

Main Stories 24 September 2018

* **Delawie: Process of dialogue lacks democratic legitimacy (*Koha*)**
* **Scott: It would not be wise to set deadline for Kosovo – Serbia talks (*media*)**
* **Thaci to lead state delegation at UN General Assembly (*Epoka*)**
* **Hoti: A strong government must lead dialogue (*Zeri*)**
* **Kurti requests citizens’ mobilization for the 29 September protest (*Epoka*)**
* **Tahiri: North and Presevo Valley are Albanian lands, cannot be swapped (*Epoka*)**
* **“Kosovo in the same position at the UN General Assembly” (*Epoka)***
* **French paper publishes Kosovo map with “corrected borders” (*Kosova Sot*)**
* **Former top NATO official comments Kosovo-Serbia dialogue (*Bota* *Sot*)**
* **Serbia has caused Kosovo €22 billion war damages (*Epoka*)**
* **Dukagjin war veterans to protest on 26 September (*Epoka*)**
* **Visas group to arrive in Kosovo tomorrow (*Zeri*)**
* **Special court is dealing with murder of Ahmet Krasniqi (*Express*)**

**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Delawie: Process of dialogue lacks democratic legitimacy (*Koha*)**

The paper carries as its leading front-page story an interview with outgoing U.S. Ambassador, Greg Delawie, highlighting his remarks that the process of dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia lacks democratic legitimacy. “I think it is up to the Assembly to secure democratic legitimacy. The Assembly has not been able to secure 61 votes on anything related to dialogue, regrettably … Any solution that derives from dialogue and lacks some democratic legitimacy will be hard to implement,” Delawie is quoted as saying. He also said that “the solution needs to be stable, accepted by the people of both countries, it must contribute to stability in the region and not weaken regional stability … I think these are the most important things”. He also said that not everything presidents Thaci and Vucic agree upon might be acceptable for the U.S. “We have said we will review the proposed solution and we will express our concerns, if we have any,” he said.

**Scott: It would not be wise to set deadline for Kosovo – Serbia talks (*media*)**

The U.S. Ambassador to Belgrade, Kyle Scott, told Serbian media that “it would not be wise to set a deadline for talks between Kosovo and Serbia, at least until something tangible is achieved”. Scott said Kosovo and Serbia could go to elections next year and added that the situation in the region is always complex. He added that the U.S. is not directly involved in negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia and that it is important for the parties to focus on a comprehensive agreement. “There are ideas. Some are successful and some are not, and in our opinion it is important to give the opportunity and room to leaders of Serbia and Kosovo to talk, be flexible and creative in reaching a permanent solution that can be implemented and that is acceptable for the people of both countries,” Scott said.

**Thaci to lead state delegation at UN General Assembly (*Epoka*)**

The President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci, has traveled to the U.S. to lead the Kosovo delegation at the works of the UN General Assembly in New York. President Thaci, together with the first lady, Lumnije Thaci, will be participating at the annual reception of the U.S. President Donald Trump as Melania Trump. Thaci is also expected to meet his counterparts from different countries to deepen cooperation, increase number of recognitions and membership at international organisations.

**Hoti: A strong government must lead dialogue (*Zeri*)**

Avdullah Hoti, head of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) parliamentary group, wrote in a Facebook post that only a strong government can lead the process of talks with Serbia. “The Prime Minister lacks the political power to lead this process and is not able to delegate this authority to someone else. It is clear that he can speak only on behalf of his party, but not on behalf of the government which is divided into areas of interest,” Hoti said. He further argued that only a strong and broad-based government deriving from new elections can lead the process of dialogue.

**Kurti requests citizens’ mobilization for the 29 September protest (*Epoka*)**

Albin Kurti leader of Vetevendosje Movement said the 29 September protest seeks “to stop Thaci-Vucic trade, object Serbia’s aspirations in Kosovo and insists on new legitimity through new parliamentary elections.” He called the citizens to join this protest in front of the National Library at 14:00 hours saying that massive protests can tell the world that Kosovo population, different from President Thaci, has not changed its mind about the independence of Kosovo.

