-Seseljevih-ucenika-i-oni-su-odmah-odblokirali-Srbiju?meta_refresh=true

¹⁷<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/desnicarski-pomak-sisao-s-uma-nismo-sigurni-da-srbija-ne-priprema-vojni-agresiju-na-hrvatsku/914495.aspx>

Tepeš, Pero Ćorić and Ivan Kirin. Tepeš was also a Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, highest political position that one member of HSP AS has ever achieved.

Party President is currently Ivan Tepeš and Chief Secretary is Pero Ćorić. HSP AS is a member of European Conservatives and Reformists group in the European Parliament. Major party principles are embedded into Croatian nationalism, conservatism and Christian catholic values. Prominent members of the party are usually using public statements to spread hatred and intolerance towards left wing parties, non-governmental organizations, LGBT community and Serbian national minority. They are also supporters of historical revisionism about the Nazi backed puppet state Independent state of Croatia which was ruled by the fascist political group called Ustasha. HSP AS is usually trying to reduce the atrocities and nature of the Ustasha regime which lasted from 1941-1945 on the territory of Croatia.

One of the first political moves made by the party after the Government was formed was trying to promote the cancellation of the Civil Partnership Act. This act enabled legality of same sex unions in Croatia. "The people have spoken in a referendum what they thought about the definition of marriage, everything else is manipulation of the left who did not respect the will of the people, and they deceived the people"¹⁸, he said.

The second policy that they were trying to implement through the Parliamentary Committee for Defense was aiming towards the militarization of society and spreading fear about potential country enemies. The party wanted to introduce compulsory military service for all male citizens. This service will "build up solid and stable men"¹⁹, said Ćorić pointing out that Croatia is surrounded by enemies. Before inciting the implementation of compulsory military service, members of HSP AS were expressing anti-migrant views and asking the Government to close Croatian borders because refugees are in their view a threat to national security.

HSP AS's usual way of spreading and inciting intolerance and fear is to give public statements in which they are trying to present left and center to left parties as a "communist threat", arguing that "biological substance of Croatian man is in danger"²⁰. Chief Secretary of the party Pero Ćorić calls the Social Democratic Party (SDP) "neocommunists"²¹, and is describing them as "anti-Christian" and "anti-Croatian"²².

On the 4th of March 2016 HSP AS held a general conference where party member Anto Kovačević have said that opposition leaders of largest social democrat, liberal and Serbian national minority party Zoran Milanović, Vesna Pusić and Milorad Pupovac should jump of the bridge in the river Sava²³ (which means that they should kill themselves) .

HSP AS also wrote a letter to the UN Security Council in which they stated that Vesna Pusić, a HNS (Croatian People's Party) member and UN general secretary candidate does not possess legality nor legitimacy to stand as a candidate for UN Secretary-General. Letter stated that "Vesna Pusić is a representative of a totalitarian,

¹⁸<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/hsp-ce-traziti-ukidanje-zakona-o-zivotnom-partnerstvu-vec-na-iducoj-sjednici-sabora/869937.aspx>

¹⁹<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/hsp-as-bi-da-obvezni-vojni-rok-stvori-cvrste-i-stabilne-muskarce-a-predsjednik-im-izbjegao-vojsku/878301.aspx>

²⁰<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/hspas--neka-se-milanovic-pupovac-i-pusic-bace-s-mosta-u-savu-/880578.aspx>

²¹<http://www.hspas.hr/index.php/novosti/item/1959-tepes-i-coric-s-murtera-kad-pobijedimo-neokomuniste-u-hrvatskom-saboru-ce-biti-kriz-od-tri-metra>

²²<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/coric-s-gnusanjem-odbacujemo-najavu-smjene-najucinkovitijeg-ministra--hasanbegovica/898931.aspx>

²³<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/hspas--neka-se-milanovic-pupovac-i-pusic-bace-s-mosta-u-savu-/880578.aspx>

communist ideology"²⁴, although she is a member of a liberal democrat party which is a member of ALDE political group in the European parliament.

