

# STATEMENT FROM THE FDU STUDENT PLENUM

## Chronology of Events

On November 22, 2024, students, and staff of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (FDU) in Belgrade gathered to commemorate the 15 victims of the Novi Sad train station collapse. During this peaceful, officially registered, gathering, an organized group violently attacked participants, leaving two students with minor injuries. The media identified several members of the group involved:

1. Milija Koldžić
2. Aleksandar Jokić
3. Dušan Kostić
4. Milena Aleksić
5. Ivan Stanišić

This incident triggered the following series of events:

**November 25:** FDU students held a plenum and initiated a blockade.

**November 26:** The FDU Student Plenum issued demands calling for the identification and sanctioning of all perpetrators involved in the attack, as well as the removal of implicated public officials. Students voted to remain in blockade until all demands are fulfilled by the relevant authorities.

**December 2:** Simultaneously, the Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Chemistry, along with other faculties housed in the former PMF building, and the University of Belgrade Rectorate were also blocked.

Since then, over sixty faculties across Serbia have joined the protests. The plenums of these faculties have adopted the demands of the FDU Student Plenum, with some adding their own demands.

**The first demand of the FDU Student Plenum**, announced on November 26:

*The filing of a criminal complaint by the Ministry of the Interior (MUP) with the competent public prosecutor's office in Belgrade against the individuals who physically attacked students and professors.*

Since the Ministry of the Interior (MUP) did not respond to the request within seven days of its submission, the full professor and dean of FDU filed a criminal complaint with the Third Basic Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade (Treće osnovno javno tužilaštvo u Beogradu) on behalf of the faculty on December 2.

Thus, the first demand of the FDU Student Plenum was fulfilled, not through the response of the relevant institutions as requested, but through the initiative of the faculty dean.

The second demand of the FDU Student Plenum, announced on November 26:

*We demand that the Ministry of the Interior immediately confirm the identities of the individuals mentioned above, who have been identified in media reports. We also demand that the remaining members of the organized group responsible for the attack on the students be identified, as their identities are still unknown to the public, and that they be sanctioned in accordance with the first request outlined in our statement. Additionally, if it is determined that any of them hold public office, we request their removal from these positions.*

This demand has yet to be fully addressed. Twenty-six days after the incident, to our knowledge, the Ministry of the Interior confirmed the identities of the individuals identified in the media reports, but has not yet identified the other members of the organized group involved in the attack.

**The third demand of the FDU Student Plenum**, announced on November 26:

*The removal of Milija Koldžić from his position as a member of the New Belgrade Municipal Council.*

**December 10:** At 6:00 PM, FDU students gathered in front of the New Belgrade Municipal Office to attend a meeting where the main agenda item was the dismissal of Milija Koldžić from his position. However, the assembly president, Živan Obrenović, prevented students, who had registered to attend, from entering and closed the session to the public and media. The FDU students waited for more than four hours in front of the municipal office for the results of the anonymous vote. The outcome was 26 votes against dismissal and 22 in favor, meaning Milija Koldžić remained in his position as a councilor of the New Belgrade City Municipality. During his speech at the meeting, Koldžić denied any wrongdoing, presenting himself as a victim of an attack by FDU students, despite video footage of the incident clearly contradicting his claims.

**The fourth demand of the FDU Student Plenum**, announced on November 26:

*The initiation of disciplinary proceedings against Aleksandar Jokić, coordinator of the distribution area at Elektrodistribucija Beograd (EDB), by the competent authority of EDB.*

**December 13:** Milija Koldžić and Aleksandar Jokić resign from their positions.

As with the previous demands of the FDU Student Plenum, the third and fourth demands were not fulfilled through the actions of the relevant institutions, but rather through the initiative of Milija Koldžić and Aleksandar Jokić themselves. Koldžić completely denied any responsibility for his involvement in the attack by the organized group on FDU students, while Jokić has not made any statement on the matter.

