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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Prime Minister Haradinaj withdraws dialogue platform from Assembly (*media*)**

All media report that Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj decided on Tuesday to remove the government’s platform on talks with Serbia from the Assembly. Haradinaj said he made the decision to give room to political parties to discuss and give their ideas on dialogue with Serbia. “Today I withdrew the Government’s platform on dialogue with Serbia because I have seen great interest for debate. We must allow time for debate and political parties will have room to come up with their proposals,” Haradinaj was quoted as saying. ***Epoka e Re*** covers the news under the leading front-page headline ***Dialogue platform withdrawn from the Assembly due to lack of political consensus***. ***Kosova Sot*** notes in its coverage that “the government has backed down; the ridiculous platform has been withdrawn”. Bekim Collaku, advisor to President Hashim Thaci, in an interview to ***Lajmi*** hailed Haradinaj’s decision to withdraw the platform, saying this shows political maturity and that it will give time to political parties to achieve wide-ranging consensus for the final part of the process.

**Apostolova: Pristina-Belgrade relations, the greatest challenge (*Bota*)**

Head of the EU Office in Kosovo, Nataliya Apostolova told *Euractiv* that normalization of the relations between Pristina and Belgrade is the most complicated process in Balkans. She stressed that both parties need continuous encouragement of the international community in order to reach a solution. She added that there were concerning ethnic incidents during the last months where both Albanians and Serbs participated.

**EU: Resumption of Kosovo-Serbia dialogue in hands of the parties (*Bota*)**

The EU Information Office in Brussels told the ***Voice of America*** that the next meeting between Kosovo and Serbia’s delegations is in hands of both parties. “The EU acts as facilitator of the discussions. It is in hands of the parties to agree on the content, pace, next steps, format and timeframe of the discussions. We are in continuous contact with the chief negotiators of both parties and we will resume with our discussions in Brussels as soon as possible,” the EU Information Office in Brussels said.

**Collaku: Actors in dialogue were designated for some time now (*Koha*)**

Bekim Collaku, advisor to Kosovo President Hashim Thaci, told the paper on Tuesday that the actors of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia have been designated for six years now and that Thaci will represent Kosovo in the finale of the process. “This proves that dialogue has its normal course, its actors have been carefully designated and based on many arguments. Therefore, it is logical and expected to have continuity in the process. This means that the President of the country will lead the all-inclusive delegation of Kosovo in the process with a high level of responsibility,” Collaku said. The paper further notes that the government has retracted its platform on dialogue according to which President Thaci would lead Kosovo’s delegation in the final phase of dialogue with Serbia. Although new talks are expected to begin in the second half of June, consensus on the process has yet to be reached. The Office of the President said on Tuesday that preparations are underway to have an all-inclusive team consisting of political parties, civil society and experts of respective fields. In an interview to ***T7***, Collaku said that the new round of dialogue is expected to begin this month and that it could conclude within a 6 – 9 month period. He also said that the outcome of the process will be nothing more or less than mutual recognition.

**Hoxhaj: Political unity is needed for dialogue with Serbia (*Tribuna Channel*)**

Kosovo’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Enver Hoxhaj, said in an interview to ***Tribuna Channel*** on Tuesday that unity is needed among Kosovo’s political parties for the final phase of talks with Serbia. “We have reached this point as a country thanks to the power, unbreakable will, consensus and finding common ground. Dialogue must be supported by members of the Kosovo Assembly,” he said. Hoxhaj also argued that the Constitution of Kosovo entitles President Hashim Thaci to represent Kosovo in dialogue with Serbia.

**Ismaili: LDK should not block dialogue (*T7*)**

Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) deputy leader, Uran Ismaili, talked about the final phase of dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, in an interview to ***T7*** on Tuesday. He said the Constitution of Kosovo guarantees President Thaci’s role in representing Kosovo in dialogue with Serbia. Ismaili called on the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) not to block the process. “The LDK knows from their experience that Thaci’s role in dialogue is irreplaceable,” he said.

**Surroi: Thaci lacks credibility to lead negotiations with Serbia (*KTV*)**

Publicist Veton Surroi argued in an interview to ***KTV*** on Tuesday that President Hashim Thaci lacks credibility for negotiations with Serbia. He added that even after a decade, talks between Kosovo and Serbia “have produced nothing but new conflicts”. Surroi suggested that a comprehensive peace deal is needed that will treat the future of Kosovo’s citizens in a completely different way. “Kosovo and Serbia have spent their time in vain for almost a decade, especially in a process that has produced nothing but new problems, such as an association that may cause new conflicts. Kosovo needs to sign a peace agreement with Serbia; Kosovo should enter into a negotiating process if it is ready and if it creates a consensus, not to create other agreements but reach a peace agreement,” Surroi was quoted as saying.

**Soltes in Kosovo collecting integration facts (*Epoka*)**

The European Parliament’s Rapporteur for Kosovo Igor Soltes, during his ongoing visit to Kosovo, said that Kosovo should not allow corruption to impede progress of the integration process. “We are in Kosovo to gather as much data as possible from the leaders of the institutions, in order to report to the European Parliament,” Soltes said after his meeting with the President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci. The latter said that they are working to build a political consensus for the dialogue with Serbia. “Do not forget that there is a perception that the entire region except for Kosovo is being helped,” Thaci added. Soltes met on Tuesday also with Kosovo’s Minister for European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha.

**Osmani: Our motion to bring down the government is ready (*Klan*)**

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) Vjosa Osmani said on Tuesday that LDK is ready to bring down the government. She told Klan Kosova that that they are cooperating with the other opposition parties to reach an agreement. “LDK already has 27 signatures and prepared request for the motion to bring down the government,” Osmani said.

**D’Alema: Whole region must move toward EU (*media*)**

Kosovo President Hashim Thaci met on Tuesday in Pristina with former Italian Prime Minister Massimo D’Alema. “Thank you for your personal engagement, and for the support you gave to Kosovo and the region. We will be forever grateful,” Thaci said. D’Alema said Kosovo has made progress and that “the time has come for the whole region to move toward the European Union”.

**Opposition views as dangerous statute of Trepca mining complex (*media*)**

***Koha Ditore*** reports on page three that opposition parties have criticized the new statute of the Trepca mining complex which the government had adopted and submitted to the Assembly for approval. Vetevendosje leader Albin Kurti told a press conference on Tuesday that the new statute does not take into account Trepca’s significant role in Kosovo’s economic development. He also said Vetevendosje would soon organize a roundtable of experts that will come out with key remarks about the government’s project. ***Zeri*** quotes Kurti as saying that the new statute “is a threat” to the assets of the mining complex. Meanwhile, Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) representatives said on Tuesday that the Assembly’s committee for economic development should summon the board, management and union of the mining complex to discuss all remarks related to the content of the new statute.

**EU allocates €35 million for northern municipalities (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on its front page that except for the budget from the government of Kosovo, huge amounts of funds allocated from Serbia, the Fund for Development of the North, the four northern municipalities of Kosovo, Mitrovica North, Zvecan, Leposavic and Zubin Potok, will be receiving within the next two years additional €35 million from the European Union. “During the next two years, the EU will double the support for qualitative education, which means that these funds will be allocated for this purpose,” said head of the EU Office in Kosovo, Nataliya Apostolova.

**Petrit Collaku elected executive director of Association of Journalists (*Bota Sot*)**

Petrit Collaku has been unanimously elected on Tuesday as the new Executive Director of the Association of Journalists of Kosovo, the paper reports on page six. Collaku, a long-time reporter has also held the position of senior researcher at the AJK for two years now.

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