

Media Release  
Debate Format and Rules  
Beograd, Serbia  
April 17, 2012

RTS, CeSID, NDI and the OSCE mission to Serbia are organizing a series of TV debates with representatives/candidates of election lists who are participating in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Serbia. The call to participate in these debates was sent to the following election lists (ranked according to the order of their confirmation):

1. Izborzaboljiživot – Boris Tadić
2. Srpskaradikalnastranka – Dr Vojislav Šešelj
3. UjedinjeniregioniSrbije – MlađanDinkić
4. ČedomirJovanović – Preokret
5. PokrenimoSrbiju – TomislavNikolić
6. DemokratskastrankaSrbije – Vojislav Koštunica
7. IvicaDačić – SocijalističkapartijaSrbije, PartijaujedinjenihpenzioneraSrbije, JedinstvenaSrbija

The debates will air live on April 19, 26 and May 3 at 9:00 pm on the first channel of Serbian Radio Television.

The debate topics and broadcasting info is as follows:

**Debate 1:** (Thursday, April 19, 2012, starting at 9:00pm)

- Partisanship
- Fighting against corruption
- Healthcare

**Debate 2:** (Thursday, April 26, 2012, starting at 9:00 pm)

- Economy (industry and agriculture)
- Decreasing unemployment
- National debt

**Debate 3:** (Thursday, May 3, 2012, starting at 9:00 pm)

- Kosovo
- EU integration
- Improving the living standard

The first meeting between organizers and representatives of election lists was held at RTS on April 13, 2012. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss organization details, rules and structure of the debates.

At the meeting between organizers and representatives of election lists a consensus was reached regarding debate rules. Those rules are as follows:

## **RULES**

On organizing the TV debates “Word on Word”

### **Guarantee of participant equality in the debates**

All participants in the debate are equal. Each participant in the debate will be asked a total of 3 questions. Questions will be the same for all participants in the debate. All participants will have the same amount of time for their responses/presentation.

### **Rules related to allowed time for participant presentations**

The total duration of each debate is about 90 minutes. Debate time will be equally divided among all participants in the debate. Each participant will have a total of 10 minutes available.

The first 9 minutes will be divided in the following way: each debate participant will have available 3 minutes for each posed question. Of those three minutes, the participant will have **one minute** to answer the question and **two times one minute** which the participant can use to:

- Add on to his given answer
- Comment on an answer/s of other participant/s
- React to a comment or answer from other participants

In addition, each participant will have available one more additional minute for closing remarks.

### **Participant Time Management**

Time designated for participant responses will be managed by a clock controlled by the debate organizers. The debate participants will be able to see time left over for answering, responding or commenting. All participants will be warned by a sound signal when their designated time has expired.

While a participant is talking, only his or her microphone along with the moderator’s microphone will be turned on.

Debate participants will not speak outside of the time designated to them for responding, commenting and reacting. Participants will not interrupt each other or take over other participants designated time.

The debate moderator has the right to turn off the microphone for any participant not adhering to the rules related to debate time management.

The moderator reserves the right to exclude a debate participant from further participating in the debate if after two warnings he/she continues to not adhere to debate rules.

### **Rules related to the space where the debate will take place**

Representatives of election lists and their colleagues will be at RTS at the latest 30 minutes before the airing of the debates.

The podium positions as well as the order of answering questions will be chosen randomly at the beginning and this order will last for the duration of the debate. These decisions will be made before each debate at the latest 15 minutes before the beginning of debates.

The organizer will provide each participant with writing paper, pencils and water. Participants will enter the area foreseen for the debate "empty handed".

Each participant may bring with him/herself two colleagues who do not have a right to participate in the debate in any way.

The organizer has the right to bring up to 10 representatives of print and news media representatives into the area designated for debates. They will not have the right to participate in the debate in any way. The organizer reserves the right to chose which media representatives it will invite.

### **Debate Participants**

Election lists have the right to select a person who will participate in the debate as the election list representative. Election lists will inform the debate organizer as to who will represent their list at the latest 48 hours before the start of the debate. The organizer will inform representatives of election lists regarding all proposed participants. The participant list will be closed at noon, on the day before the debate is to take place. Up until that moment election lists have the right to change the designated person that will represent the election list in the debate. If the debate organizer does not receive any request for changes it will consider that the election list representative who was initially proposed will in fact represent the list in the debate.

If the election list fails to inform the organizer regarding their representative, it will be considered that that election list has declined participating in the debate. In this case, as well as in the case that the election list directly declines participation, the organizer will leave an empty stand designated for that election list and will notify the public of the reason for the absence.

Election lists have the right to chose the way that they will be announced/represented in the debates. Namely, if underneath the name of the

participant there will be a full or shortened version of the election list name. Election lists will send a notification to the debate organizer regarding their decision related to how they would like their list to be announced/presented at the same time as their decision as to who will represent their election list in the debate.

### **Other questions**

All other questions/issues related to the organization of debates, which are not covered by the above mentioned rules, are to be decided by the organizer based on personal or debate participant initiatives. In making any decisions, the organizer will consult will all debate participants ensuring equal treatment of all.

### **The organizers:**

Zoran Stanojević, Urednikdebata, RTS

Marko Blagojević, Operativnidirektor, CeSID

Thomas Kelly, Direktor, NDI Srbija

Dragana Solomon, Direktorodeljenjazamedije, Misija  
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