**Tahiri: North and Presevo Valley are Albanian lands, cannot be swapped (*Epoka*)**

Former Minister for Dialogue Edita Tahiri said on Sunday Albanians should unite in one state by strengthening the rule of law and not by giving lands away. She said both Kosovo North and Presevo Valley are Albanian lands, and as such, they cannot be exchanged. She added that thank to dialogue process with Serbia in Brussels, the parallel structures were extinguished and sovereignty of Kosovo state was reached in that part of Kosovo.

**“Kosovo in the same position at the UN General Assembly” (*Epoka)***

Ibrahim Gashi, Professor for international relations, told the paper that Kosovo should try to use the UN General Assembly to move forward the agenda of recognitions, dialogue and membership at INTERPOL. He said that Kosovo is this year as in the past, participating at this forum unequal with the other countries and added that major changes are not expected to happen at this session. He added that Kosovo diplomacy should mention during the bilateral meetings of this forum the dialogue with Serbia in order to test if UN state members are ready to consider Kosovo’s membership at the UN, in case of the reach of an agreement with Serbia.

**French paper publishes Kosovo map with “corrected borders” (*Kosova Sot*)**

The French paper Le Monde has published a map of Kosovo depicting it with “corrected borders”. The map shows the northern part of Kosovo being part of Serbia while Presevo Valley territory appears as part of Kosovo. A French geographer told the paper that while the concept of borders is recognised by international law as being inviolable, they can nevertheless be redrawn if relevant parties agree.

**Former top NATO official comments Kosovo-Serbia dialogue (*Bota* *Sot*)**

Former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana said in an opinion piece for ***Project Syndicate*** that now is a very important momentum for resolution of disagreements between the Western Balkans countries and speaking specifically about Kosovo-Serbia dialogue he underlined that it is not up to the EU to set conditions on how the process needs to go about and that “local ownership will be the key to any agreement”. Solana said that the commitment of Kosovo and Serbia presidents will to a large extend depend on their readiness to come up with a realistic solution in line with EU fundamental values.

**Serbia has caused Kosovo €22 billion war damages (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo government officials and political analysts in Prsitina said Serbia’s war damages caused to Kosovo before and during 1990-1999 conflict, reach the amount of €22 billion. However, they said compensation of these damages has not been discussed so far at the dialogue ion Brussels. They said this matter was raised once during the process of the negotiations in Vienna to close immediately as Serbian party did not accept to discuss the matter.

**Dukagjin war veterans to protest on 26 September (*Epoka*)**

The war veterans’ associations from Dukagjin area announced that they will be protesting next Wednesday in front of the Ministry of Justice, in defense of war values and dignity of Kosovo Liberation Army warrior. “We call on all comrades in arms and all citizens to protest against yet another injustice that is being committed against the sacred war of the KLA,” wrote on his Facebook account Gazmend Syla, adviser for war veterans’ affairs at the Prime Minister’s office.

**Visas group to arrive in Kosovo tomorrow (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on its front page that the Council of Ministers’ Working Party on the Western Balkans Region (COWEB) will stay in Kosovo today and tomorrow to get up-close information on the work done by Kosovo’s institutions in reforms, with special emphasis on rule of law. Kosovo’s Minister of European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha, told the paper on Sunday that Kosovo authorities have prepared all materials needed to inform the group on the progress achieved so far. She said the visit is very important due to the visa liberalization that Kosovo is in at this point.

**Special court is dealing with murder of Ahmet Krasniqi (*Express*)**

Behxhet Krasniqi, the brother of Ahmet Krasniqi, former defense minister of Kosovo’s government in exile who was killed in Albania in 1998, told the news website that the special court is dealing with the murder of his brother. “The Special Court is handling this. They have told us that this is under their jurisdiction,” Krasniqi was quoted as saying. “They have contacted our family. They told us that this is in their jurisdiction and that it may take a while but the truth will be revealed”.

**Disclaimer**

This media summary consists of selected local media articles for the information of UN personnel. The public distribution of this media summary is a courtesy service extended by UNMIK on the understanding that the choice of articles translated is exclusive, and the contents do not represent anything other than a selection of articles likely to be of interest to a United Nations readership. The inclusion of articles in this summary does not imply endorsement by UNMIK.