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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Mogherini assesses dialogue has entered a new phase (*Epoka*)**

The EU High Representative for Foreign Policy and Security, Federica Mogherini, assessed on Thursday that the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade at the level of presidents, has been accelerated. “What is currently essential is not only to facilitate the dialogue but also to defend both parties to work at this new phase, be it in the internal aspect or among themselves,” Mogherini said. “When I speak about the success of the dialogue, this means finding a place where the region wins, where both parties win, even if they have to withdraw from some things. But I never believed and still do not believe on the zero conclusion of the game, especially in this case, as the work we do represents efforts to identify sustainable solution for everyone,” Mogherini said after the meeting of Stabilisation Association Council between the European Union and Serbia. She added that EU’s doors are open for the entire Western Balkans when each of the partners in the region fulfills certain conditions and reforms.

The EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Johannes Hahn, said that the new momentum should be used to include Western Balkans in the EU.

**U.S. general: KFOR to remain in Kosovo (*Kosova Sot*)**

Commander of U.S. army in Europe, Lt-Gen Ben Hodges, said he didn’t believe the Russian-Serb centre in Nis is truly a humanitarian organization and that KFOR will continue to keep its presence in Kosovo. “As I see it, we have no plans on leaving Kosovo for at least the next five years as resources have been secured,” Hodges said.

**“Municipality to annul decision giving land to Orthodox Church” (*Koha*)**

University of Pristina steering council and student parliament have asked the Municipality of Pristina to annul decision giving the land inside the university campus to the Orthodox Church. In a letter, UP claims that the Pristina Municipality’s Executive Council decided in 1990 to give the disputed land to the Orthodox Church and that the revocation of this decision would pave way for a legal resolution to the problem and enable the university to get back the property it claims ownership over.

**Çeku: The only obstacle for creation of army is the Serbian List (*Lajmi*)**

Deputy Minister of the Kosovo Security Force, Agim Çeku, told lajmi.net that the only obstacle that delays creation of the army is the Serbian List. “As far as KSF is concerned, it is ready any day to deal with a decision, but now this decision is in hands of the Prime Minister and President. It is not up to the KSF Ministry,” Çeku said. He added that the KSF transformation process has been dragged on since 2014 but that he believed that it has now reached its final phase. “The entire international factor has realized that the Army is necessary,” Ceku said noting that Kosovo army “is proven to be the interest of all citizens, and the region.”

**EULEX claims judge Simmons was under investigation (*Lajmi*)**

The EU Mission of the Rule of Law in Kosovo, EULEX, has issued on Thursday a press release with regards to the media reporting on Malcolm Simmons’s accusation on EULEX’s address. “Malcolm Simmons has been, over the past year, the subject of a series of independent investigations into serious allegations against him. These investigations are being conducted by a team, formed and based in Brussels and chaired by a former judge of the European Court of Justice. These allegations are in different stages of investigation and some have proceeded to a Disciplinary Board and are now awaiting the Board’s decision. The rest are ongoing”, EULEX said. It added that the EU and EULEX operate a zero tolerance policy towards inappropriate behaviour and wrongdoings and all Mission members are accordingly accountable for their actions and that all the allegations recently expressed by Mr. Simmons have been treated equally seriously. “EULEX wants to underline that it is a Rule of Law Mission with the mandate to assist Kosovo authorities,” reads the press release.

**Limaj proposes former EULEX judge, Simmons, to testify in his case (*Koha*)**

Hours after news broke out that the EULEX judge Malcolm Simmons resigned his post citing corruption inside the mission, Kosovo’s Deputy Prime Minister Fatmir Limaj, who is on trial for organised crime and corruption, asked the court to bring Simmons to testify on his behalf. Limaj said Simmons’s statement to the French ***Le Monde***, where he alleged that EULEX intended to weaken political figures like Fatmir Limaj, supports his own suspicions and that from the outset he considered the case against him to be politically motivated. However, the court refused Limaj’s request deeming it unnecessary.

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