

CWP also said that because it wanted to avoid conflicts of interest, it had decided that Lidija Udovicki's husband Mark Crandall should not negotiate with the Serbian administration after her sister Kori joined the Serbian cabinet.

Kori Udovicki said on Monday that she had spoken with Vucic about the situation and been given his support.

"I called the Prime Minister this morning and he told me that I had his support and the support of the Government for the reforms undertaken by my ministry. I will resign when I don't have that kind of support," Udovicki told Belgrade-based daily Alo.

The letter to Biden was signed by five Congress members - Edie Bernice Johnson, Carlos Curbelo, Scott Perry, Adam Kinzinger and Zoe Lofgren.

They alleged that a small group of people led by Vucic's brother, Andrej Vucic, and two of his close friends, Nikola Petrovic and Zoran Korac, "has consolidated their influence and interest in energy, telecommunications, infrastructure and all major businesses in Serbia". Petrovic, the director of state company Elektromreze Srbije, is also widely believed to be close to PM Vucic.

Further concerns were raised in the letter that journalists' rights "have declined to their lowest point since the tyranny of Slobodan Milosevic".

"Media outlets have been consolidated and are controlled directly by the Prime Minister, his family and close business associates," the Congress members alleged.

After the letter was made public, Vucic's Serbian Progressive Party initially said that the five Congress members who wrote it were a part of a "Bosnian caucus" that was hostile to Serbia.

But when he returned to Serbia, Vucic said it had nothing to do with any "Bosnian caucus" but that a US company was behind it.

source: balkaninsight.com