We consider that the third and fourth demands were fulfilled only symbolically, since both Koldžić and Jokić resigned under public pressure. However, these resignations were not the result of institutional action but rather symbolic gestures.

## RADIO TELEVISION OF SERBIA'S COVERAGE OF THE BLOCKADES

Since the beginning of the FDU blockade, the public broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) has never directly addressed the fact that FDU has been under blockade in its central news program, *Dnevnik 2*.

**November 26:** The FDU Student Plenum informed the media, including the public broadcaster RTS, about the blockade of FDU and all of its demands.

**November 29:** RTS, in its central news program *Dnevnik 2*, reported for the first time about the blockade in the context of a one-day blockade of the University of Belgrade Rectorate, but did not mention that FDU had been under blockade for four days at that point.

**December 2:** After the Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Chemistry, along with other faculties housed in the former PMF building, and the University of Belgrade Rectorate, entered into blockade, RTS reported on the demands of the student plenums of the University of Belgrade. The demands of the FDU Student Plenum and the blockade of FDU were still not mentioned.

Over the next five days, RTS did not report on the blockade or public actions of the FDU Student Plenum in its central news program, *Dnevnik 2*, despite being timely informed.

**December 11:** During the emergency address of the President of the Republic of Serbia at the Presidency building, a student gathering from the blocked faculties was held in front of the building. During the address, the president stated that all the students' demands would be fulfilled, listing only the first, second, and sixth demands of the University of Belgrade Student Plenum, without addressing the third, fourth, and fifth demands of the UB students, which are also the only demands of the FDU Student Plenum.

Later that evening, following the aforementioned address, *Dnevnik 2* began with President Vučić's statement, "All student demands have been met, but I do not expect the blockades to end." In this program, the demands of the FDU Student Plenum were again not read.

**December 12:** During a spontaneous student gathering in front of RTS's headquarters at Takovska 10, reporter Igor Topalović reported for *Dnevnik 2* from the scene. His report, reproduced in full, was as follows:

*"Today, in addition to the previous demands, students have added new ones. These include the filing of criminal charges by the Ministry of the Interior (MUP) to the competent public prosecutor's office in Belgrade against five individuals who, according to the students, physically attacked students and professors. Additionally, they demand that the MUP confirm the identities of these individuals, as well as the identities of others who, the students claim, also attacked them, but whose identities are still unknown. They are also calling for the dismissal of a member of the Council of the City Municipality of New Belgrade, who, according to the students, was one of those*

*who attacked students and professors in front of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts on November 22, when these protests began. Finally, the students have demanded the initiation of disciplinary proceedings against the coordinator of the distribution area of Elektro distribucija Beograd by the competent authority."*

RTS, in this broadcast, claimed that new demands had been added, even though they had already been partially reported ten days earlier. That same evening, the FDU Student Plenum sent a correction, which RTS did not publish. Since the start of the blockade, FDU students have regularly reminded the public broadcaster of their full demands.

**December 13:** During the *Dnevnik 2* program, RTS incorrectly stated December 2 as the date of the attack on FDU students and staff, although they had reported the correct date of the incident, November 22, 2024, just the day before.

In the same broadcast, RTS incorrectly attributed a demand to the students that no plenary body had made, concerning the resignation of Damir Zobenica, the Vice President of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

**December 17:** In the *Dnevnik 2* program, RTS again incorrectly stated December 2 as the date of the attack on FDU students and staff. They also reported that prosecutor Nenad Stefanović stated that the preliminary investigation was ongoing and that the prosecutor's office was acting on the complaint filed by the Dean of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts and taking actions within its jurisdiction.

Based on the ongoing selective and inaccurate reporting in the *Dnevnik 2* program, there is reasonable doubt about the reliability of the claims made by Radio Television of Serbia, including those related to the proceedings of the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office.

As of the time this statement was issued, the full demands of the FDU Student Plenary have not been covered in their entirety by the central news program of the public media service, Radio Television of Serbia, *Dnevnik 2*.