HSP AS claims that Vesna Pusić has no moral legitimacy for this position because in 2001 she stated that "The Croatian Government waged a war of aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina"²⁵ and thereby caused permanent and irreparable damage to Croatia, particularly in the field of foreign policy. In this way HSP AS is denying war crimes and nature of Croatian military actions during early 90's in Bosnia and Herzegovina which were proven by the judgments and work of ICTY, especially in the case of Aleksovski²⁶.



Figure 5: Ivan Tepeš at the protest on 26 January 2016, rti.hr

The threat of left wingers and communists was also emphasized when HSP AS made a public statement after the interrupted football match between Croatia and Czech Republic during the European football championship in France. In the statement, HSP AS, as HČSP, blamed the leader of the biggest social democratic party in Croatia for the incident although he had nothing to do with it. The statement emphasizes that the "communists" are to be blamed for this, ex-Yugoslavia secret service and Zoran Milanović (President of SDP) who controls them. They described the incident as the coup d'état in Croatia²⁷. In this way party members are trying to create anti-communist hysteria, and proclaim social democratic party as communist which is far away from the program and goals of SDP.

HSP AS is usually expressing radical religious views and advocates for policies which are trying to decrease civil rights at the expense of the religious feelings. Chief Secretary of the HSP AS Pero Ćorić gave a statement about the future party coalitions for the upcoming elections in 2016. He points out that: "the party's ultimate goal and dream is to make Croatia a non-secular state and to put a three meter tall cross in the Parliament, in Poland there is a two meter tall cross. If two thirds of Croats are Catholics then we must respect that"²⁸. HSP AS are also involved in historical revisionism about World War II past in Croatia. Party members are not condemning crimes committed by the Ustasha and successor organizations, instead they are glorifying the leaders of the fascist movements. Chief Secretary of HSP AS posted photos on Facebook which are depicting him photographed in front of the picture of Ante Pavelić, leader of Croatian fascist Ustasha organization and Nazi-backed Independent state of Croatia from 1941-45. He told the reporters that this photo was taken in his living room and that he also has photos of his uncle and father in Ustasha uniform exhibited in his living room²⁹.

Also, on 31 July 2016 HSP AS members were present at the ceremony of the erection of the monument dedicated to Miro Barešić in village Drage in South Croatia³⁰. Barešić was a Croatian nationalist and terrorist, member of the

²⁴<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/otvoreno-pismo-zastupnika-pusic-je-nanijela-nepopravljivu-stetu-hrvatskoj-ne-moze-biti-sefica-una/889951.aspx>

²⁵ibid.

²⁶<http://www.icty.org/case/aleksovski/4>

²⁷<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/ludludjihsp-as-huliganski-ispad-je-djelo-zorana-milanovica-i-udbe/900547.aspx>

²⁸<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/pero-coric-krajnji-je-cilj-da-u-saboru-stoji-kriz-od-tri-metra-i-da-hrvatska-ne-bude-sekularna-drzava/902804.aspx>

²⁹<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/coriceva-fotografija-s-poglavnikom-pavelicem-u-pozadini-uzburkala-javnost-objasnio-je-o-cemu-se-zapravo-radi-1098847>

³⁰<http://www.hsp-ante-starcevic.hr/index.php/novosti/item/2020-izborni-stozer-hsp-as-i-domovinske-koalicije-na-otkrivanju-spomenika-hrvatskog-viteza-mire-baresica>

Croatian National Resistance organization. This organization was founded in 1957 by Maks Luburić, former Ustasha general. Barešić was convicted for the murder of Vladimir Rolović, Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden in 1971.



