

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Friday, 21 January 2022 1:25 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) ; Rachel Moseley
Subject: Serbia/Rio TPs - attached for reference [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Attachments: Talking Points - Serbia-Rio Tinto Mine Closure 21 Jan 2022 v1.01.docx

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Dear s22(1)(a)(ii)

Please find attached for reference the TPs on Serbia/Rio Tinto. We have added you all to the distribution list, however in case there are any issues attaching now for reference also.

Kind regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Eastern Europe & Western Balkans Section
Latin America & Eastern Europe Branch | Europe & Latin America Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
T s22(1)(a)(ii) | E s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to their elders past, present and emerging.

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

**Australian Government****Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade****MEDIA TALKING
POINTS
DISTRIBUTION:
STANDARD****Topic: POLITICAL-ECONOMIC****Subject: Serbia – Rio Tinto Mine closure****Originating Division: ELD****Version Date: 21/1/2022****Version: 1.01****Reason for Update:** New
talking points**Expiry:** 21/04/2022**Talking Points**

- Disappointed by the Serbian Government's decision to revoke Anglo-Australian Company Rio Tinto's licenses to explore and mine lithium in Serbia
 - This comes after national protests against Rio Tinto's lithium mine in Serbia.
- This is a decision for the Serbian Government.
- We note the strong economic benefits of this significant investment by Rio Tinto in Serbia
 - a \$2.4 billion investment was approved by the Rio Tinto board in July 2021.
- Lithium is an important part of transitioning to a low carbon economy.
- s33(a)(iii)
- s4(1)(1)

Any use or disclosure of personal information about individuals and the incidents contained in this background should not be made public. To do so may constitute a breach of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Background

On 20 January, Serbia's Prime Minister Ana Brnabic advised of the Serbian Government's decision to revoke Rio Tinto's licenses to explore and mine lithium. Prime Minister Brnabic stated "we have fulfilled all the demands from the environmental protests and have put an end to Rio Tinto in the Republic of Serbia," and "all decisions [linked to the lithium project] and all licences have been annulled".

This decision comes on the back of a referendum held on Sunday 16 January, where constitutional amendments, primarily focused on judicial independence needed as part of Serbia's bid to join the EU, were proposed, and accepted by voters. Whilst the vote was supportive (60.48% voted yes), voter turn out was low (approx. 30%) and according to

preliminary results, voters in Belgrade voted against the proposed changes (54%). s33(a)(iii)

For some months, large anti-Rio Tinto campaigning has been underway in Serbia including in the capital, Belgrade. Local media has been saturated with virulent anti-Rio content, and activists continue to plan protests and disruptions to company activities. s33(a)(iii)

Rio Tinto has developed a significant proposed project in Western Serbia, the Jadar (lithium-borate) project, s47G, with an investment of \$2.4 billion approved by the Rio Tinto board in July 2021. Rio Tinto discovered jadarite (a lithium sodium borosilicate mineral) in Serbia in 2004, near the city of Loznica in western Serbia, s47G. Jadar was intended to produce battery-grade lithium carbonate, a critical mineral used in large scale batteries for electric vehicles and storing renewable energy. In addition, Jadar would produce borates, which are needed for the development of renewable energy equipment such as solar panels and wind turbines. If developed, the deposit could supply a substantial part of global demand for lithium, providing a significant boost for the Serbian economy in the long term. There is strong interest by European car makers in a European source of electric car battery inputs.

s33(a)(iii)

Handling Notes

Media Interest

Approval	
Consultation	Post
Author	s22(1)(a)(ii), ELD; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cleared by	Lynette Wood; FAS ELD

Distribution	
Media Liaison Section, SES, HOMs/HOPs, STO Directors, Secretary's EO and Senior Executive PAs, A-based public affairs officers, A-based HOM PAs, FMO, MTIEO, PMO	

and PM&C addressees.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

; Moseley, Rachel; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Version: 9.0

Created at 21/01/2022 10:18 AM by s22(1)(a)(ii)

Last modified at 21/01/2022 1:17 PM by s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

