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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Parties agree on five topics proposed by PDK (*media*)**

All media cover the roundtable organized by the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) leader Kadri Veseli, on Tuesday, aimed at reaching political consensus on Kosovo’s agenda. The Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) was represented by its leader, Ramush Haradinaj, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), by Agim Veliu, mayor of Podujeve and LDK’s caucus, Avdullah Hoti, Social Democratic Initiative (NISMA), by Fatmir Limaj, the Alliance for the New Kosovo (AKR), by secretary of the party, Vesel Makolli and Alternativa, by Ilir Deda. The Group of Independent MPs, was represented by Dardan Sejdiu. Vetevendosje movement, Serbian List and Serb Independent Liberal Party (SLS), did not participate at the meeting. After the meeting, Kosovo’s PM Ramush Haradinaj said they also discussed matters on which the political parties disagree among themselves. He added that he expects these roundtables to bring a consensus. “We remain open on the dialogue platform. We expect to have help and support on this matter,” Haradinaj said. Asked about alleged motion to bring the government down, Kosovo’s Prime Minister, Ramush Haradinaj, said he does not see readiness of the opposition parties to file a motion against his government. PDK leader Kadri Veseli said after the meeting that parties are close to achieving national consensus on capital issues and that parties would continue to organize such roundtables. “We are on a good path to form the army in cooperation with the United States of America,” Veseli told reporters after the meeting. LDK parliamentary group chief, Abdullah Hoti, said after the meeting that early parliamentary elections are inevitable and that a ruling coalition that lacks the majority of votes in parliament is unable to make even the simplest decisions. ***Koha Ditore*** reports on its front page this morning that the political parties agreed to form a working group that will choose a specific topic that will be discussed at the next meeting. Both ruling parties and the opposition have expressed their agreements on the topics suggested by the PDK: the formation of the Kosovo Army, the European Integration Agenda, Dialogue with Serbia, the formation of the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities, and Election Reforms. The paper also notes that the Vetevendosje Movement (VV) and the Serbian List did not attend the meeting. VV representatives said they did not agree with the agenda. ***Kosova Sot*** notes in its front-page editorial that the roundtables are aimed at “shifting the public’s attention at a time when the country is faced with bankruptcy and the state administration is in total anarchy”.

**Haradinaj expects visa liberalization in autumn (RTK)**

The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said on Tuesday he was certain that Kosovo would get visa liberalization in autumn. “I want to be honest with you. We expect confirmation of the EU institutions that Kosovo has fulfilled its duties for visa liberalization in four or five weeks. Then, this does not mean that visa liberalisation will happen immediately. We have to be careful, because governments, separately can come up with special requests. I hope that some time in autumn, I am not giving any dates, because they can say that I am interfering with their dates, but I believe that sometime in autumn, we will travel freely,” Haradinaj said.

**Thaci: Our fate and history are within the European family (*RTK*)**

President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, on the first day of his official visit to Berlin, delivered a keynote address to the German Council on Foreign Relations. In front of many German state representatives and diplomats, representatives of the civil society and media, President Thaçi said that Germany has proved itself to be a great friend and supporter of Kosovo. He also stated that the people of Kosovo not so long ago did find shelter in this country, during the worst of times, and while a considerable number of those who sought shelter have returned to their homeland, a number is also well integrated into German society. “Germany has supported Kosovo and Kosovars during their darkest times, through participation in NATO intervention. Germany is also one of the largest donors and investors in Kosovo, and is helping Kosovo in many sectors, from rule of law to investments in energy sector” added President Thaçi. According to Thaci, Germany’s role in support of Kosovo in the international arena remains crucial, as Berlin today has become one of the strongest symbols of the European democratic values and ideas. President Thaçi, speaking in relation to Kosovo’s European perspective, stated that tomorrow, May the 9th, Europe Day, is a public holiday in Kosovo, and Kosovo is dedicated to its Euro-Atlantic perspective, while over 90 % of the Kosovars support Kosovo’s EU and NATO membership.

