

Guard will not destabilize Serbia - Jovic

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BELGRADE -- Interior Minister Dragan Jovic said Wednesday the self-proclaimed Guard of Tzar Lazar would not destabilize Serbia.

Jovic added that according to information his ministry has, this group is "not dangerous".

"The police have no information that this group is a threat," Jovic told reporters in the parliament, noting that "no one will be allowed to cause any incident that would endanger Serbia."

Asked whether the MUP would allow a rally the Guard has scheduled for November 28 on the administrative boundary with Kosovo, Jovic repeated: "They will not destabilize Serbia."

Almost all parliamentary parties reacted negatively to today's announcement by the Guards which called on the MPs "to engage in a war for the defense of Kosovo".

The group leader Hadzi Andrej Milic sent invitations to the parliament's correspondence department, together with the organization's membership cards, calling on lawmakers to go to war.

Milic told reporters in front of the National Parliament that he "did not expect any of the MPs to respond to the invitations", though he added that his organization "wished to inform the authorities and the Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC) of its intentions."

Milic announced that unarmed members of the Guard would gather at Merdare near the administrative boundary with Kosovo on November 28 to set up their "headquarters".

He repeated his call to the police and army to return to Kosovo and protect the remaining Serb population there, dismissing accusations that his organization was a paramilitary formation.

According to the Guard commander, the organization had "at least 5,000 members in every municipality in Serbia" and possessed weaponry that, as he put it, "can launch rockets at Pristina from 80km."

Milic did not wish to say who led the Guard as that person was wanted by the Hague Tribunal, though he said that the organization's political wing was represented by Zeljko Vasiljevic, a representative of the Movement of Serbian Veterans affiliated to the Socialist Party of Serbia.