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## **SERBIAN OFFICIALS CONDEMN MONTENEGRO UNIFICATION EVENTS BAN**

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Balkan Insight (29 October 2018)

Officials and politicians in Serbia on Sunday condemned Podgorica's decision to ban ceremonies marking the 100th anniversary of the unification of Serbia and Montenegro.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said he doesn't understand the decision, which he said prohibits people in Montenegro from thinking differently and having a different view of the past.

The decision was also condemned by the Serbian Defence Minister Aleksandar Vulin, who said it was hard to explain that there are Montenegrin politicians who speak in such ugly terms about Serbia and the Serbian people, who make up a third [of the population] of Montenegro, newspaper Danas reported.

The pro-Russian Serbian Peoples Party, which is part of the ruling coalition, said in a press release that Serbia should withdraw its ambassador in Montenegro for consultations until Serbs are allowed to freely express their national feelings.

We believe that Serbia must be determined and send a sharp demarche to the government of Montenegro, demanding that it stop this practice of forbidding Serbs from marking this great jubilee, the party said.

As World War I drew to a close, an assembly that convened in November 1918 in Podgorica decided to unite the old kingdom of Montenegro to the Kingdom of Serbia. The formation of Yugoslavia followed.

The union lasted for the best part of a century, but in 2006 Montenegro split from Serbia, following an independence referendum.

The Montenegrin government has insisted that the Podgorica Assembly led to the disappearance of Montenegro as a state.

It condemned all proposed celebrations of the centenary which it said dishonoured the memories of all those in Montenegro who were killed during the [Yugoslav] dictatorship, which began at the Podgorica Assembly.

However Serbian organisations in Montenegro have said that they are planning celebrations of the unification of Serbia and Montenegro across the country.

On October 26, local authorities in the Montenegrin town of Pljevlja banned one such event, saying

it contradicted the state tradition of Montenegro, Serbian public broadcaster RTS reported.

Serbian organisations said they would file criminal complaints against the Pljevlja authorities. But despite the ban, the event was subsequently held in a local church.

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-officials-ask-countermeasures-against-montenegro-10-29-2018>

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Kaynak/Source: