

Main Stories 14 September 2017

* **Haradinaj applies “failed” model to expropriation of land near Obiliq (*Koha*)**
* **AGK condemns Haradinaj’s statement on Kosovo media (*Zeri/RTK*)**
* **Germany’s Merkel congratulates Haradinaj on election (*dailies*)**
* **Vetevendosje to cooperate with government on national issues (*Epoka e Re*)**
* **Court approves Ombudsperson’s request on electricity billing (*Koha*)**

**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj applies “failed” model to expropriation of land near Obiliq (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on the front page that Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, has decided to apply a model deemed failed by the World Bank to settle a dispute with the residents of the villages of Hade and Shipitulla regarding the expropriation of their land for Obiliq/Obilic coal plant purposes. The model used in the past for a part of Hade residents was concluded by a World Bank panel to have been unsuccessful and not in line with World Bank policies. However, government representatives say the model will only be applied with regards to financial compensation but that the exact amount has not yet been defined. Kosovo’s Minister for Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka, said the agreement has been reached with residents of the villages and that this averted a possible energy crisis with huge consequences for Kosovo.

**AGK condemns Haradinaj’s statement on Kosovo media (*Zeri/RTK*)**

Association of Kosovo Journalists (AGK) condemned the statement of Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj who called journalists “unschooled” as being “unacceptable”. Asked to comment on the media reports that the U.S. Embassy does not support any other border demarcation agreement apart from that signed in 2015, Haradinaj said: “I have great respect for the media but most of you don’t know how to read in English and you don’t even want to understand what I said,” Haradinaj said adding that the statement of the U.S. Embassy never states it agrees or disagrees with a certain agreement. AGK considers Haradinaj’s statement to be disappointing and an insult to all Kosovo journalists. “We recall that the mission of the journalists is to make questions any time they need an answer and the content of the questions cannot be controlled by anyone,” AGK said in a statement. Soon after the AGK statement, the Office of the Prime Minister issued one saying Haradinaj’s statement was misinterpreted. “Haradinaj only asked for professionalism and ethics from some of the journalists and nothing more,” the statement said adding that PM Haradinaj regrets if anyone took offence from this.

**Germany’s Merkel congratulates Haradinaj on election (*dailies*)**

The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has congratulated Ramush Haradinaj upon taking on the post of Kosovo prime minister and reminded him of what are the key issues Kosovo needs to address in order to move forward. “State building, improving the economic situation, dialogue with Serbia, border demarcation with Montenegro, and fight against corruption and organised crime seek attention. These are crucial steps towards strengthening of Kosovo’s European perspective,” Merkel noted.

**Vetevendosje to cooperate with government on national issues (*Epoka e Re*)**

Kosovo Assembly’s deputy speaker from Vetevendosje, Aida Derguti, said in an interview to the paper that her party will cooperate with the current government on issues of national interest and hailed the decision of Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj to dismiss the border demarcation commission with Montenegro. However, Derguti warned that the “reliance” of the new government on the Serbian List “threatens the interest of Kosovo.” Furthermore, a government that “barely managed to secure a simple majority seems to be off to a bad start,” Derguti added.

**Court approves Ombudsperson’s request on electricity billing (*Koha*)**

Pristina Basic Court has ruled in favour of Kosovo Ombudsperson’s request to postpone billing of unpaid electricity in the north to consumers in the rest of Kosovo. The postponement will be in force until a final court verdict is reached. Ombudsperson argued in his request that billing the rest of the residents in Kosovo for the electricity unpaid by those in the north is damaging and almost irreparable.

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