

From inconsistency to satanism:

What pro-government portals blame NGOs for

Although the initiators of the Law on Foreign Agents have temporarily gone quiet, the campaign against Montenegro's civil society persists without interruption, driven by the same actors, and with a clear aim – to suppress the critical voices coming from non-governmental organizations.

Pro-government portals supporting the parliamentary majority are publishing near-daily articles attacking NGOs for criticizing those in power. These organizations are branded as foreign mercenaries, often accused – without basis – of bias and of refusing to defend the rights of individuals within the ruling structures.

Not surprisingly, for anyone familiar with Montenegro's media landscape, the most aggressive rhetoric comes from portals such as Borba and IN4S. Over 35 articles were published on these sites targeting NGOs between March and May alone.

Shame, satanism, and a “hunt for Serbs”

Borba and IN4S wrote, “Serb public figures, among them Professor Aleksandar Stamatovic, are ideal prey for the Centre for Civic Education (CCE).” The reason – Stamatovic became the target of public and NGO criticism for openly sexist outbursts and comments directed at a journalist during a show in which he appeared as a guest. Following this, the CCE called for an investigation into a scholarly paper Stamatovic had published twice, questioning whether it constituted plagiarism.

IN4S referred to a “[shame of the NGOs](#)” when the civil sector pointed to the role of former Minister of Defense Pavle Bulatovic in war crimes committed during the 1990s. The portal published [columns](#) full of inaccuracies, branding NGOs as “grant stars” and [accusing](#) them of being tasked with inciting tensions, organizing protests, and fomenting color revolutions.

Borba also published multiple [columns](#) by [Mitar Radonjic](#), whose own NGO has received state funds, in which he claims that NGOs are “civic-minded” only in name and that “under the guise of EU integration and human rights, they actively, daily, and according to a satanic agenda, spread various political pamphlets, and are by default ‘critical’ of anything that does not align with the policies previously implemented by the former government.” These columns further assert that NGOs pay particular attention to the education system, through which they “push” an agenda aimed at destroying the family as the basic unit of society and promoting anti-traditional values.

Inconsistency or What NGOs actually do?

A recurrent theme in these attacks is the portrayal of NGOs as inconsistent and biased. A notable example comes from [Vesna Bratic](#), former Minister of Education and now a member of the political party United Montenegro.

The CCE had publicly stated that the state may be liable for over a million euros in damages due to illegal dismissals of school directors during Bratic's term. In response, Bratic accused the organization of remaining silent on the state's payout of 75 million euros related to various legal disputes – though the majority of these fall outside the scope of the CCE's focus.

[IN4S](#) also accused NGOs of selective outrage, suggesting they only denounce threats when their own allies are targeted. This came after threats were reportedly made against Minister Slaven Radunović – an incident captured on camera and handled by the police, with no prior precedent for NGO reactions to such events.

The same narrative was echoed by politician [Vladislav Dajkovic](#), who claimed he, too, had been threatened and received no support from the civil sector.

Following this pattern, [Borba](#) accused NGOs of hypocrisy for not speaking out when Foreign Minister Ervin Ibrahimovic appointed former Speaker and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ranko Krivokapic as an advisor. Nevertheless, Krivokapic has not been convicted of any crime, nor has he been linked to corruption, and, as the Prime Minister himself stated, the appointment was legal.

"If the NGO sector is not ready to speak out now—when the very principles they champion are being openly undermined – then the question arises: whom do they really serve? The citizens, or party calculations?" concludes one of Borba's articles.

EU agreement sparks new wave of attacks on Montenegro's NGOs

The Montenegrin government's moves to forge investment deals with the United Arab Emirates have triggered a renewed wave of attacks on the country's civil sector. While officials tout the agreements as economic opportunities, NGOs have been raising red flags over transparency issues, deviations from EU procedures, and concerns that projects could threaten areas like the protected Long Beach in Ulcinj. Their criticism has not gone unnoticed—nor unpunished in the eyes of pro-government media.

As civil society groups gathered in protest outside parliament, United Montenegro leader [Goran Danilovic](#) attempted to deflect attention from the issue, declaring he would not defend the beaches "with the NGO sector until they stand up against discrimination toward Serbs and Montenegrins who speak the Serbian language."

Any opposition to the UAE Agreement was framed as servility to the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), even though the DPS did not vote against the deal. This narrative was used to attack investigative journalist and director of the Centre for Investigative Journalism, Milka Tadic Mijovic. The pro-government portal [Borba](#) referred to her as "a spearhead of the Second Family, aligned with the DPS."

The same portal [mocked](#) the President of Montenegro, Jakov Milatovic, for inviting civil society to participate in consultations.

Meanwhile, as the country awaits the outcome of a new parliamentary vote on the UAE Agreement, these portals continue to stir suspicion, suggesting, without any evidence, that NGOs are secretly forming a political movement.

"There have been no protests in Montenegro for some time, save for a few 'local' ones," [Borba claimed](#), "but calls for a 'battle for Long Beach' in Ulcinj, coming from segments of the opposition and civil sector, may represent future competition – not only to the ruling majority but also to the DPS, which appears incapable of delivering change either at the national level or within the party itself."

According to the very same [news portal](#), the controversy surrounding investor Mohamed Alabbar and the NGO reaction signals "something far deeper than mere protest against investment projects – it exposes a moment of true crisis within Montenegro's so-called civil society."

Defending the Constitution and secularism as a “sin”

Even consultations with the European Union are increasingly being condemned and distorted. [Borba accused NGOs of inconsistency](#) in demanding a response to the UAE Agreement but did not do so regarding the proposal to introduce religious education in public schools. The logic behind the distinction is clear: one involves Montenegro’s EU path and foreign policy obligations; the other concerns internal policy. However, in these attacks, such context is deliberately erased.

One particularly vitriolic attack was directed at the Centre for Democratic Transition (CDT) after the Constitutional Court upheld its initiative and ruled that declaring Saint Basil of Ostrog the patron saint of Niksic was unconstitutional. [IN4S](#) dismissed the initiative as “ideological engineering,” claiming CDT remains silent when human rights violations occur. In an apparent attempt to discredit the organization, IN4S illustrated the article with a photograph showing CDT leaders Dragan Koprivica and Milica Kovacevic in the company of Dusko Markovic – taken back when he served as Minister of Justice. The implication was clear: the CDT was painted as being aligned with the former ruling structures.

Though the proposed Law on Foreign Agents has faded from headlines, for now, its ideological champions remain active. Their campaign to discredit the civil sector and spread disinformation about NGO activities continues—relentlessly and without accountability.



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