Figure 6: Photo: Pero Ćorić in front a picture of Ante Pavelić, Index.hr

Besides neglecting the atrocities of totalitarian regimes during World War II in Croatia, party members were also denying war crimes that were committed during the war in Croatia by Croatian forces. The ICTY³¹ and ICJ³² clearly stated in their verdicts that during military operation Storm, conducted in 1995 by Croatian army and police forces, serious crimes were committed against the civilian population, mostly of Serbian nationality. Since the State of

Croatia has never apologized for the crimes, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights invited citizens to sign a petition of apology to all the victims of operation Storm. HSP AS called this initiative a "subversion act", an "insult of Croatia"³³, and was threatening with criminal charges towards YIHR. In this way they were denying innocent victims of this military and police action.

HSP AS is a party that is clearly expressing its nationalism through intolerance towards the center to left political options, national and sexual orientation minorities. Since the party became a part of the executive Government, it also got more media spotlight. That is why HSP AS in last year rarely organized street actions and focused more on public statements. But in January 2016 president of the party Ivan Tepeš participated in a protest in Zagreb³⁴ which expressed "concerns about the overall media freedom situation in the country"³⁵. On 19 January 2016, the Zagreb-based television 'Z1' broadcasted a political TV show 'Markov trg' (eng: 'Mark's square – named after St. Mark's square where the Croatian Parliament, the Government and the Constitutional Court are based). The show's host, Mr. Marko Jurič, concluded the broadcast with the hate speech towards the Serbian national minority in Croatia³⁶. Electronic Media Agency is the regulatory body for electronic media in Croatia, and it received over 400 complaints by the viewers and studied the content of the TV show, concluding that these words violated Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media that prevents the encouragement and spread of discrimination and violence. Thus, the Agency decided to sanction the 'Z1' television by disabling them to broadcast their program for 3 days (72 hours). Croatian veterans' association HVIDRA organized a protest on 26 January in front of the Agency. The protesters were cheering nationalist chants and threatening during the march and during the protest in front of the Agency. According to police information, around 5.000 people participated in the protest, while the organizers

³¹<http://www.icty.org/case/gotovina/4>

³²<http://www.ici-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=3&PHPSESSID=1b26ed7874e931cebeac63deba0f6ecf&case=118&code=cry&p3=4>

³³<http://www.hsp-ante-starcevic.hr/index.php/novosti/item/2014-dr-sc-vlatka-vukelic-nitko-se-nema-pravo-ispricavati-za-velicanstvenu-vojno-redarstvenu-akciju-oluja>

³⁴<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/branitelji-idu-u-prosvjednu-setnju-u-znak-potpore-televiziji-z1-1055024>

³⁵<http://www.osce.org/fom/226861>

³⁶<http://www.novolist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/HND-ocijenio-da-je-poruka-autora-emisije-Markov-trg-govor-mrznje>

claimed the turnout to be between 8.000 and 10.000 people³⁷. An especially worrying occurrence was that Ivan Tepeš participated in the protest because he was the Deputy Speaker in the Croatian Parliament.

Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja – Hrvatski demokratski savez Slavonije i Baranje (HDSSB)

Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja (HDSSB) is a right-wing, national conservative party whose political aim is decentralization of Croatia, implementation of politics of regional development and strengthening of local and regional government³⁸. It was founded on 6 May 2006 in Osijek by a group of local former members of the Croatian Democratic Union (Croatian: *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, HDZ). Since 2014, the party's President has been Dragan Vulin, but the most exposed member has been Branimir Glavaš, the party's founder and convicted war criminal. Branimir Glavaš was a major general in Croatian army during the war in Croatia from 1991 to 1995. In 2009 he was found guilty at the Croatian court for war crimes, torture and murder of Serb civilians in town Osijek during the war, and was sentenced to 10 years in prison³⁹.



