

Main Stories 13 October 2017

* **Haradinaj: We will make EU grant Kosovo visa liberalisation (*Kosova Sot*)**
* **Haradinaj: We will give constitutional mandate to Kosovo’s army (*Epoka*)**
* **Hoxhaj: Serbia provoking tensions (*Koha*)**
* **Berlin Process discussed in Belgrade without Kosovo (*Koha*)**
* **Meta: Dialogue to resume, there is no alternative (*RTK*)**
* **CDHRF refutes Apostolova’s statement on Kosovo prisons (*Klan Kosova*)**
* **KDI: Assembly should have legitimacy during new phase of dialogue (*Epoka*)**
* **OSCE to deploy over 220 observers to northern municipalities (*Kosovapress*)**
* **Jordi Roca, new rapporteur for Kosovo (*Epoka*)**

**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj: We will make EU grant Kosovo visa liberalisation (*Kosova Sot*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said the truth will soon be determined on the issue of the border demarcation process with Montenegro and that the successful implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) will make the EU move forward with visa liberalisation. Haradinaj said that the next topic to be negotiated with EU institutions will be candidate status adding: “Rest assured this will not take years,” said Haradinaj in an election rally for his Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK).

**Haradinaj: We will give constitutional mandate to Kosovo’s army (*Epoka*)**

The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said on Thursday during his visit at the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), that the government of Kosovo will give constitutional mandate to Kosovo’s army. Haradinaj said Kosovo’s membership at NATO would guarantee more security for non-majority communities. He said that KSF is the address where one can only speak about success. He added that KSF is one of the institutions which has the most trust of Kosovo people, and that it should be envied by other institutions.

**Hoxhaj: Serbia provoking tensions (*Koha*)**

Kosovo’s Deputy Prime Minister, Enver Hoxhaj, expressed concern over, as he said, the lack of reactions by the international community against Serbia’s glorification of war criminals. “By defending war criminals and denying the collective guilt for past crimes, Serbia is fuelling tensions and delaying regional reconciliation,” Hoxhaj tweeted. Hoxhaj’s reaction comes after Serbia’s Defence Minister, Aleksandar Vulin, praised the former Serb army general, Vladimir Lazarevic, convicted by the tribunal in The Hague for war crimes in Kosovo.

**Berlin Process discussed in Belgrade without Kosovo (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that Kosovo’s Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli was not invited to attend the Belgrade Security Forum, which among other things will also discuss the Berlin Process for the Western Balkans. A written reply from Pacolli’s office to the paper noted: “We did not receive an invitation to attend the Forum. Therefore, any question concerning the participants, the topics of the debate and eventual obstacles for participants should be addressed to the organizers”. An unnamed source told the paper that there were diplomatic efforts to enable Pacolli to attend the forum, but Belgrade reportedly did not agree for Kosovo to be represented at that level. Blerim Shala, advisor to Kosovo President Hashim Thaci on dialogue with Serbia, was also scheduled to attend the forum but later cancelled his participation without disclosing any reasons. Meanwhile, Dalibor Jevtic, Kosovo’s Minister for Communities and Returns, will attend the forum and will discuss talks between Pristina and Belgrade.

**Meta: Dialogue to resume, there is no alternative (*RTK*)**

Albanian President, Ilir Meta, said in an interview to ***RTK*** on Thursday that dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia is very important and that it has no other alternative. Meta encouraged Kosovo’s institutions to resume dialogue and said that the process needs to be revitalized. “The European Union has played an important role, but an increased engagement by the United States of America is important to guarantee the agreements reached so far. It is important for all stakeholders in Kosovo to be united on this matter,” he said. Meta said it was important to find a principled and wise solution to the border demarcation with Montenegro. “Because this unblocks the visa liberalization process. I don’t think this issue can be resolved now as Kosovo is heading to local elections. But it is an issue that needs to be resolved in principled, constructive and wise fashion, because it is in Kosovo’s interest to resolve the problem and unblock other processes,” he said. Meta said he was against border changes in the Balkans, “because this would open Pandora’s Box and would lead to unpredictable developments”.

**CDHRF refutes Apostolova’s statement on Kosovo prisons (*Klan Kosova*)**

Kosovo-based Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) dismissed the statement by the head of the EU Office in Kosovo and Special Representative, Nataliya Apostolova, that prisons in Kosovo are overpopulated and face challenges of radicalism and violence. CDHRF said that compared to the countries in the region, violent incidents are “extremely rare” in Kosovo.

**KDI: Assembly should have legitimacy during new phase of dialogue (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI) has published its fourth survey of the public opinion on the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue, “The new phase of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia: citizens’ point of view.” Respondents of this survey assessed that the Assembly of Kosovo should have a more powerful role in the dialogue process between Kosovo and Serbia. Around 76 percent of the respondents consider that the European Union should guarantee the agreements between Kosovo and Serbia.

**OSCE to deploy over 220 observers to northern municipalities (*Kosovapress*)**

Head of the OSCE mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Jan Braathu, said that they would support the Central Election Commission (CEC) by deploying over 220 observers to northern municipalities on election day, 22 October. “Our staff will work with election commissioners in municipalities and polling station committees to ensure adequate implementation and compliance with CEC structures,” Braathu said after visiting CEC premises in Pristina. Meanwhile, head of CEC Valdete Daka said all preparations are in place for upcoming elections. She also noted that the OSCE’s role in the election process will be limited to technical support for the CEC.

**Jordi Roca, new rapporteur for Kosovo (*Epoka*)**

Jordi Roca from Spain was nominated as new rapporteur for Kosovo. He will be reporting to the Council of Europe on respect of the human rights, rule of law and Kosovo’s achievements. Roca was elected by secret vote of the Committee for Policies of the Parliamentarian Assembly of the Council of Europe. His counter-candidate was Morgens Jensen from Denmark.

**Disclaimer**

This media summary consists of selected local media articles for the information of UN personnel. The public distribution of this media summary is a courtesy service extended by UNMIK on the understanding that the choice of articles translated is exclusive, and the contents do not represent anything other than a selection of articles likely to be of interest to a United Nations readership. The inclusion of articles in this summary does not imply endorsement by UNMIK.