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WERNER IS PUTTING ON PRESSURE FOR A 'CRIMINAL' – Scandalous statements of President Iohannis. He speaks about abuse for the first time, for the sole reason that suspect Laura Kovesi has been subpoenaed in a case involving bribery. Iohannis demands explanations from the prosecutors for indicting Kovesi and attacks the Section for the Investigation of Crimes in the Justice System. Up to the Kovesi case, Iohannis had no issues with the indictment of other magistrates by the same section

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The statements made by **Romanian President Klaus Werner Iohannis (pictured right)** on Thursday, February 14th 2019, were indeed scandalous. In our opinion, Iohannis is putting on outright pressure on the prosecutors of the Section for the Investigation of Crimes in the Justice System, for the sole reason that **Laura Kovesi (pictured left, standing)** was subpoenaed by the Public Prosecutor's Office, where she is to be informed of being the subject of a criminal investigation, for accepting a bribe, abuse of office and false testimony.

In an unbelievable turn of events, Iohannis is imperatively demanding that the prosecutors from the special section for the investigation of magistrates clarify Laura Kovesi's situation. **Virtually, Iohannis' position is no different than other politicians', whom he himself accused of pressuring the prosecutors, when they voiced accusations regarding the modus operandi of the prosecutors. At the same time, it is amusing that Iohannis jumped to the defense of a 'criminal'. Because that is what Laura Kovesi should be, in his opinion, judging by the fact that Iohannis classified all those against whom cases were opened by the DNA and who dared to criticize the prosecutors' decisions as 'criminals', meaning exactly what he is doing in Kovesi's case.**

On the other hand, **the Romanian President's reaction marked a first. It is the first time he has ever spoken about pressures on prosecutors. What's even more to the point is that he remembered abuse only when it comes to Laura Kovesi, as he remained tight lipped about the thousands of ruined destinies and wrongdoings of the very DNA led by the one he is defending today.**

Last but not least, **we witnessed President Klaus Iohannis attack the Section for the Investigation of Crimes in the Justice System precisely in the case of the former head of the DNA, but had no qualms about this section and no public outbursts when other magistrates were indicted by the very same section. At that time, the President of Romania did not demand that the prosecutors clarify the circumstances of the magistrates which were targeted by the cases, nor did he warn the management of the section of the responsibility they carry.**

Anyhow, Iohannis' discourse clearly sends the message that Laura Kovesi is untouchable and practically above the law.

Normally, the Superior Magistrates' Council (CSM) should have urgently taken note, ex officio, of Iohannis' press release, as in the case of other statements made by politicians who questioned the prosecutors' investigations.

Here is what Klaus Iohannis had to say on the matter:

“Priority zero for all those with responsibilities in the Romanian state, regardless of their position, should be to protect and consolidate the rule of law.

I demand maximum impartiality from the Section for the Investigation of Crimes in the Justice System, as well as strict compliance of the law and a swift clarification of the circumstances surrounding the case opened in the name of Mrs. Laura Codruta Kövesi, as the management of this section has an immense responsibility in this sense.

The special section for the investigation of magistrates must in no way serve as a political instrument for the investigation and intimidation of magistrates and prosecutors. I contested the establishment of such a body from the very beginning, backed by the harsh criticism received from the Venice Commission, the European Commission and GRECO, because it does not pose sufficient guarantees of independence in relation to the political factor and may affect the citizens’ confidence in the justice system.

The PSD-ALDE majority willingly ignored all of these warnings, and as a result, this special section is now operational. This very majority, through a series of detrimental amendments to the justice laws, is directly responsible for generating the current conflict among magistrates. PSD-ALDE constructed an anti-justice discourse from the very beginning and has made concrete efforts to revoke the chief prosecutor of the DNA and Romania’s Attorney General. As of late, the Chairperson of the High Court of Cassation and Justice has also voiced claims regarding pressures and interferences.

I caution the PSD-ALDE majority to stop taking any more steps back, pushing Romania further from its European path as a consolidated democratic state. It is imperative that PSD-ALDE enforce the opinions of the Venice Commission, with utmost priority, as well as the recommendations included in the European Commission's Report on MCV, so that the independence of the justice system and the fight against corruption shall not be affected, and the democratic foundation of the Romanian state shall not be endangered.

The fight against corruption shall continue in Romania, despite the aggressive efforts of those with vested interests in controlling the justice system and bringing the rule of law to its knees. As President, I will continue to act in a manner that maintains the status which Romania has gained with great sacrifice, that of a country with powerful institutions, through the correct enforcement of the law, not through abuse”.

[* Here is the Romanian version of this article](#)