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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**President Thaci on border demarcation with Montenegro (*RTK*)**

In an interview to ***RTK*** on Tuesday, Kosovo President Hashim Thaci thanked the Kosovo government for submitting the draft law on the border demarcation with Montenegro. Thaci said: “This shows that the agreement was right, accurate, clear, professional and in line with the highest state responsibilities and with full respect to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo, and based on local and international expertise. Four different commissions worked on this agreement, with great support from our institutions, from NATO, the European Union, then-U.S. President Barack Obama, and from then-U.S. Vice President Biden and the support they gave to the agreement … Therefore, I think that the Kosovo government made the right and responsible decision to send to the Assembly for voting the draft law on the border demarcation with Montenegro. I expect all political parties to rise above group interests and emotions and to vote with Kosovo’s interests in mind. We also saw a report prepared by the government-appointed commission. In my opinion, this was a misleading and ridiculous report, which failed to provide a single new argument. It was more of an emotional statement, based on wishes, frustration and a battle between professors of geography, rather than a scientific, professional and responsible assessment. Their speeches today confirmed that for three years now they are responsible for the fact that Kosovo remains isolated. It is good for this saga to come to an end and for the Kosovo Assembly to vote on this”.

**Internationals urge endorsement of border demarcation agreement (*Zeri*)**

The paper on the front page reports that international officials in Kosovo have urged MPs to support the border demarcation agreement with Montenegro. In a written reply to the paper, the French Embassy recalled that both Kosovo and Montenegro signed the aforementioned deal in 2015 and as such it needs to be ratified by the Assembly of Kosovo. At the same time, the Norwegian Embassy said the 2015 agreement is accurate and hailed the decision of the government to send the agreement to the Assembly for approval. The EU also hailed the government’s move saying: “It is crucial for Kosovo to find the best possible solution to the current stalemate over demarcation through a debate of elected representatives and a vote case on the basis of legitimate expectations of the people of Kosovo and their European perspective”.

**Mustafa: Nothing new on Kosovo-Montenegro border (*Zeri*)**

The leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Isa Mustafa, said that he noted no new things in the report that the government’s commission on border demarcation with Montenegro presented yesterday. “We saw nothing new, no new findings, except for what was said before,” Mustafa said. He added that it was still not clear whether the government sent to the Assembly the 2015 agreement or the commission’s report.

**Dinosha: Montengro does not have new position on demarcation (*RTK*)**

The Montenegrin Ambassador to Kosovo, Ferhat Dinosha said that despite the new findings of Kosovo’s commission for border demarcation, official Podgorica does not change its position. “Montenegro does not have a new position. It does not have a new report of the commission. This is the work of Kosovo institutions. We will continue to maintain good contacts with Kosovo institutions on this and any other issue,” Dinosha said.

**Haxhiu: Only commission’s report should have been sent to Assembly (*Zeri*)**

Vetevendosje MP, Albulena Haxhiu, said that the government of Kosovo should have sent to the Assembly only the border demarcation commission's report and not the entire 2015 agreement. “Only the report would have to be sent, to discuss it once again so that the MPs who still harbour doubts can see that Hashim Thaci signed an agreement that gives away territory,” Haxhiu said.

**Isufi: Demarcation does not harm our cooperation with PDK (*Lajmi*)**

Deputy leader of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), Ahmet Isufi, said that their position has not changed and expressed conviction that the Assembly will bring down the agreement for demarcation of the border with Montenegro signed in 2015. “That version of the former commission did not pass then when coalition partners had 80 votes. There is no chance for this version to pass,” Isufi said. “MPs should be based on their will by respecting the Constitution and laws in power. This has nothing to do with the ruling coalition, but with defending Kosovo’s interests.”

**LDK MP Osmani criticizes PM Haradinaj for backing border deal (*Lajmi*)**

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Vjosa Osmani, took to Facebook on Tuesday to criticize Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj for supporting the border demarcation the agreement with Montenegro. “It is the same agreement as the one in 2015. Not a single letter was changed. It is the same agreement that turned violence and accusations into a routine. The Prime Minister and his cabinet voted today in favor of the same agreement,” Osmani wrote.

**UNMIK reveals how Interpol removed Haradinaj from wanted list (*media*)**

Several online media outlets quote UNMIK spokesperson Sanam Dolatshahi saying that in December of 2016 Interpol was asked by Kosovo authorities to recall international arrest warrants against 20 Kosovo nationals and that the UN mission in Kosovo mediated between Pristina and Interpol as per the mandate deriving from the UN Security Council Resolution 1244. “The lifting of arrest warrants was done based on resolution 1244, as in previous cases,” Dolatshahi said to the Belgrade news agency ***Tanjug***.

**Serbian court: Arrest warrant for Haradinaj remains in power (*Lajmi*)**

The Ministry of Justice in Serbia has not received any notification by INTERPOL to remove the arrest warrant for Kosovo’s Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj. The Supreme Court in Serbia told ***Beta*** news agency in Belgrade that the arrest warrant remains in power. “There has been no decision to lift the arrest warrant. The order remains in power,” the court said. Serbia’s Ministry for Internal Affairs informed that they would complain on the case and they will also raise the matter at the United Nations Security Council.

**ECAP rejects complaints over Pristina and Prizren runoffs (*Kosova Sot*)**

The Elections Complaints and Appeals Panel (ECAP) has rejected complaints from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) regarding runoff elections in Pristina and Prizren, respectively. ECAP ruled against the request for a recount of ballots in the two biggest municipalities but the parties can still appeal the decision to the Supreme Court.

**Haradinaj: Representation of non-majority communities is guaranteed (*Telegrafi*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said in a meeting with representatives of the Consultative Council for Communities that non-majority communities are integral part of Kosovo and that their representation is guaranteed. Chairperson of the council, Gazmen Salijevic, meanwhile spoke of the need for implementation of their recommendations from relevant ministries and Haradinaj vowed to intensify cooperation to make this happen.

**ISIS threatens in Albanian for New Year holidays (*Gazeta Express*)**

“You have plenty of time to get a vehicle and run over their crows or to buy a knife and strike them or to load your gun with ammunition. And if your soul accepts this, go into their crowd and scream: “Allah is the greatest”. This is the message that ISIS has send to its supporters in Albanian language, making serious threats against Albanians for New Year holidays, the news website reports.

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