Figure 7: Official coat of arms of HDSSB



Figure 8: Branimir Glavaš, leader of HDSSB. Source: slobodnaevropa.org

HDSSB has been a parliamentary party for years. In the 6th convocation of the Parliament, they had 4 representatives and in the 7th convocation 7 of them. After the parliamentary elections in 2015, two members of HDSSB became parliamentary representatives – Branimir Glavaš and Josip Salapić. Since the party's establishment, members of HDSSB, especially Glavaš, have been famous for controversial media appearance. In the period we have monitored, 1 August 2015 to 1 August 2016, Glavaš caused controversy on 12 August 2015 by publishing on his Facebook profile a picture of himself with a bottle of 'Führerwein' – with a label depicting Adolf Hitler⁴⁰.

After several media have reported this case criticizing Glavaš for the picture at stake, Glavaš responded by causing another controversy. The next day, 13 August 2015, he published a picture of a bottle of wine with a label which depicts Josip Broz Tito, followed by his comment as follows: „Does a wine with the name of one of the 10 biggest criminals in the world's history bother you? In Kumrovec [Tito's home village] they sell red and white wine with a

³⁷<http://www.jutarnji.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/foto-savska-opet-paralizirana-masovni-prosvjed-branitelja-zbog-gasenja-z-1-televizije-juric-i-bujanec-urucili-mirjani-rakic-cetnicke-kape/91459/>

³⁸<http://www.hdssb-psz.hr/onama/statut.html>

³⁹<http://www.index.hr/mobile/clanak.aspx?category=black&id=432915>

⁴⁰<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/branimir-glavas-ljetne-veceri-provodi-u-dobrom-drustvu-pijuci-fuhrerwein-1018927>

picture of the communist criminal Tito on its bottles, and it is written on the label that this wine was produced of grape from a vineyard whose owner was Tito. Cheers!⁴¹

While it is his right not to agree with the politics led by Josip Broz Tito, the attempt of minimizing Hitler's crimes by comparing him to Tito is certainly unacceptable. In early October 2015, Glavaš has founded the Slavonian Hawk Guard (Croatian: *Slavonska sokolska garda*). The group, dressed in black, military-like uniforms with boots and berets and carrying Croatian flags, is explained to be the party's section for sports and recreation. When asked by journalists why is a guard in black uniforms needed nowadays (alluding to black uniforms worn by members of the Ustasha movement) and what do black uniforms have to do with a sports club, Glavaš replied that the black color was chosen because it looks „elegant and solemn“⁴².



Figure 9: Comparison of uniforms between Slavonian Hawk Guard and fascist Ustasha uniforms. Sources: *Večernji List*, Youtube

Soon afterwards, on 19 October 2015, leaders of HDSSB accompanied by the Slavonian Hawk Guard went to the Croatian Parliament in the center of the country's capital in order to submit the list of their candidates for the upcoming parliamentary elections. The Guard was lined up on Marko's Square in front of the Parliament building by their 'trainer', with whom they were shouting a military salute: „faithful to the country – always faithful!“ (Croatian: *Domovini vjerni – uvijek vjerni!*)⁴³.

Even though they did not explicitly point out any connection between the Slavonian Hawk Guard and the Ustasha movement, or any military group as a matter of fact, nor they used hate speech in their performance, their visual and verbal expression vividly revokes the Ustasha movement. Apart from the matching black uniforms with berets, their military salute resembles Ustashes' official salute – *Za dom spremni!* – whose usage is punishable under Croatian law. Such performance can by no means promote peace and reconciliation; on the contrary, it revitalizes a historical period marked by crimes and prosecutions based on national belonging, and thus fosters an atmosphere of intolerance and hatred.

Autochthonous Croatian Party of Rights – Autohtona hrvatska stranka prava (A-HSP)

⁴¹<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/nakon-hitler-glavas-nazdravlja-kumrovackim-vinom-s-likom-tita-1019097>

⁴²<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/glavas-o-osnivanju-slavnonske-sokolske-garde-nije-to-vojna-postrojba-to-je-sportsko-rekreacijski-klub-1029252>

⁴³<http://www.vecernji.hr/izbori2015/celnici-hdssb-a-uz-slavonsku-sokolsku-gardu-predali-liste-1031709>

Autochthonous Croatian Party of Rights (A- HSP) is a right wing and nationalist party. It was founded in 2005 but got its actual name in 2009⁴⁴. Party never had a representative in the parliament and was never successful on state or local elections. President of A-HSP and most prominent member is Dražen Keleminec. Major party principles are embedded in Croatian nationalism and anti-communism.