**Australian Government****Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade****MEDIA TALKING
POINTS
DISTRIBUTION:
STANDARD****Topic: POLITICAL-ECONOMIC**
Subject: Serbia – Rio Tinto Mine closure**Originating Division: ELD****Version Date: 27/1/2022****Version: 1.04****Reason for Update: New
talking points****Expiry: 21/04/2022****Talking Points**

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- Lithium is an important part of transitioning to a low carbon economy.
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s47F(1)

s47F(1) + s47E(d)

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s33(a)(iii)

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Cleared by	Lynette Wood; FAS ELD

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s22(1)(a)(ii)	; Moseley, Rachel; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Version: 15.0

Created at 21/01/2022 10:18 AM by s22(1)(a)(ii)

Last modified at 27/01/2022 4:15 PM by s22(1)(a)(ii)

Feb 2022

Serbia – Rio Tinto Mine Closure

Handling Note: ELD leads on Serbia. s47G

Key Responses/Top Lines

- Regret the Serbian Government's decision to revoke Anglo-Australian Company Rio Tinto's licenses to explore and mine lithium in Serbia
 - This comes after widespread, ongoing protests against Rio Tinto's lithium mine development.
- This is a decision for the Serbian Government.
- We note the strong economic benefits of this significant investment by Rio Tinto in Serbia
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s33(a)(iii)

s4/G

s47F(1)

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s33(a)(iii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: FW: [External] Cancel meeting today [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: s47F(1) @riotinto.com>
Sent: Wednesday, 2 March 2022 6:16 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: [External] Cancel meeting today [SEC=OFFICIAL]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender.

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

10th March looks good, any time except between 3-4pm.

Please share an invite.

All the best,
s47F(1)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47F(1)

Rio Sava Exploration d.o.o. Beograd
Bulevar Milutina Milankovića 1i
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OFFICIAL

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s47F(1)
Sent: Monday, 17 January 2022 12:32 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: FW: Rio Tinto: Teach in Embassies [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47F(1) has sent this email asking us to pick a date and select a team from the embassy to participate at their "teach in session" to present the Jadar project to the embassies. They would appreciate our response by the end of this week.

Grateful for your advice on this.

Regards, s47F(1)

From: s47F(1) @riotinto.com>
Sent: Monday, 17 January 2022 12:25 PM
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Rio Tinto: Teach in Embassies

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s47F(1)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47F(1)

From: s47F(1)
Sent: Monday, January 17, 2022 12:22 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au; s33(a)(iii)

Cc: s47F(1) @riotinto.com>; s47F(1) @riotinto.com>

Subject: Rio Tinto: Teach in Embassies

Dear colleagues,

As agreed before the holidays, we will organize teach in sessions to present the Jadar project to the embassies.

We have scheduled two time slots for it:

1. 27th of January, 12.30-14.00
2. 3rd of February, 12.30-14.00

Location of the teach ins is Navigator Building, Milutina Milankovica 1i, 5th floor, Rio Tinto office.

Can I please ask you to pick one of the dates and get back to us by the end of this week? Also, please provide list of the attendees from the embassies that would like to participate.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a nice day.

s47F(1)

Rio Sava Exploration d.o.o.
Bulevar Milutina Milankovića 11
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RioTinto



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From: s47F(1) @riotinto.com>
Sent: Thursday, 20 January 2022 4:32 PM
To: s33(a)(iii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au> s33(a)(iii)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: s47G s47F(1)

You don't often get email from s47F(1) @riotinto.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender.

All,

s47G

Regards,

s47F(1)

Rio Sava Exploration d.o.o.
Boulevard Milutina Milankovica 1 i, floor 5
11070 Belgrade, Serbia
M s47F(1)
T s47F(1)

I'm sending this message now because it fits my commitments. I don't expect that you will read, respond to or action it outside of regular hours. Should an immediate response be needed, I will contact you directly or clearly articulate the urgency in the subject line.



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Stevan Vasic

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 27 January 2022 4:14 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Media: "Go-Change": 20 year ban on lithium and borate mining [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

Dear all,

Today s47C public figures have sent a joint letter to the opposition calling them to unite, to come forward with one presidential candidate, to control election process and ballot boxes etc and request that 8 conditions be fulfilled upon change of the regime.

