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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Merkel to Thaci: Fight corruption, form Association/Community (*dailies*)**

Papers report on the meeting yesterday between the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci in Berlin. At a joint press conference after the meeting, Merkel spoke of the need for Kosovo institutions to fight corruption and organised crime and implementation of all agreements reached in the framework of the dialogue with Serbia. She noted in this respect that priority should be given to the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities. Chancellor Merkel said that relations between Kosovo and Serbia are central to their respective EU integration process. “We know this is not the easiest thing but I believe there has been progress but more needs to be done,” Merkel said. President Thaci on his part expressed the readiness of Kosovo to conclude dialogue with Serbia resulting in a legally-binding agreement. “We realize that the final stage is not easy, for both Kosovo and Serbia, but dialogue is the only way for the two countries to move forward,” he said adding that he was looking forward to Germany’s active role in the process.

**“Serbia is blocking dialogue process” (*Zeri/Koha*)**

On the front page, both papers report on Serbia’s decision not to allow three Kosovo MPs to attend a Belgrade conference and for preventing Kosovo karate representatives to enter Serbia to compete at European championships. ***Zeri*** considers the decisions to be signs that Serbia is blocking the dialogue for normalisation of relations while ***Koha Ditore*** writes Serbia’s decisions are anti-European. Kosovo legislators – Vjosa Osmani, Blerta Deliu, Ilir Deda – were invited by the chairman of Serbian Assembly’s European integration committee Nenad Canak to attend a conference in Belgrade but their invitations were subsequently revoked. Osmani said the move shows Serbia is an anti-European country and that this does not contribute to peace and normalisation of relations. Similarly, Deda and Deliu slammed the decision by Belgrade authorities. President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci meanwhile commented on the ban to Kosovo karate representatives saying it was “unacceptable” and goes against the spirit of sports and fundamental rules of the International Karate Federation. Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj also said the decision was unacceptable while Deputy Prime Minister Enver Hoxhaj called it anti-European.

**Foreign Ministry to raise Serbia’s entry ban of Kosovo MPs at EU (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Foreign Ministry has reacted to Serbia’s decision to ban entrance of Kosovo Assembly MPs, Ilir Deda, Vjosa Osmani Kodra and Blerta Deliu, who were to participate at peace conference in Belgrade, considering it as unacceptable. “This act of the Serbian Parliament under the pressure of the ultra-nationalist Vojislav Seselj, who was sentenced for war crimes, shows once again Belgrade’s lack of will to promote good neighborly relations and development of regional cooperation. It is regretful that on the very Europe Day, Belgrade authorities showed their anti-European behavior towards Kosovo and international community,” noted a press release. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs warned further that it will raise the issue to the representatives of the European Union.

**Serbia: Karate athletes can compete but without state symbols (*Klan Kosova*)**

The Serbian Government’s Office for Kosovo has issued a statement regarding the participation of Kosovo karate representatives in the European Championship in Novi Sad saying they can attend the event but without state symbols and only under the name of international federations. “As hosts, good hosts, we allow the karate athletes from the southern province to take part in this championship but exclusively under a neutral status and representation under Europe’s international federations,” the statement reads.

**Veseli: Decision on visa liberalisation soon (*Zeri*)**

Head of Kosovo Assembly and leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), Kadri Veseli, said he expects Kosovo to soon receive decision on visa liberalisation. In a Facebook post on Europe Day, Veseli underlined that Kosovars believe in values represented by Europe and have no dilemma on where their future lies.

**Haradinaj: Correction of the border with Montenegro has started (*Bota*)**

The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said on Wednesday after the meeting of the government that the process for correction of the border with Montenegro has started. “The correction is a process which has started. The borderline will be marked by both parties and both parties consider this to be of interest. As sooner as it is concluded, the better for both parties. It is a process, it is not foreseen to conclude within a few weeks, but the ground is sustainable,” Haradinaj said.

**Shpend Ahmeti, leader of PSD (*Epoka*)**

The extraordinary convention of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), which was led by Kaqusha Jashari, elected on Wednesday with majority of votes Shpend Ahmeti as the leader of this political party. Visar Ymeri was elected as deputy leader, while Aida Derguti, for the position of the general secretary of the party. This political party elected also the steering council, and decided to leave PAN coalition reached before the elections.

**FYROM PM Zaev pays private visit to Haradinaj in Pristina (*Klan Kosova*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, received in his private residence in Pristina Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Zoran Zaev, and his wife. Haradinaj shared a picture of the meeting on Facebook and wrote the following caption: “Together with Anita, we welcomed in our house our friend and my Macedonian counterpart, Zoran Zaev, with his wife Zorica hoping that our friendship reflects relations between the two countries and our peoples.”

**PM Haradinaj promises municipality to Gorani community (*Koha*)**

In a visit to the village of Brod, Dragash municipality, Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj promised local residents, majority of whom members of the Gorani community, that the new municipality of Gora will soon be established. He said that no one would lose from the creation of a new municipality and that the initiative comes from the MP from the Gorani community, Adem Hoxha.

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