

MEP questions Slovenian election outcome

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News

Slovenian MEP Milan Zver has raised questions about the legitimacy of his country's new government and called for the release of national opposition leader Janez Janša.



Following Sunday's election, political newcomer Miro Cerar, leader of the centre-left party which carries his name, looks likely to become Slovenia's next prime minister, despite forming the party just 41 days before votes were cast.

Cerar, a law professor and the son of an Olympic gymnast and a former justice minister, received 34.6 per cent of the vote while the centre-right Slovenian democratic party (SDS) received 20.6 per cent, in an election which saw a 51 per cent turnout.

However, Milan Zver, of the centre-right Slovenian democratic party (SDS), remains critical of the effect that the leader of the opposition Janez Janša's imprisonment has had on the outcome, and whether his incarceration is justified.

The so-called Patria affair which broke out in 2008, involved Janša being accused of receiving a bribe

from the Finnish company Patria, just 20 days before the general elections, which SDS say "significantly affected the upcoming elections".

"The 2014 elections to the national assembly were neither free nor fair, and the result of the elections is not legitimate"-Milan Zver

Despite the allegations being made in 2008, the bill of indictment against the former prime minister was filed just three months before the local elections in 2010. The trial began in September 2011, two months prior to the parliamentary elections, and the decision came 27 days before the European elections, all of which, SDS say, is very "convenient".

SDS also say that in all cases between 2008 and 2012 their party was ahead in the lead up to the elections.

Having received a 22 month sentence in June 2013, Janša's appeal was dismissed by the constitutional court of Slovenia and he started his serving his prison term on 20 June this year, just 23 days before the country's general elections.

Zver told the Parliament Magazine, "After nearly 2200 days of the decision making in different legal bodies, the Patria affair has already marked the third consecutive Slovenian parliamentary elections."

This time around, according to Zver, "A mere three weeks before the elections, SDS was prevented from equally participating in the pre-election activities by a politically orchestrated process and the physical removal of the SDS president Mr Janez Janša from the election campaign.

"The removal of Janez Janša from the political arena has passivised a large part of the electorate, which resulted in distorted election results," he claims.

"For this reason, the 2014 elections to the national assembly were neither free nor fair, and the result of the elections is not legitimate," he stated.

"Since the parliamentary elections were not fully legitimate, the government that will be formed on such a basis will also not be fully legitimate"-Milan Zver

And, he added, "Since the parliamentary elections were not fully legitimate, the government that will be formed on such a basis will also not be fully legitimate."

Zver elaborated, "These are the second consecutive elections where the party that won has been created a mere 41 days before the elections. In 2011 the party that won was created 43 day before the elections. Both parties had a lot of support from the media monopoly, as well as funding that till this day stays unknown."

"SDS members of the national assembly will closely follow the activities of this illegitimate government and the future coalition," Zver stressed.

"They will exercise parliamentary control and use all available democratic and legitimate means to eliminate the consequences of bad decisions, but will at the same time not assume any key functions in the national assembly.

"The result of the elections is in any way such, that the prevailing anti-reform and anti-European

parties that occupy the majority of seats, does not allow the future government to take Slovenia out of the crisis," he explained.

Although little has been said about the election result at EU level so far, it has been widely reported that the result raises questions about the country's reforms.

And as for the future of the centre-right party, Zver said, "SDS will continue to focus its efforts on measures for the welfare of the country and its people.

"The president of the party Janez Janša has, despite the fact that he's imprisoned, received the largest amount and the highest percentage of votes on the SDS candidacy list on the last elections."

He went on, "Citizens do understand that injustice has been done, therefore we urge all those responsible, especially the supreme and constitutional court, to immediately do everything to eliminate the reasons for the illegitimacy of the elections and after almost 2200 days finally decide to annul the unjust judgement and release Janez Janša."

"Citizens do understand that injustice has been done"-Milan Zver

The SDS allege that the sentence was awarded to the former prime minister for accepting a "promise for an unknown reward for his influence and intervention in the process of a public tender" for the purchase of armoured vehicles.

It is also claimed that Janša committed the offence on a date, in a place and through a method of communication that are all "undetermined".

The Slovenian deputy continued, "[SDS] expects the president of Slovenia [Borut Pahor], as well as the parliamentary majority, to jointly call on the competent courts to decide in the Patria case without further delay.

"Because the SDS is aware of the current situation of the country, it is willing to postpone, freeze and also cancel its planned measures arising from the positions on the illegitimacy of the elections until the decision of the court of last instance.

But, he concluded, "SDS can do that only under the condition that the parliamentary majority and the president of the republic publicly commit that they will enable at least partial reparation of the damage or call for new elections as soon as the court annuls the Patria judgement."

About the author

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