In one of these eight points i.e. requests, they ask that all controversial projects which are endangering health, nature, cultural heritage and infrastructure come to an end. They also request that responsibility of all those responsible for initiating or carrying out these project should be assessed and further processed. The list of these projects would be made by a special body made out of non /party experts.

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 27 January 2022 3:54 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Media: "Go-Change": 20 year ban on lithium and borate mining [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Media platform: **Voice of America**

Date: **26 January**

Article headline: **"Go-Change": 20 year ban on lithium and borate mining**

Calling on citizens to come to the protest on Thursday at 7pm, the leader of the "Go-Change" campaign, Savo Manojlovic , assessed that it was a way to fight for the last request, i.e. a complete ban on lithium and borates mining in Serbia for a period of 20 years.

Presenting the fact that the company Euro Lithium is conducting exploration in Valjevo in search of ore, Manojlovic said at the press conference that the abolition of the spatial plan 'Jadar' made it impossible to carry out construction in that area, but that did not mean that it was prevented on the territory of Serbia.

According to Manojlovic, this ban should be implemented legally and it is possible to adopt amendments to the Law on Mining at an emergency session of parliament, which would prevent the excavation of lithium and borates in the whole of Serbia.

" I would like to emphasize that the President of the Republic mentioned the one-year moratorium before this. We reject the one-year moratorium because it would be a kind of fraud to bridge the per-election period and insist that this issue be resolved before then. Otherwise, we will continue with any kind of pressure, both in terms of a public campaign and in terms of pressure on the streets until the adoption of this request ".

Nenad Kostic , professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Iowa , said that he had an insight into the patent application that Rio Tinto submitted to the authorities in the USA, and in his opinion it is alarming because water from the Drina is needed to dilute sulfuric acid.

"The Drina does not belong only to Serbia, but also to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Republika Srpska. I have not heard that our government has consulted with the governments of neighbouring countries whether they agree to have someone use the Drina , " Kostic said and added that the jadarite processing solution is from the 19th century and does not to believe that there could be some great technological discoveries.

" I'm ready to wait 10, 20, 30 years, no matter how long it takes for Rio Tinto or some other company to develop something that I think is not possible. And that is green mining. Green mining - it's cold fire and dry water "Those two things don't go together ."

He also added that people must be aware that the story of batteries as a "passport to prosperity" is a misleading term and reminded that the battery must be charged from some energy, and that in Serbia that energy comes from "dirty and polluting coal".

Scientific advisor from the Institute of Chemistry, Technology and Metallurgy Dragana Djordjevic said that she said that the Spatial Plan of Serbia envisages the opening of 40 mines, of which ten are lithium and borates mines.

According to her, only the exploration activities have already caused ecological damage in the area of Jadar, an area where 19,000 people live satisfactorily from agriculture, dairy and beekeeping.

The impact on the environment of lithium exploitation from deep ore, such as the situation in Serbia, is one hundred to a thousand times greater than in surface exploitation in South America, Djordjevic pointed out and stressed that 70 per cent of all world lithium reserves are in the triangle Bolivia-Chile-Argentina, where lithium is extracted via simpler procedures from the surface of the land.

Less than one per cent of lithium is found in Serbia and Jadar, says Djordjevic.

BETA NEWS

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General Manager Radomir Diklic

Editor in Chief Vojkan Kostic

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& PRESS REVIEW

No. 6370

Belgrade, Tuesday, January 25, 2022

DAILY COVID-19 DEATHS IN SERBIA AT 35 AS 15,046 ARE CONFIRMED NEWLY INFECTED • DER STANDARD: SERBIAN GOV'T USING PROVEN TACTIC OF BLAMING FOREIGNERS FOR PROTESTS • FIFTH-GENERATION NATO FIGHTERS DEBUT IN THE BALKANS

Serbia

DAILY COVID-19 DEATHS IN SERBIA AT 35 AS 15,046 ARE CONFIRMED NEWLY INFECTED. In the last 24 hours, 35 people died of COVID-19 in Serbia, while 15,046 were confirmed to be infected with the coronavirus that causes the disease, it was announced on the covid19.rs website on Jan. 24.

