

SPEECH BY NIS CITY MAYOR AT THE NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION

At the traditional New Year's reception Nis City Mayor Darko Bulatovic summarized the achievements of the past year and announced plans for the next:

"We are at the very end of the passing year and on the doorstep of the coming year. This is a moment when we have to look back at the year 2018, to look at what we did and what kind of foundations we set for 2019. This festive evening we can rightfully say that a difficult year, a year full of challenges, difficulties and uncertainties, but also years of success, work, peace and prosperity is behind us.

There is no doubt that 2018 was a decisive year in the development of the modern Nis. During last year 3 new large factories were opened in Nis, where the value of investments was over 80 million euros and that would employ at least 4,500 workers. On the well-established foundations in 2018, we continue to build in 2019. Next year we expect the construction of a new Johnson Electric Factory, the expansion of the Leoni factory, as well as the beginning of the operations of the Zumtobel subcontractors, which will employ over 500 workers. We are negotiating with over 10 new potential investors and we are sure that in 2019, with the support of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Nis will be an ideal destination for new investors. Special attention is paid to medium, small and micro enterprises in the strategies and the policies of the City of Nis. City of Nis, with the support of the Serbian Government, allocated RSD 110 million to support domestic micro, small and medium enterprises and has supported over 300 domestic companies through numerous stimulus measures.

We all have to agree about one thing – science, economy and advanced technologies – they are the three most powerful pillars on which we are building modern Nis. As the crown of all efforts, the foundation stone for the decade-old dream of the City of Nis was laid – Scientific Technology Park, the largest and most powerful ever investment in young people, in science and education.

At the end of this 2018 we can proudly say that we have built the most modern and largest Clinical Center in the entire Balkans, that we have built and that we are building key road directions, and the roads are important, because every new road is a new road to the future! Today, the largest national projects are being implemented in Nis, such as the project of construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant with a network of collectors worth EUR 55 million.

Nis today is an ideal place for realization of large investment projects. All preparations were made for the big investment project by Delta Company in the construction of a commercial business center worth about 70 million euros. After a few years of delay, Novi Nis Project is progressing real well. The realization of commercial investments, such as the Delta Planet Shopping Center and Novi Nis Residential and Commercial Complex, prove that the economic situation in Nis is improving. These data, as exact and statistical indicators, show that the City of Nis is indeed a city of the future.

The most powerful proof is the solving of the biggest problem of today, that is, the decrease of the number of unemployed and creation of new jobs. At the moment, there is lowest possible unemployment rate in recent years. The number of unemployed, just two years ago, was about 33,000, and this number was reduced by almost 10,000 in just two years.

Our results are recognized at the national and international

level: at the national level, the City of Nis was declared the Champion of Local Economic Development in the category of attracting investments for 2018/2019. Also, the Financial Times ranked the City of Nis at the 7th place as the City of the Future for 2018/2019. Nis, as a region, came in the third place in the category of small European regions with regard to attracting foreign direct investment

Dear associates and friends of the City of Nis,

New Year is a symbol of a new beginning of life, a new hope for the future. I am deeply convinced that, with joint forces, with a unique will, and above all with diligent and hard work we can achieve a common dream and build a modern, powerful, European Nis, a "smart city", a place that attracts tourists from all over the world and has a great reputation in the international public. Dear associates, as we are together in these pre-holiday and festive days, we are together in our everyday tasks. And precisely, our work together, friendship and sincere love of our city and our only, beloved Serbia, multiply our forces for the battle for great achievements.

Let New Year's holidays bring the best in us, let us encourage solidarity in our neighbors, the joy of giving by which we enrich and make our own life happy; these days, but also throughout the year, we should be saying kind words to each other, we should forgive each other, we should declare and multiply love, we should enrich each other's soul with care, respect and care. I sincerely wish that in 2019 every person's life changes for the better.

I sincerely wish, to all my fellow citizens, personal and family happiness, tranquility, well-being, happiness and every personal and professional success. May 2019 bring peace and prosperity to our Serbia and our beloved Nis. May 2019 be happy, healthy and prosperous for all citizens of Nis and all

citizens of Serbia. Long live!

GRANTS FOR COMPANIES, ENTREPRENEURS, SCIENTIFIC – EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, CLUSTERS AND ASSOCIATIONS FROM NIS

December 6th

In the presence of the city officials, businessmen and members of the Nis City Economic Council, Nis City Mayor Darko Bulatovic presented the contracts companies, entrepreneurs, scientific-educational institutions, clusters and associations from Nis. Funds are allocated under the Local Economic Development Program for 2018. At the beginning of the ceremony Nis City Council Member in charge of local economic development Mihajlo Zdravkovic pointed out the importance of the city support program to the business entities, expressed his gratitude to all the companies and associations that took part in this program. Mayor Bulatovic said that the businessmen themselves were best aware of the significance of the budget and the fact that after many years the budget of the city was stabilized so that it was now possible to redefine certain funds under the local economic development program for 2018. The Local Economic Development Program is implemented by the City of Nis Office for Local Economic Development and Projects. The Head of OLEDP Milan Randjelovic spoke more about the measures and criteria used in the

selection of the companies that received grants. Based on the internationalization activities, a total of 13 companies received funds when it comes to the improvement of competitiveness and total of 46 companies received contracts on the allocation funds. Total of 10 entities received funds allocated for the activities for improving the competitiveness of companies that use the Start Up Center and co-working space services and improving the cooperation with economy and scientific-educational institutions.

RECEPTION FOR AMBASSADOR OF DENMARK

December 3rd

Nis City Mayor Darko Bulatovic and Deputy Mayor Milos Bandjur met today with H.E. Ambassador of Denmark Mr. Anders Christian Hougård at Nis City Hall. Denmark and the Republic of Serbia enjoy a positive range of relations including political and development cooperation. It is the Embassy's overall task to represent Denmark and the Danish interests in Serbia, as well as to seek cooperation in the many areas where Danish and Serbian interests are mutual or complementary. Denmark supports Serbia in its efforts on the path towards the EU. The related reform processes are also increasing the business opportunities in Serbia for Danish companies. The representatives of the Danish IT Company Better Collective took part in the meeting. "There are already several Danish companies in the city, and I have taken the opportunity to present to the Ambassador Hougård the potentials of our city in the IT sector and to invite other companies from this country to invest here," as Mayor Bulatovic said on this

occasion. Better collective was founded in 2004 and has its headquarters in Copenhagen. Today, the company has a global presence, expanding beyond Danish borders. They currently have offices in Paris, Vienna and Nis. Better collective is a leading developer of educational platforms within the gaming industry. Through products they try to make sports betting and gambling entertaining, transparent and honest for a global online betting network. In the past two years, about 70 programmers have been employed in this company in Nis, and there is an intention to double the number of employees in the next year.

ROMACTED PROGRAMME PRESENTED

November 28th

ROMACTED, “Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level”, a Joint Programme between the European Union (DG NEAR) and the Council of Europe was presented at Nis City Hall. The specificity of the actions within programme framework would be to assist the local authorities to integrate Roma specific dimension/measures into the mainstream local policies, budgets and public service delivery on their agenda, while enhancing the participation of the Roma citizens in the design, implementation and monitoring of those policies and projects. As a result of the implementation of the programme, it is expected that the participating municipalities remain with consolidated features to continue serving the needs of the Roma population such as sustainable local action plans and one-stop-shops that facilitate the access of Roma to the public services. A Working Group was established with the aim of improving the communication and coordination of activities, and improving the effectiveness of

services at the local level dealing with the problems of the Roma, as an expert working body of the City of Nis Council.