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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Thaci: Now is the time to reach a peace agreement (RTK)**

Kosovo President Hashim Thaci told ***RTK*** from New York that now is the time for Kosovo and Serbia to reach a peace agreement. He said this agreement will open Euro-Atlantic perspective for both countries. He added that he will raise this matter also in the meeting with the U.S. President Donald Trump and other world leaders participating at the UN General Assembly. According to him, Kosovo cannot allow any tendency for this agreement to be conditioned by division or exchange of territories.

**Kosovo leaders meet Senator Johnson, U.S. support confirmed (RTK)**

The President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci, together with the Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli and Kosovo Ambassador to the U.S. Vlora Citaku, met the U.S. Senator Ron Johnson. “We just concluded our meeting with Kosovo’s friend, Senator Ron Johnson. Senator Johnson by serving to the U.S., has supported our journey towards freedom, independence and state-building process. We will have the same support of the U.S. during these days, in our agenda for increase of recognitions, membership at international organisations and reach of a final agreement with Serbia, within the final phase of the dialogue,” Thaci wrote on his Facebook profile.

**Limaj: I would never sign something harmful for my country (Klan)**

Fatmir Limaj, leader of the Social-Democratic Initiative NISMA, told Klan Kosova that coalition government is offering the opposition parties possibility to be part of the dialogue. He said that if a final agreement with Serbia is reached, then if not the governing coalition, it will be the opposition political parties that will have to implement it. “Therefore, we should all be united on this matter. Solutions can happen also by negotiating. We are saying let us make the delegation together. Parties of dialoguing are dim. The President is being contested,” Limaj said and added that Kosovo went in the past unprepared in the dialogue. “NO one can be an owner of the national matters. We can receive the mandate and give account to the Assembly and parliamentary committees. This guarantees transparency, inclusiveness and power, no matter who discusses tomorrow,” Limaj said. “The entire world is aware of Kosovo’s targets in this dialogue: mutual recognition and Kosovo’s membership at UN,” Limaj said. According to him, Serbia has never come up with a concrete proposal on what do they request in exchange for recognition of Kosovo.

**LDK counting on NISMA votes to bring down government (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on the front page that the opposition Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) is counting on the votes from the ruling coalition party Social Democratic Initiative (NISMA) in successfully pushing forward a no-confidence motion against the current government. LDK deputy leader Agim Veliu is quoted as saying that their initiative is also expected to gain support from certain MPs from ruling parties but did not elaborate. And while other opposition parties, Vetevendosje and the Social Democratic Party (PSD), said they were open to supporting this government’s end, NISMA MP Haxhi Shala denied his party’s involvement in LDK’s motion of no confidence.

**LDK could boycott Kosovo Assembly (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) plans to organize protests and even withdraw from the Kosovo Assembly if it fails to oust the Haradinaj-led government through a motion of no-confidence. “We think that we have two-three actions left within the institutions and then the last step for us are protests and we are not ruling them out,” Agim Veliu, one of the deputy leaders of the LDK told reporters in Pristina on Monday. “If we organize protests, we will not return to the current institutions until we have institutions that are legitimized by the people’s vote”.

**Opposition says Kosovo’s delegation in New York lacks legitimacy (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on page three that while Kosovo President Thaci and Prime Minister Haradinaj are expected to meet with different leaders that will attend the United Nations General Assembly in New York, heads of opposition parties in Kosovo have called on them not to discuss a final agreement with Serbia, claiming that they lack legitimacy to do so. Vetevendosje leader Albin Kurti said on Monday that President Thaci was using the idea for Presevo Valley to join Kosovo as bait for others. He added that agreements reached between Thaci and his Serbian counterpart, Vucic, are damaging for Kosovo. “Kosovo cannot be sacrificed for Serbia’s integration in the EU and for Thaci to escape the Special Court. Shpend Ahmeti, leader of the Social Democratic Party, said President Thaci and the current government lack legitimacy to represent Kosovo in talks with Serbia. “The Kosovo Assembly must have the lead role in dialogue with Serbia,” Ahmeti argued.

**Delawie: My dreams for Kosovo (*Zeri*)**

The outgoing US Ambassador Greg Delawie says in an opinion piece published in the daily ***Zeri*** today that he was leaving Kosovo hopeful but noted that this will be a critical time which calls for a brave solution. He said Kosovo has enough potential to contribute to a bright future if its leaders make the right decisions. Despite progress Delawie says he witnessed over his three-year mandate, challenges remain. “We all know the rule of law in Kosovo is not a strong as it can or as it should be,” Delawie said adding that political interference in the judiciary needs to stop. He underlined that reconciliation between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo is crucial for peace but that more needs to be done in inclusion of Serbs and other minority communities. “Kosovo has no time to lose dealing with its challenges. It needs to demonstrate to the international community that it can be a reliable partner that embraces transatlantic values,” Delawie says.

**In New York, PM Haradinaj meets officials from Samoa (*Telegrafi*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj met in the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York Prime Minister of Samoa Susuga Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielagaoi and thanked the country for recognising independence of Kosovo. Haradinaj spoke of progress in Kosovo and its commitment to Euro-Atlantic integrations. Samoa’s prime minister on his part pledged to support Kosovo’s bids to join international organisations.

**Pacolli lobbies for visa liberalisation at UNGA sidelines (*Klan Kosova*)**

Kosovo’s Foreign Minister, Behgjet Pacolli, met in New York in the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session the Finnish Foreign Minister Timo Soini and urged him to support visa liberalisation for Kosovo. Pacolli said Kosovo youth deserves free movement and spoke of Kosovo’s progress in implementing visa liberalisation criteria. Speaking about dialogue with Serbia, Pacolli said it has entered the final stage and that there are several options on the table. “I personally favour normalisation based on economy, on the wellbeing of the citizens,” he said.

**“Dialogue is the only way to resolve problems” (*media*)**

Several media cover the meeting between U.S. Ambassador to Kosovo, Greg Delawie, and Kosovo’s Minister for Communities and Returns, Dalibor Jevtic, highlighting their remarks that dialogue is the only way to resolve problems between Albanians and Serbs. They also discussed the initiative to amend the law on the Kosovo Security Force. Jevtic said, “this process is unnecessary at this point and it can hamper other important processes, especially those related to dialogue”.

**SAA implementation not satisfactory (*Epoka e Re*)**

Kosovo Minister for European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha, said at the meeting of the working committee on European integration that relevant institutions need to put more effort into implementing remaining priorities of the European Reform Agenda and activities set out in the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). “National plan for SAA implementation is poor. It has not been implemented,” Hoxha said noting that by end of June only 12 percent of planned activities were implemented.

**“They want to kill Gani Geci after his statements about Thaci” (*Indeksonline*)**

Gani Geci, former MP from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), recently accused Kosovo President Hashim Thaci for ordering the assassination of Ahmet Krasniqi, former Defense Minister of Kosovo’s government in exile, in Tirana in 1997. Geci also claimed that he is a witness for the Specialist Chambers and said he would meet Thaci in court. Geci’s family issued a public statement on Monday expressing their concern that he could be murdered following these claims. The family called on Kosovo Police and international mechanisms to protect Gani Geci and that if something happens to him they would “respond in same fashion against Thaci”. Geci meanwhile told ***T7*** TV station that he personally received no threats and that his family issued the public statement after reading reports in the media that his life is at risk. Meanwhile, Kosovo Police told ***Kallxo.com*** that it has not received any request for protection from Geci family. “There is nothing concrete at this point,” said police spokesperson Avni Zahiti.

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