Hospital care is currently being provided for 2,922 COVID-19 patients, 119 of whom require assisted ventilation. The number of samples tested in the last 24 hours was 30,998. Since the beginning of the epidemic in Serbia, the disease has claimed 13,306 lives, according to official figures.

Tatjana Adzic Vukicevic, the chief of the COVID hospital in Batajnica on the outskirts of Belgrade, said on Jan. 24 that 611 patients were hospitalized there. She specified that around 70 percent of the hospitalized patients were unvaccinated, and that the vaccinated patients did not have pneumonia.

The doctor told BETA in an interview that only two percent of the hospitalized patients had repeat COVID infections, adding that patients over 70 years of age were prevalent.

DER STANDARD: SERBIAN GOV'T USING PROVEN TACTIC OF BLAMING FOREIGNERS FOR PROTESTS. Faced with protests against a lithium exploitation project, the Serbian government is taking a page from Hungary and Russia's book and labeling non-governmental organizations foreign agents, reads an article in the Austrian daily Der Standard.

Belgrade sees "conspiracies against Serbia" everywhere, the daily reported, noting that Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic had recently pointed a finger at USAID and the Open Society Foundations, but also at the German Heinrich Boell Foundation and the Austrian River Watch NGO for orchestrating and bankrolling protests in Serbia.

Pretending that revolt over lack of transparency and expropriation, as well as environmental concerns, are not coming from Serbian society, but from outside is a mistake, the Austrian daily noted, according to a Jan. 24 post on the Euractiv Serbia website.

Additionally, calling out the Heinrich Boell Foundation indicates that the government in Belgrade, which enjoyed the support of Angela Merkel's administration, was not thrilled with the presence of the Greens in the new government in Berlin, the commentary read. The daily reported that finger-pointing at traitors in foreign pay was a well-known trope from Hungarian or Russian politics.

VIROLOGIST: OMICRON ALLOWS FOR RETURN TO SEMBLANCE OF NORMALITY. Dr Milanko Sekler, a virologist, has said on Jan. 24 that the Omicron variant of Covid-19 allows "a semblance of normal life to return," adding that "the virus has travelled two-thirds of the journey, and everything looks as it should for now."

Sekler said in an interview with the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation (RTS) that respiratory illnesses were typically more common in winter months, and that children should go back to schools and kindergartens. "Bacterial infections aside, respiratory virus infections are more common during winter, because people spend more time indoors. It's cold outside, and cold weather may lead to a sluggish immune response and a greater susceptibility to infection," Sekler said.

The virologist underlined that children "are ideal Covid-19 spreaders," especially in schools and kindergartens, spending a lot of time together indoors. It's therefore impossible to protect them against coronavirus or flu infections, Sekler explained.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY: TALKS ON JOINT CANDIDATES TO BE SUSPENDED OVER PONOS NOMINATION, OR DEMOCRAT LEADERS TO STEP DOWN. A member of the Democratic Party Main Committee, Aleksandar Dikic, said on Jan. 24 that "using a fait accompli technique, a party, which for unknown reason aspires to lead the Serbian opposition, nominated Zdravko Ponos as a presidential candidate," referring to the Freedom and Justice Party.

"Without any prior agreement or clear, credible parameters, without a series of meetings involving a broader spectrum of coalition partners, this hasty nomination is yet another proof that conflicts within

the opposition hadn't been resolved, and that there's more than animosity and unhealthy ambition behind them. The problems are much deeper," Dikic said in a featured article for the Danas newspaper.

He wants to know "where in all that lies the role of the Democratic Party, which has always been the connective tissue of the Serbian opposition," explaining that there were only two options left. "First, for the lack of sheer decency and for heedless messages that have reached the opposition public in the aftermath of the decision, the Democratic Party is suspending talks to make it possible for the opposition to run together in the next city and parliamentary elections," Dikic wrote in his article.