**Serbian List: We will not return to Kosovo government (*RTK*)**

The Serbian List issued a press release on Tuesday saying that they will not return to the government of Kosovo, because all the reasons that made them leave the ruling coalition in the first place, still stand. “Nothing has changed from the moment that we left the ruling coalition,” the press release notes. “We are aware that our decision will result in the further homogenization of Albanian political actors, and of the agreement on significant matters to them. This could be seen also during the past period of time, based on the manner in which the so-called opposition behaved in relation to the proposals of the government at the Assembly.” The Serbian List blames Kosovo’s Albanian political specter for the created situation, and “those who brought upon us masked violators with long barrels.”

**Abdixhiku: Elections now would affect visa liberalization process (*Lajmi*)**

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) Lumir Abdixhiku, told T7 broadcaster that his political party prefers rather an agreement with the other political parties that filing a motion of distrust to bring the government down. He said that despite the stagnation of Haradinaj’s government, extraordinary election right now, could affect and complicate the process of visa liberalization.

**Sofia to gather Haradinaj and Brnabic again (*RTK*)**

The Prime Minister of Serbia, Ana Brnabic, is expected to participate at an international conference of regional cooperation and European integration, which will be held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 17 and 18 May. The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, is also expected to participate at the meeting. This conference, organized by Vienna Economic Forum, aims for the Sofia Summit to be a connecting bridge between Bulgaria’s presidency and Austria, which will take over the presiding on the second half of this year. Albania’s Pm Edi Rama, that of FYROM, Zoran Zaev, Montenegro’s PM, Dusko Markovic, Bulgaria’s Prime Minister Boyko Borisov and the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, Ekaterina Zaharieva, are expected to participate at this meeting.

**EULEX, one more month in Kosovo (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports in one of its front-page stories that after ten years in Kosovo, the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) will end its mandate in June. Kosovo government officials and EULEX representatives confirmed to the paper that the mission will have only an advisory role after June 14. A EULEX spokeswoman told the paper that there will be no more EULEX judges and prosecutors in Kosovo’s judicial system.

**PSD to elect its leader today (*RTK*)**

Twelve MPs that left the Vetevendosje Movement a few months ago, and functioned as Group of independent MPs, published on Tuesday the logo of their political party, while today, on the Europe Day, they are expected to hold the convention of the Social Democratic Party (PSD). This convention is expected to bring a more clear shape to the organizing of the party, as they are expected to elect structures and its leader. According to the invitation of the PSD, the convention will start at 17:00 hours.

**Community of journalists against proposed media law (*Koha/RTK*)**

The community of journalists has opposed a law on media initiated by the Kosovo Assembly’s committee on media, saying that the law is unnecessary and that the initiative is an attempt to interfere and limit the freedom of media in Kosovo, ***Koha Ditore*** reports on page four. Nait Hasani, a member of the parliamentary committee, said the initiative is aimed at protecting the media because according to him the Independent Media Commission is not able to do this. He also said that the law would protect journalists from harassment at work, discriminatory speech, blackmail or even theft of content. Media representatives on the other hand are opposing the initiative to draft the law. The Board of the Council of Kosovo Print Media issued a press release on Tuesday saying that this is an effort to establish control and censorship over the media. ***RTK*** reports that the Kosovo Journalists Association (AKG) reacted on Tuesday saying that it was not informed by the assembly committee about the initiative. “The AKG in principle opposes every legal initiative by any institution that does not consult the stakeholders and does not announce the reasons for drafting this law. Kosovo has a broad range of positive laws that clearly regulate many areas directly related to the freedom of speech, but what we constantly lack is political and institutional readiness to implement these laws in practice,” the AKG said in their reaction. The public broadcaster also reports that several media editors reacted against the initiative on Tuesday saying that it constitutes a threat to the freedom of speech.

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