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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Parties close to agreement on border demarcation (*Koha Ditore*)**

The paper reports on the front page that Kosovo’s main political parties are close to agreeing on the text of a statement aimed at resolving the border demarcation issue. The text of the document has been negotiated for a while now under the mediation of Naim Rashiti, Kosovo director for the Balkans Policy Research Group, and is said to make reference to the political parties agreeing not to undertake any actions as long as the dialogue on border demarcation is not concluded. The parties also pledge to work together to reach consensus on the issue and that the review for the border demarcation with Montenegro is done in line with Kosovo’s territorial integrity, its legislation, the principle of reciprocity and that of international law. In addition, according to the paper, the final paragraph of the document leaves open the possibility of a joint Kosovo-Montenegro mechanism being established to discuss the border issue.

**Six failures of the ruling coalition (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports in a front-page story that there are at least six major problems accumulated for the Kosovo government during the first two years of its mandate. Despite the large number of votes in the Assembly, the coalition cannot manage to approve the demarcation agreement with Montenegro, Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities, Kosovo Armed Force, visa liberalisation, war veterans’ list and the Special Court. Furthermore, according to political analysts, this also affects Kosovo’s relations with the international community. Kosovo’s Deputy Minister of Local Government Administration, Bajram Gecaj, told the paper the government is working intensively to finalize the agreements in question. While in regard to border demarcation with Montenegro, Gecaj said that the opposition is also to blame for the failure to ratify this agreement. Opposition parties’ representatives said that government solely is to blame for such failures because it has the wrong approach towards these issues.

**Appeals Court upholds sentences for members of “Drenica 2” group (*Koha*)**

The appeals court upheld original sentences for the members of the so-called “Drenica 2” group convicted of war crimes. The court however shortened the prison sentences for some of the convicted, all members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Sylejman Selimi, former KLA commander and ambassador to Tirana, now faces seven instead of eight years in prison while the three-year sentence for PDK MP, Fadil Demaku, and Mayor of Drenas/Glogovac, Nexhat Demaku was confirmed by the court. Fadil Demaku announced he will appeal the decision at the Supreme Court but also said he plans to resign his MP seat. Nexhat Demaku is also expected to step down from his municipality post.

**O’Connell: Nepotism problematic for Kosovo (*Epoka e Re*)**

The Embassy of the United Kingdom in Kosovo has signed a contract with the international company, “BDO LLP” in partnership with company “A&DC”, to help Kosovo institutions on recruitment of candidates for senior positions in public institutions of Kosovo, as part of the “Empowerment of good governance, transparency and accountability of Kosovo institutions.” The UK Ambassador in Kosovo, Ruairi O’Connell, said that nepotism is problematic for Kosovo. “I have the pleasure that we can support the Kosovo Assembly and government on making positive changes. This is only the start. It is a long process and success can be achieved only with the political engagement of Kosovo leaders,” O’Connell said.

**Netherlands approves Special Court’s headquarters in The Hague (*Kosova* *Sot*)**

The House of Representatives of the Dutch parliament has approved the proposal of the Foreign Ministry to allow the establishment of the Special Court’s headquarters in The Hague. Dutch Foreign Ministry officials said that it is not certain how long the Special Court will be operational, since it depends on the number of defendants, although initially it has five-year mandate. However, Dutch local authorities during this time will have the authority to issue arrest warrants against anyone who escapes from detention in the Netherlands.

**Haziri: LDK and PDK are not in a love partnership (*RTK*)**

The Deputy leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Lutfi Haziri commented the statement of the leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), Kadri Veseli, that “it is not a big deal if we go to new elections, but that this is not the right moment.” Haziri said that LDK and PDK are not in a love partnership. “On the contrary, but elections are not a solution. Kosovo should prepare for national consensuses, and matters such as the Special Court,” Haziri said.

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