The other option, as he put it, was for "the Democratic Party Main Committee to pass a no confidence vote to the party leadership, if they were to propose a vote in support of the candidacy of Zdravko Ponos."

UNION: ZDRAVKO PONOS ACCEPTABLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. The Sloga trade union association said in a press release on Jan. 24 that it considered acceptable the Freedom and Justice Party's proposal that former Serbian chief of staff Zdravko Ponos should be the opposition's joint candidate in the coming presidential elections.

"We are convinced that Zdravko Ponos, as a man of integrity and undeniable military career, will certainly be a better candidate than the sitting president, who has identified himself with the state, who violates the Constitution and divides the people into 'his' and enemies to Serbia," the union association said.

The statement added that the unions expected Ponos, if elected president, to repair relations with the foreign investors that see Serbian workers as cheap labor and chattel, to take a firm stand on labor rights and to support amending labor legislation.

DJILAS: PARTY NOT TO GIVE UP ON PONOS. The Freedom and Justice Party leader, Dragan Djilas, said that he was convinced all opposition parties would support Zdravko Ponos as a presidential candidate, promising not to give up on his nomination.

"We have nominated Ponos because, among other things, this whole thing has been taking too long, and we want to bring it to an end. We have made a promise to the Serbian people that we'll nominate a candidate until Feb. 1, and Ponos is the man we have clearly proposed as our candidate to other opposition parties," Djilas said for the Nova paper on Jan. 24.

When asked to comment on the words of the People's Party president, Vuk Jeremic, that Miroslav Aleksic was their "first choice," and that it was the coalition partner that was insisting on Ponos, Djilas said that he didn't want to discuss statements by other politicians, because he felt that everyone should explain their own views.

"It was not party interest that had led us in making the choice... We have suggested to our partners and to all other opposition groups in Serbia, that they, too, should support Zdravko Ponos, and that all of us should rally around him in this struggle," Djilas said, making it clear that he wouldn't give up on the nomination, because he believed in Ponos.

POLITICIAN: REFERENDUM OUTCOME CAN BE

VIEWED AS GOV'T RATING TEST. . Aleksandar Marton, spokesperson for the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina, has said that the Jan. 16 referendum was binding, which means that the Serbian parliament was obligated to ratify the constitutional amendments it confirmed, amendments envisaged in Chapter 23 in Serbia's talks on accession to the European Union.

"This referendum process, like all those before it, was rife with lack of transparency. The public was deprived of serious debate on the topic of constitutional amendments. We in the [League] are particularly embittered that everything was reduced to the judiciary segment rather than a comprehensive reform of the political system, including the change of a bad, centralist Constitution," Marton told the Jan. 24 issue of the Zrenjanin daily.

In light of the fact that the current regime had supported the amendments to Serbia's most important legal document, while the opposition was divided, Marton believes the outcome of the referendum can also be viewed as a test of the government's ratings. "Of course, the voting should not be framed entirely in the political sphere, but the fact is that the result is a clear message to the incumbents that citizen discontent is rising. Opting for no was especially prevalent in the largest cities," Marton said.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCHDOG: SERBIA ILLEGALLY REPATRIATES BAHRAINI NATIONAL, IGNORING EUROPEAN COURT'S INJUNCTION. .

The Belgrade Center for Human Rights has warned that Serbia unlawfully extradited a Bahraini national to his home country on Jan. 24, despite an injunction issued by the European Court of Human Rights in the extradition procedure.

The Belgrade NGO cautioned that the decision to repatriate despite the Court's decision would "harm Serbia and its reputation before international bodies not only in this matter, but also in the context of the rule of law and respect for human rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and the Constitution of Serbia."

The organization explained that the man had been in custody in Serbia since last November, and that he said before the authorities he wanted to apply for asylum, because he was at risk of torture, political and religious persecution at home.

"Despite the decision by the European Court of Human Rights, which at the request of the Belgrade Center for Human Rights had issued an injunction to postpone the extradition until Feb. 25, 2022 pending the final ruling of the Court, Serbia carried out the execution, violating not only the ruling of the Court in Strasbourg, but also a series of international and domestic regulations mandating respect for and protection of human rights," the Belgrade human rights watchdog said in a press release.

Region

FIFTH-GENERATION NATO FIGHTERS DEBUT IN THE BALKANS. . The Netherlands is sending two stealth F-35 fighter jets to Bulgaria next spring, reinforcing the Alliance's forces in the Balkans and sending a stark message that a potential Russian intervention in Ukraine would be met with a tough response.

"NATO members have different views on the Eastern Question, and while some are sending reinforcements to the NATO members near Russia, some, like Germany, prefer a very restrained position. The Dutch will deploy two F-35A fighters in a Black Sea surveillance mission in April and May. For their pilots and technicians, the deployment of F-35A in a partner country will be a challenge, because it's a sophisticated aircraft and a very demanding one, maintenance-wise," the Balkan Security Network assessed on Jan. 24.

The portal went on to say that, before this deployment, another ally would send their reinforcements, as the Bulgarian Council of Ministers is soon to confirm a decision to accept the assignment of between five and seven Typhoon fighter jets from Spain.

SCHMIDT: EU COULD EASILY REACH AGREEMENT ON SANCTIONS AGAINST DODIK. Christian Schmidt, the high representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has said that the European Union could easily reach agreement on imposing sanctions against Milorad Dodik, the Serb member of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to reports in Sarajevo media outlets on Jan. 24, Schmidt told the German Der Pioneer that "we must make clear" that the state must not be divided and must be functional to prevent the current situation declining into a shooting conflict.

He said EU sanctions against Dodik would be a "good option," and was the direction that had his support, adding that the necessary EU agreement for that step was possible. I recommend that all international donors do that, not just the EU, Schmidt said.

Business

PRIME MINISTER: GOVERNMENT COMPLETELY PUTS A STOP TO RIO TINTO AFFAIR. Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic said on Jan. 24 that her cabinet had "completely put a stop to" lithium and boron exploration by the Rio Tinto corporation, and that no one else had requested exploration rights in that area.

Brnabic said to reporters in Belgrade that the Government of Serbia "has no intention" of granting "exploration rights" to any other company either. She explained that her cabinet had also abolished a Spatial Plan for special-purpose areas that had paved the way to jadarite exploitation and processing, and that a working group in charge of it had been disbanded as well.

The prime minister underlined that Rio Tinto no longer possessed exploration rights. "At this point I can't see how another company could step in, when there are no other exploration rights, and no one has

applied for those. We have no intention of granting exploration rights to anyone else either," Brnabic explained.

MINISTER: JADAR PROJECT SHUTDOWN LOSES STATE CHANCE AT SUPPLY CHAIN. Serbian Minister of Mining and Energy Zorana Mihajlovic said on Jan. 24 that lithium, alongside copper and gold, was a critical mineral worldwide and that shutting down the Jadar project had lost Serbia the chance to be among the first in Europe with a complete supply chain.

Appearing on Happy TV, she said that revoking the decree that instituted a spatial plan for the project had practically halted it, but urged that "we must not allow mining in Serbia to stop, because we are a mining country."

"Lithium, copper and gold are critical mineral feedstock in the world, and Serbia is rich in that feedstock. Talk about mining in our country should stop boggles the mind. It isn't true that Serbia is just a farming country and that there's no need to develop our industry, our mining," Mihajlovic said, adding that "the idea had been to have a lithium mine, a battery factory and an electric vehicle plant, which would have boosted Serbia's gross domestic product growth by another EUR15 billion."

Events Of The Day

EVENTS OF THE DAY - JAN. 25. BELGRADE - 9 a.m. - At German School (Deutsche Schule Belgrad), Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development Branko Ruzic and German Ambassador Thomas Schieb to sign agreement on cooperation between the two governments relating to the school.

BELGRADE - 10 a.m. - At Foreign Ministry, Minister Nikola Selakovic to meet with Turkish Ambassador Hami Aksoy;

- 12:30 p.m., Selakovic to meet with Michael Davenport, head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

Weather forecast

WEATHER FORECAST. Serbia will be predominantly sunny and very cold on Jan. 25, with light snow towards the end of the day and overnight. The daily lows will range from minus 12 to minus six degrees Celsius, and the maximum temperatures will reach between minus four and zero.

