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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Ruling coalition divided over Thaci’s lead role in talks (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj’s proposal for President Hashim Thaci to have a leading role in talks with Serbia is not supported by the whole ruling coalition. The opposition had earlier rejected the proposal, and lately the Social Democratic Initiative – a partner in the ruling coalition – has also voiced its opposition to Haradinaj’s proposal. Nonetheless, the government’s platform on dialogue with Serbia has been submitted to the Assembly and it will be included in the agenda of the Assembly Presidency. At least 61 MPs need to vote in favor of the platform. The paper also quotes political analysts as saying that the Assembly could be ignored completely and for President Thaci to continue with a lead role in negotiations.

**Tahiri: We expect positive assessment from EU (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Justice Minister, Abelard Tahiri, said he was convinced Kosovo will get a positive assessment from the EU on its track record of fighting organised crime and corruption. Tahiri said Kosovo has stepped up efforts to fight corruption and that there has been good coordination among respective institutions. “I believe these measures will not go only towards the implementation of the final visa liberalisation criteria but will also have a direct impact on increasing efficiency of judicial system,” Tahiri said.

**“Germany pressures five EU countries to recognize Kosovo" (*Epoka*)**

Former President of Romania, Trajan Basesku told Romanian broadcaster ***B1*** that Germany is exercising pressure toward the five EU countries which have not recognized Kosovo, to do so as soon as possible. “Romania cannot recognize independence of Kosovo despite Germany’s promises made to the Kosovo leaders. This would have been a terrible blow for Moldavia being that situation in Trans-Dniester is similar to the one in Kosovo,” Basesku said.

**Vetevendosje splinter group set to form own party (*dailies*)**

The group of twelve independent MPs, formerly from Vetevendosje, has issued a statement presenting principles on which their new political party will rest. While the name of the party has not yet been unveiled, its programme will focus on social-democratic values. Visar Ymeri said in a press conference that the new party has a political perspective and that it is open for cooperation with Vetevendosje. The leader of the new party has not yet been announced either but MP Besa Baftiu said there is belief that Pristina Mayor Shpend Ahmeti could successfully lead the party.

**UNMIK’s future (*DW/dailies*)**

***Deutsche Welle*** in Albanian runs a story on the UN Mission in Kosovo saying there is deep division within the Security Council as to what the future of the mission will be. The latest quarterly report on the situation in Kosovo is reported to have reached the Security Council and will be presented by UNMIK chief Zahir Tanin in the coming days. Under the subheading *UNMIK’s role*, ***DW*** writes that the mission could play a role in assisting implementation of agreements reached so far between Pristina and Belgrade and notes that the Security Council could either consider proposals to end the mission in Kosovo, change the current format of sessions, or even ask the Secretary-General to carry out a strategic review of the mission. “We are continuing efforts to improve the situation,” UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said.

**Another American prosecutor to lead Specialist Chambers? (*Koha*)**

***Koha*** quotes unconfirmed reports in Serbian media saying that the US prosecutor Jack Smith has been appointed to lead Specialist Chambers following the retirement of his fellow-national, David Schwendiman. Smith is reported to have asked for a period of one year to get familiarized with cases the chambers are working on.

**Veseli: Italy supports Kosovo on Euro-Atlantic integrations (*Epoka*)**

The President of the Assembly of Kosovo, Kadri Veseli, hosted on Tuesday a meeting with Italy’s President of the Senate, Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati. They discussed political developments, Kosovo’s European perspective and bilateral relations. Veseli expressed gratitude for her visit and praised relations between Italy and Kosovo. He also told Casellati that Kosovo has fulfilled all the criteria for visa liberalization adding that Italy’s support on the matter is very important. Casellati said Italy has supported and will continue to support Kosovo on its path towards Euro-Atlantic integrations. She added that except for the political and security support, Italy will give support Kosovo also on economy. “I will be the voice of Kosovo to the major corporations to come and invest in Kosovo,” Casellati said.

**Stefanovic admits KSF members were questioned (*Koha*)**

Serbia’s Minister of Interior, Nebojsa Stefanovic, said Kosovo Security Force Serb members were not arrested In Serbia. “None of them was arrested, we only had discussions, because they could have information on certain issues. When we consider that someone could be a danger for Serbia, then we discuss with them,” Stefanovic said. He also spoke about the Oliver Ivanovic’s murder, accusing Kosovo for lack of cooperation to shed light on the case. “We are ready to cooperate with Kosovo, we do not want to speculate on who killed him. It is in our interest to find the perpetrators and those who gave order,” Stefanovic said. He reiterated that if Haradinaj enters Serbia, he would be arrested.

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