

The Human Rights Center based in Srbobran, Serbia faces an action instituted by an employee of the "Detelinara" Police Station, Novi Sad. The action was entered to the Court at Srbobran and the Human Rights Center finds it revolting. The Commander of the above mentioned police station claims damages of 500.000,00 dinars (6.250,00 Euros or 8.335,00 US Dollars) for defamation. The Commander took offence at our complaint regarding his work and attitude sent to the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Justice of Serbia. We had all the reasons to complain but let us list the antecedents and the facts. The cause of the issue was an incident in Novi Sad that had happened with the writer of this announcement and his colleague in November 2003 (we wrote about the incident several times at various newspapers and internet portals). After the incident – where the two of us were protecting ourselves against 8-10 Serbian attackers, we reported one of the attackers to the police, but the police have done nothing to achieve any results for three years. When we were inquiring about our case, we received refusals and, with hidden threat, we were advised to give up demanding our rights. Realizing that our case can be prolonged until forever, we informed the public about the attitude of the police which resulted in the police claiming damages. We strongly refuse the Commander's demand since the employees of the police station have not been interested in solving our case for years saying that there was no reason to investigate upon and disturb things. However, when we informed the public about the attitude of the police – probably it triggered their reaction – they entered their action to the Court at Novi Sad, and almost in the same time the Commander claimed damages from us. The attitude of the police and their suing the Human Rights Center is an action against all those who dare to work towards carrying into effect the human and minority rights in Vojvodina. Nevertheless, we stand strongly by our goals - that is nothing else but the protection and realization of the rights of the Hungarians in Vojvodina. As far as the suit is concerned, our lawyer has made the legal steps needed. The international, Serbian and Hungarian public, several representatives of the European Parliament (first of all, Dr. Becsey Zsolt), the Ministries of Interior and Justice of Serbia, the Foreign Ministry of Hungary, the Consul General of Hungary, and the representatives of OSCE, EUMM and other bigger human rights associations are being informed about this action of the police.

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Rudolf Kiss, Human Rights Center