**Kosovo Main Stories 12 September 2015**

* **Mustafa: Formation of armed forces cannot be conditioned with reserved seats (*Koha*)**
* **“UNESCO membership, most difficult battle after ICJ, due to Serb propaganda” (*Lajmi*)**
* **Meeting on formation of Association of Albanian Municipalities in Serbia starts (*RTK*)**

**Mustafa: Formation of armed forces cannot be conditioned with reserved seats (*Koha*)**

Kosovo’s Prime Minister Isa Mustafa said today that he does not regret that while they were in the opposition during the previous government, he and his party, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), refused the extension of reserved parliamentary seats for the non-majority communities. “It is absolutely true that during the previous government while we were in the opposition, I and the LDK rejected the extension of reserved seats in the Kosovo Assembly. I do not regret this and I would still reject such a decision at any price. Because it is unreasonable to reduce the number of seats for Albanian MPs in the Assembly and to increase the number of seats for representatives of non-majority communities,” Mustafa writes on his Facebook account. “It is clear that with the guaranteed seats the non-majority communities are positively discriminated almost twice as much compared to their percentage in the population. Even today, I will not agree to bargain with seats in the parliament”. Mustafa also said it was unjustifiable for non-majority communities to condition the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Armed Forces with the extension of reserved seats. “This would lead us to a cycle of conditions and then finding a way out would be very difficult ... Regardless of the ongoing propaganda, I am working with everyone to find a solution to the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force. In the last ten days, we had five meetings with the coalition partners and international stakeholders and the highest structures of the KSF to find a solution,” he said. Mustafa said his government would work hard on advancing the rights of non-majority communities. “We are champions in providing such rights. The future Armed Forces will be a force for all our citizens; therefore, I expect representatives of non-majority communities in the Assembly to cooperate and assume their responsibilities”. ***RTK*** quotes Mustafa as saying that the Serbian List is blocking the formation of the Armed Forces.

**“UNESCO membership, most difficult battle after ICJ, due to Serb propaganda” (*Lajmi*)**

Kosovo’s Deputy Foreign Minister Petrit Selimi said today that he was optimistic about Kosovo’s membership in the UNESCO. During a conference held at the Kosovo government, Selimi unfolded new details about Kosovo’s path toward membership in the UNESCO and said that Kosovo submitted the membership request to the UNESCO Executive Board. He said the Executive Board would discuss the request in its next meeting in October. “The voting will take place in early November and Kosovo needs 2/3 of votes to become a member of the UNESCO,” Selimi said. “Membership in the UNESCO is very important and after the ruling of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo’s declaration of independence, this is going to be the second most important battle due to the Serbian propaganda on the matter”.

**Meeting on formation of Association of Albanian Municipalities in Serbia underway (*RTK*)**

The Assembly of Albanian Councilors in the Presevo Valley has begun its meeting on the formation of the Association of Albanian Municipalities in Serbia. Serbian Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic said Albanians in Serbia should not be discriminated but that they must respect the Serbian Constitution. “I warn them not to draw any parallels with the Association of Serb Municipalities in Kosovo. I warn them not to play with fire and to respect the constitution and the order of the Republic of Serbia. The fact that Serbia favors talks does not mean that it is weak. On the contrary, Serbia is stronger than it has been in the last 20-30 years,” Dacic said. The Albanian leaders in the municipalities of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac said they would discuss the situation in the region and establish the Association of Albanian Municipalities, similar to the Association of Serb-majority Municipalities in Kosovo. They also argue that the situation in the Presevo Valley remains unstable ever since the 2001 conflict between Serbian government forces and UCPMB insurgents who were demanding more rights for Albanians in the region.