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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Lavrov: Russia will not accept biased review of Resolution 1244 (*media*)**

The Prime Minister of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic spoke in Russian while welcoming the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at the offices of the Serbian government. Vucic said that cooperation between the two countries has always been good, but he added that it will be even more successful in the future. Lavrov said that Moscow followed carefully general elections won by Vucic and added that they see him as contributor to further development of relations between the two countries. “Russian will not interfere in Serbia’s foreign affairs. We are always ready to find an equilibrium in our interests,” Lavrov said. He also met with Serbia’s Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic. “I can say that it is impossible to defend Serbia’s integrity and territorial sovereignty without Russia. Serbia will never be a country against Russia, as some others, we do not join EU’s sanctions,” Dacic said after the meeting. Lavrov said: “we sympathize with Serbian friends and we are against any effort to review the Resolution 1244 in a biased manner”.

**Serbia has agreed on a “geographical code” for “Kosmet” (*Koha*)**

Citing reliable sources in Brussels, the paper reports on its front page that the Serbian Government’s letter to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) notes that “based on ITU rules, the procedure to allocate a geographic three-digit dial code for the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija has been embraced”. The paper further notes that Brussels unofficially says that it is not important what Serbia requests, because Austria has made the request for the telephone code on Kosovo’s behalf.

**Civil society requests clarification of bridge revitalisation plan (*RTK*)**

The civil society in Mitrovica, seeing the concerns of Mitrovica citizens, has made a public invitation to the Minister for Dialogue, Edita Tahiri, mayor of Mitrovica South, Agim Bahtiri, mayor of Mitrovica North, Goran Rakic and representatives of the European Union Office in Kosovo, as the main actors involved in dialogue, to clarify in a transparent manner the plan for revitalization of Mitrovica Bridge and building of the wall in northern part of Mitrovica. “Recent works at Ibër Bridge has caused confusion, obscurity and tensions among Mitrovica citizens, causing different reactions and distrust with regards to the agreements reached in Brussels by the parties involved in the dialogue. Lack of transparency in the dialogue process and lack of inclusion of the citizens has caused increase of this distrust,” they wrote in a press release.

**Xhemajlaj: Lawsuit against Thaci ready for Constitutional Court (*Indeksonline*)**

The Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) candidate for Drenas/Glogovac mayor, Isa Xhemajlaj, said he is facing obstacles both from the Kosovo institutions and the office of President Hashim Thaci in carrying out his election campaign. He also said he plans to lodge a complaint with the Constitutional Court against Thaci for, as he said, his involvement in the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) campaign. “The paperwork that we will submit to the Constitutional Court is ready and we are hiring a lawyer who will pursue this to the end,” said Xhemajlaj.

**Arifaj: Thaci has not supported any candidate (*Klan Kosova*)**

Advisor to Kosovo President Hashim Thaci, Ardian Arifaj denied reports that Thaci stood in support of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) candidate in Drenas/Glogovac elections. He said Thaci was abroad for the most part of the election campaign and he has welcomed a free and fair election process. “The President’s cabinet does not deal with political issues,” Arifaj stressed.

**Journalists concerned with media blackout in Syla’s trial (*Telegrafi*)**

Association of Journalists of Kosovo (AJK) has expressed concern over the court’s decision to ban the media from covering the trial against Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) MP, Azem Syla. “The term transparency has lost meaning in courts,” AJK said adding this is not the only trial the media are not allowed to cover. It added that the closing off of trial sessions affects directly the image of the judiciary and also prevents reporters from carrying out their duties.

**Albanians to have determining role in new FYROM government (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on page four that none of the two biggest parties in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have the necessary numbers to form the central government and that therefore cooperation is required with the Albanian political parties in order to have a sustainable ruling coalition. A civil society activist from FYROM however told the paper: “what most people expect is a technical government and new elections in spring which perhaps could be held at the same time with the local elections”. In a separate box related to the same issue, the paper notes that Vetevendosje leader Visar Ymeri has called on Democratic Union for Integration (BDI) leader Ali Ahmeti not to join a coalition with VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski. ***Zeri*** daily newspaper notes that Ymeri is the first politician from Kosovo to comment on the result of elections in FYROM.

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