A-HSP is a party which glorifies fascist Ustasha political organization. On the official web pages of the party, the Ustasha chant "Za dom spremni" (Croatian: ready for home) is clearly displayed on the home page⁴⁵. This salute was used during Nazi backed Independent state of Croatia from 1941-1945.



Figure 10: Official coat of arms of A-HSP

Figure 11: 'Zadomspremni' is visible in the down right corner of the picture, hrvatskipravasi.hr

Because A-HSP is not represented in the local or national government bodies, it mostly focuses its activities on street actions and public assemblies. At the assemblies, party members are often expressing political messages which are targeted against Serbian national minority, LGBT community or left wing parties and organizations. For the 2015 election campaign A-HSP announced that if they will be a part of the government they would abolish civic education curricula and NGO's which are promoting LGBT rights⁴⁶.

On 28 February A-HSP organized party army lineup on the main city square in Zagreb. Around 20 party members were lining up carrying Croatian flag which resembles the flag of the Nazi-backed Independent state of Croatia which existed from 1941-1945. Almost hundred antifascist protesters gathered right next to them to make a counter protest⁴⁷.

⁴⁴<http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/dalmacija/split-zupanija/clanak/id/81508/osnovana-autohtona-hrvatska-stranka-prava>

⁴⁵<http://www.hrvatskipravasi.hr/>

⁴⁶<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/ahsp-ukinut-cemo-lgbt-udruge-i-ovrhe-otpisati-dugove-povecati-mirovine-za-15-posto-/849841.aspx>

⁴⁷<http://www.vecernji.hr/hrvatska/keleminec-postrojio-stranacku-vojsku-na-trgu-bana-jelacica-1064067>

A-HSP got huge publicity after a series of assemblies and protest actions which they organized in small Croatian town Srb in July 2017. A-HSP members had put up a tent and a camp in the town Srb, right in front of the antifascist memorial. The memorial was set up by Yugoslav government right after the end of the Second World War to commemorate rebellion of Srb residents against Nazi backed Independent state of Croatia regime. A-HSP members tried to organize "lectures about homeland war" with some of the lectures insulting Croatian Serbs, civil society activists and politicians. Party members claimed that they were trying to defend Croatia from Yugoslavs and Chetniks for the dignity of homeland war. From 7 July 2016 party members camped in front of, what they call "Chetnik monument". They were threatening Serbian community not to organize antifascist commemoration on this place ever again⁴⁸. On 17 July police removed their tent and displaced the party members from the site of the antifascist memorial.



Figure 12: Members of the A-HSP in front of the antifascist monument in Srb, hrvatskipravasi.hr

On this 27 July CSO's, antifascist and Serbian community organizations are commemorating rebellion of Srb residents against Nazi backed Independent state of Croatia regime. A-HSP members wanted to make counter protest but they were stopped by the police because some members of the party were wearing shirts with Ustasha signs. That is why the party members blocked the traffic on the nearby road as a sign of protest⁴⁹.

⁴⁸<http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/pravasi-se-ne-daju-iz-sume-ovo-je-agresija-hrvatske-policije-na-domovinski-rat/906721.aspx>

⁴⁹<http://www.novolist.hr/Vijesti/Hrvatska/Obiljezavanje-obljetnice-u-Srbu-Zene-pjevale-Thompsona-da-bi-omele-Mesicev-govor-predsjednici-kritike-zbog-uklanjanja-Titove-biste>

REPORT ON POLITICAL EXTREMISM IN CROATIA



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