### **UPDATED DEMANDS OF THE FDU STUDENT PLENUM**

Twenty-four days since the blockade began, following the attack by an organized group on FDU students, physical violence against both students and citizens continues. Instead of serving the interests of all taxpayers who fund it, the public broadcasting service has kept citizens in the dark, effectively shielding the perpetrators of violence and the responsible institutions from accountability.

Through incomplete, biased, and untimely reporting, the public broadcaster RTS has violated multiple provisions of the Law on Public Information and Media<sup>1</sup>. As long as the actions of violent groups and individuals are not adequately sanctioned by the relevant institutions and covered by the media, we all remain at risk.

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<sup>1</sup> Law on Public Media Services – Article 4 and Article 7; Law on Public Information and Media – Article 2, Article 5, Article 6, Article 8, Article 9, Article 10, Article 15.

For all the reasons stated in this announcement, we are forced to update our demands as follows:

1. We demand the immediate questioning of suspects involved in physical assaults on students, as well as the examination of affected witnesses by the prosecution. Additionally, we urge the prosecution to request that the court impose detention measures to prevent the suspects from reoffending. Considering that the fifteen-minute blockades in memory of the victims have evolved into a daily occurrence, and that their continued freedom threatens the safety of all participants in the blockades.

The individuals who physically attacked students and professors, and who are known to the public based on media reports:

1. Milija Koldžić
2. Aleksandar Jokić
3. Dušan Kostić
4. Milena Aleksić
5. Ivan Stanišić

Given the ongoing violence against students and citizens, we are expanding the original list of suspects to include additional individuals identified by media reports as participants in other incidents since the start of the FDU blockade.

Participants in the incident near the Graphic School in New Belgrade (December 17, 2024):

6. Ratko Adžić

Participant in the incident near the Faculty of Law at the University of Belgrade (December 13, 2024):

7. Tatjana Makević Nikolić

Participant in the incident near Karlovačka Grammar School (November 29, 2024):

8. Dražen Đurđić, President of the Sremski Karlovci Municipality

Participants in the incident near Woodrow Wilson Boulevard (November 27, 2024):

9. Miljan Vračarević
10. Predrag Veselinović
11. Mladen Radenković, Head of the Department for Public Order and Peace, Belgrade Police
12. Aleksandar Čavić, Member of the Belgrade City Assembly
13. Petar Čavić
14. Gavriilo Kovačević, President of the Zemun Municipal Assembly
15. Dejan Paunović, Commissioner of the Rakovica Municipal Committee
16. Igor Đogić
17. Vesna Čingelić, Member of the Rakovica Municipal Council

18. Đoko Nenadić

19. Stefan Pantelić Stefanović, Member of the New Belgrade Municipal Council

Participants in the incidents in Novi Sad (November 5, 2024) and near Jovan Jovanović Zmaj Grammar School (December 16, 2024):

20. Luka Roganović

Should similar incidents persist, this list will be further updated.

2. We call on the Ministry of Interior (MUP) to promptly verify the identities of the above-named individuals and identify other members of the organized group responsible for attacking students, whose identities remain unknown to the public. We demand that all identified individuals be sanctioned in accordance with Demand number one of this statement and, if they hold public office, be immediately dismissed from their positions.

3. We demand that the editor-in-chief of the RTS news program publicly address the misinformation by broadcasting this statement, unedited and in its entirety, during the main news program *Dnevnik 2* on the public broadcaster RTS, in accordance with Articles 94 and 95 of the Law on Public Information and Media. Should the editor-in-chief fail to comply with this request, we will pursue further action as stipulated under the relevant provisions of Article 94 of the law.

As stated in all our previous announcements, we fully distance ourselves from any political parties or organizations.

We express our gratitude to the staff of FDU for their patience and unwavering support in our fight.

We will continue the blockade until all of our demands are fully addressed by the competent authorities.

Date: December 18, 2024  
FDU Student Plenum