



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
TO THE OSCE, UN AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
VIENNA**

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**Statement**

*on the inauguration of the President of the Republic of Croatia, prof. dr. Ivo Josipović, delivered by H.E. Neven Madej, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the OSCE, UN and other International Organizations in Vienna, February 25, 2010.*

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Secretary General, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

A week ago on February 18, the new President of the Republic of Croatia was sworn in. Prof. dr. Ivo Josipović won this highest office in two rounds of direct elections, and he succeeded President Stjepan Mesić.

Mr. Josipović was born in Zagreb 1957. Earlier he was known as a university professor of international law, a member of the Parliament and a composer. He is married with one daughter.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by a significant number of foreign dignitaries, including presidents of nearly all neighboring countries and those from the region of South East Europe. Croatia is grateful to all of them for their presence as a gesture of trust, friendship and partnerships.

In a speech delivered at this highly symbolic ceremony, President Josipović explained the motives for his candidature – a vision of European, prosperous Croatia. His key motivation was that of NEW JUSTICE (which was the motto of his campaign), the moral and legal foundation of a better society, of a Croatian State which we established, but in which justice and fairness are the values yet to be materialized in their full scope.

Consequently, he declared that time has come for Croatia to review and resolutely change whatever is wrong and makes people unequal, what divides and humiliates them. To achieve that he called on all citizens not to fear, keep silent or turn heads away, as courage triumphs over injustice.

Another objective of his Office is to make Croatia the home of democracy and human rights. These human rights are not only the fundamental human rights, but also the rights of elderly generations, the right to health, to education and to work. Any discrimination: material, religious, based on gender or sexual orientation, social or regional origin or any other grounds is inadmissible. In this context he stressed that national minorities and their culture are the wealth of Croatia and an integral part of its overall cultural heritage; they are the link with the countries of their origin, the same as the Croatian Diaspora is a bridge connecting Croatia to other countries.

A significant part of dr. Josipović's speech was devoted to the economic crisis and the hardship that hits many who are unemployed or work hard but cannot live off their work. Calling resolutely for change, for economic reforms together with the Government, for an uncompromising fight against corruption and organized crime, the President expressed confidence in the capability of the Croatian society to surmount the current difficulties and make our homeland a developed European country.

In his vision of a "NEW CROATIA", President Josipović went a step further seeing our country as a postmodern state which has to be ready to accept new standards towards climate change and environment protection, global introduction of information technology, new understanding of human rights, recognizing science, education and culture as generators of progress and preservation of our own identity in a global and multicultural society of this new (21<sup>st</sup>) century.

Mr. Chairman,  
Speaking about foreign policy, President Josipović singled out another strategic commitment which relates to achieving the goal of membership in the European Union after joining the NATO. With the Government, resolute steps will be taken to make the European dream reality. The EU membership is a challenge and we have to prove our capability to succeed in the large and demanding European market and fully adopt all democratic values of the united Europe. But this EU also represents a challenge to preserve our own national identity of a small nation with its national minorities within a large multinational community.

The development of good relations with neighboring countries and the entire region is of a strategic significance for Croatia, declared President Josipović. It is one of the priorities of the foreign policy that he will endorse. He emphasized *that it is necessary to resolve all open issues with neighbours, both border disputes and those that are a consequence of the war. Finding out the destiny of the missing persons, insisting on responsibility for war crimes, return of seized cultural heritage, reconstruction of destroyed facilities, return of refugees, guarantees for their safety and property restitution and solving of all open issues are the most important tasks for politicians in all countries. Peace-oriented policy has no alternative and the current generation of politicians simply has no right to leave problems to coming generations. He is convinced that partnership in the region, with leadership of economically and politically most successful countries, will result in prosperity of all countries which will culminate with the accession of all countries in the region to the EU.*

Croatia's foreign policy is focused on Europe and our neighbouring region, but we need friends everywhere in the world. Strategic partnership with the USA, relations with large countries such as Russia, China, and India, countries of Latin America, Africa, Asia and Australia those are all important partners.

There are many other important messages which could be presented from President Josipović's inaugural speech, but I shall finish echoing his words of promise to never give up fighting for a fair and just society...for a state in which citizens of Croatia will truly feel citizens of Europe and the World.

Thank you for your attention.