Belgrade will be fairly sunny and very cold as well. The temperatures in the capital will range from minus 12 to minus eight Celsius in the morning, and from minus three to zero during the day.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Friday, 6 May 2022 12:07 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Media: Elections are over, Rio Tinto returns - The scenario for which Vucic prepared the public is slowly coming true [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

Media platform: Danas

Date: 6 May 2022

Article headline: Elections are over, Rio Tinto returns - The scenario for which Vucic prepared the public is slowly coming true

Translation:

Rio Tinto wants to reopen negotiations on the Jadar Lithium project, said CEO and President of the company Simon Thompson, at the annual meeting of shareholders,. He added that the project "worth 2.4 billion dollars was blocked before the recent elections in the country", but that the company did not give up on it.

"We hope that we will be able to discuss all options with the Serbian government now that the elections are not on the way," he said, suggesting that the project was stopped for political reasons, not for public health and environmental protection.

True, even though Prime Minister Ana Brnabic claimed before the election that the Jadar project had been put to an end, only a few days after the elections , President Aleksandar Vucic began to slowly prepare the public for a different outcome. Environmental organizations also warned that although the spatial plan for the opening of the lithium mine was withdrawn, there was no signal that the branch of the Anglo-Australian company, Rio Sava Exploration, was withdrawing from the field. On the contrary, the registration of purchased property continued, and new offers arrived to the locals.

"That statement from the company's headquarters in a way justifies those who doubted that the Government's decision was final. However, the relevant ministry and the Government will have to decide on that, they are the ones who give permits. My expectation is that there will be no official reactions from the Government while it is in a technical status, but it will be postponed for some later moment. In any case, citizens should receive detailed information on what has been taken from the obligations so far, if any, and what will be taken into account when making the final decision on that issue" - says Nemanja Nenadic from Transparency Serbia.

Dragan Dobrasinovic from the Upright Serbia movement notes that Rio Tinto cannot return to Serbia because it never left it, and that the Government's decision, made under the pressure of protests due to the opening of the mine in Jadar, was just a masquerade.

"Nobody ever understood that this was a serious decision or a permanent commitment, because if they really wanted to, a law would be passed banning the exploitation of lithium and borates for a certain period of time. The speed with which they then abolished the spatial plan shows that it can also, perhaps faster, be restored. Especially since, due to the war, no significant arrival of investors should be expected, and Vucic will therefore quickly engage Rio Tinto or some other company. And the essence of the protest was not about the company, but the inherent risks of lithium exploitation. If the state changes its attitude towards the opening of the mine, the protests, which have proven to be an effective method, will be even more radical and strong". Additionally,

According to Sava Manojlovic from the Move-Change movement, who was one of the most important organizers of the protest against the opening of the mine, it is absurd that Rio Tinto announces that it will start negotiations on breaking the law with the Serbian government, which we pay to protect the same laws.

"Serbia is in front of two paths. One is the rule of law and it is obvious that the citizens are fighting for that path. We used the legal mechanism of the people's initiative, proposed a legally relevant solution. We want an expert discussion and to respect the words of experts who say that there should be no mines. Over 60 academics, professors and scientists stood behind scientific arguments. If the government and Rio Tinto abolish our basic constitutional rights upheld by institutions, then we will fight for them on the streets. Responsibility for any tensions and incidents will be on government officials who do not respect their own word and the laws of their own country. Where there is no justice for the people, there will be no peace for the government. And that is not a question of a threat, but of social laws" - says Manojlovic.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, 5 April 2022 5:34 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Twitter: Bojana Novakovic [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

OFFICIAL

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Earlier today Bojana Novakovic posted the following to her Twitter feed: *"I understand your frustration. But Vucic was victorious in Nedeljice [Gornje Nedeljice], not RT [Rio Tinto]. If we set aside the irregularities/intimidation, that same President, along with SNS, cancelled the Jadar Project on 20 January"*.

She was responding to other Twitter users who were criticising residents of Gornje Nedeljice, as there has been a deluge of social media traffic condemning local residents for voting SNS.

Some anti-Rio Tinto locals from Gornje Nedeljice say they are surprised by the election results. They claim:

- SNS, along with its allies, controlled polling stations and manipulated ballots
- Voting station staff were comprised of people with close family links to employees of Rio Tinto (Rio Sava)
- Voters who no longer have permanent residence in Gornje Nedeljice (i.e. citizens who had previously sold their land/houses to Rio Tinto) were seen at polling stations

s47C

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Friday, 14 January 2022 4:24 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Media: Manojlovic: We have a solution by which Serbia will not need to pay compensation to Rio Tinto [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Follow-up on this story.

Media platform: **Novi Magazin**

Date: **14 January**

Article headline: **Manojlovic: Serbia will not need to pay compensation if the Spatial Plan for the Jadar Project is abolished**

Today, the representative of the 'Go – Change' movement, Savo Manojlovic, requested the abolition of the Spatial Plan of the special purpose area for the Jadar Project [and the opening of a lithium mine in Serbia] and the introduction of a moratorium on lithium and borate exploitation for 20 years.

At a press conference in front of the building of the Government of Serbia, Manojlovic stated that the Spatial Plan for the Jadar Project was adopted because of the company Rio Tinto and that it is the legal basis for the company's business in Serbia. "If this spatial plan does not exist, there is no legal obligation for Serbia to compensate Rio Tinto," Manojlovic said.

He said that a lot of irregularities were found in the Spatial Plan: it does not contain valid data on the life of the mine, a feasibility study has not been done and there are no studies on the ore reserves. Manojlovic pointed out that the potential revocation of permits granted to Rio Tinto for exploration in Serbia, which was mentioned by representatives of the government, will not affect that company because they will certainly expire soon, and the exploration is complete.

Commenting on the statement of the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, that a moratorium on that project should be put in place for a duration of one year, Manojlovic stated that it was said in order to calm down the situation before the upcoming elections. "The government and the Assembly have to implement our requests in a concrete way by 20 January 20, otherwise we will start collecting 30,000 signatures for the people's initiative," he pointed out.

Dragana Djordjevic, scientific advisor at the Institute of Chemistry, Technology and Metallurgy of the University of Belgrade, supported the initiative presented by Manojlovic, explaining that the state allows activities harmful to the environment and destroys the highest quality areas of Serbia. "The Ministry of Environmental Protection gave permission last summer to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment, even though Rio Sava (a subsidiary of Rio Tinto) did not meet all the requirements, and the planned technology is dangerous for the environment," she stressed.

Representatives of 'Go – Change' handed over 290,000 signatures to the Government of Serbia for the petition entitled "Rio Tinto, leave the Drina".

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: Friday, 14 January 2022 11:41 AM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au>

Subject: Media: Manojlovic: We have a solution by which Serbia will not need to pay compensation to Rio Tinto
[SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Media platform: N1

Date: 13 January

Article headline: **Manojlovic: We have a solution by which Serbia will not need to pay compensation to Rio Tinto**

Savo Manojlovic, director of the Go-Change (Kreni-Promeni) initiative, announced that on Friday at 13:00 he would present a draft of the people's initiative and a solution according to which Serbia will not have to pay any compensation to Rio Tinto if it bans lithium mining.

"We have a proposal for a legal solution according to which Serbia will not have to pay a single dinar to Rio Tinto, provided there is no secret agreement with Rio Tinto. We will publish the draft of the people's initiative and the solution tomorrow, Friday at 13:00," Manojlovic posted on his Twitter account.

He previously announced that Kreni-Promeni will launch a petition that will demand a ban on lithium mining in Serbia, and that they will have to collect 30,000 signatures before handing it over to the Serbian Parliament.

It should be noted that the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, said last night that he assumes that the Government of Serbia will make a decision to ban the exploitation of lithium for the company Rio Tinto, while he believes that a moratorium should be enacted in relation to this issue.

Vucic said that the [Mining] Law was made for Rio Tinto in 2006, and that the company therefore has certain rights and claims against the state of Serbia.