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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Thaci: Army is merit of all (*T7, RTK*)**

The President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci spoke on Monday about the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) into an army. Asked about who is meritorious for the creation of the army, Thaci said the army is not a merit of any individual, but of the population and all individuals who worked to create it. He rejected claims that the army is being created thanks to Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj and his recent meetings with officials of the United States of America. Thaci also spoke about his proposal for the ‘correction’ of borders between Kosovo and Serbia saying it ‘is constitutional, legal and uncontestable.” Asked if he was ready to withdraw from his idea for the borders, on behalf of the national consensus, Thaci said “when I hear better ideas, I will consider it.” “I have not heard better ideas to conclude the dialogue with Serbia,” he said. “My aim is this: For the dialogue to happen, for Kosovo to be possibly united. I strongly support correction of the border. There is no mutual recognition without definition of the border,” Thaci insisted.

**Pacolli: Border correction idea gaining increasing support (*Klan Kosova*)**

In an interview with ***Klan Kosova***, Kosovo’s Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli said that the idea of President Hashim Thaci for ‘border correction’ with Serbia is gaining increasing support and that he has been witnessing this in the meetings Thaci has with different officials. “In the beginning it seemed to me like an unattainable idea,” Pacolli said adding: “I don’t know what border correction entails but I see this as demarcation.” Speaking about Interpol membership bid, Pacolli said he believed Kosovo has secured enough votes to be admitted this year to the organisation.

**AKR dismisses Interior Minister Gashi, appoints Ekrem Mustafa (*dailies*)**

Behgjet Pacolli’s New Kosovo Alliance (AKR) has requested the government of Kosovo to release from duty Interior Minister Bejtush Gashi citing “poor performance” and replace him with Ekrem Mustafa. ***Koha Ditore*** reports that the move was initiated by AKR MP Labinot Tahiri – Labi who has insisted a minister is appointed from his home town of Ferizaj/Urosevac. The paper also writes that the new minister, Mustafa, has no relevant qualifications for the post being a doctor by occupation in contrast to his predecessor Gashi who was a security expert. While it remains yet unclear whether the government has approved AKR’s request, ***Zeri*** quiotes Lulzim Peci, director of the Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED) as saying that it is likely the government of Kosovo is not doing well in its Interpol membership bid and Gashi has been used as scapegoat to justify possible failure.

**Opposition continues to boycott Assembly, leaving it with no quorum (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on the front page that main opposition parties – the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and Vetevendosje – continued this week boycott of Kosovo Assembly’s plenary sessions leaving it without quorum and unable to pass several draft laws. The ruling coalition had to request two breaks in order to gather its MPs to secure quorum in the Assembly. The situation angered Assembly Speaker Kadri Veseli who said there are few MPs who are conscious of the lack of quorum and are intentionally absent from the session. “I will not tolerate certain individuals determining the fate of the Assembly of Kosovo,” Veseli said.

**Draft resolution on dialogue with Serbia removed from Assembly agenda (*media*)**

Online media reported that the Kosovo Assembly has dropped yesterday’s scheduled vote on the draft resolution for dialogue with Serbia on request from Social Democratic Party (PSD) MP Visar Ymeri. “We are interested in sitting down together and trying to bridge our positions on the resolution,” Ymeri said calling on parliamentary groups to join the discussion.

**Assembly set to discuss KSF transformation bills Thursday (*media*)**

Kosovo Assembly presidency decided to include three draft laws relating to the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) on Assembly session’s agenda for Thursday. Assembly Speaker Kadri Veseli said after the meeting of the presidency that Kosovo will have its armed force by the end of the year. After the meeting, Vetevendosje MP Albulena Haxhiu accused Veseli of trying to postpone the review of the bills but said the opposition managed to include it nevertheless. Haxhiu confirmed that Vetevendosje will attend Thursday’s session of the Assembly as did Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) through its MP Armend Zemaj.

**Serbian List: We will do the utmost to prevent creation of the army (*Lajmi*)**

The portal informs that despite the persistence of Kosovo institutions to create the army of Kosovo, the Serbian List continues to object its creation. Slavko Simic told Serbian broadcaster ***RTS*** that creation of the army would affect the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. “Such laws are not in interest of Serb population living in Kosovo and Metohija and they will certainly cause uncalculated damage to the process of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. This is also in contradiction with the UN Resolution 1244. Creation of the army would harm peace and stability of Serbs living in Kosovo and Metohija,” Simic said.

**Scott: U.S. consider Kosovo a state (*RTK)***

The U.S. Ambassador to Serbia Kyle Scott said on Monday that the government of Kosovo is not “the so-called” but the Government of Kosovo, which is an independent and sovereign state with its elected representatives. Scott responded in this manner while answering a question of a journalist on if there is hope for peace while Serbia is being continuously pressured on discussions with the so-called government of Kosovo. “They are elected representatives of Kosovo and we have contacts with them as with any representative of the countries of the region,” Scott said.

**Kosovo, topic of discussion at Belgrade Security Forum (*Koha*)**

The issue of Kosovo and the new phase of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina will be among the topics of discussion at the Belgrade Security Forum set to take place this week. Kosovo’s Deputy Prime Minister Enver Hoxhaj has also been invited to take part in the event but said he had not yet decided whether to go or not. Apart from Hoxhaj, invitees from Kosovo include Alternativa MP Ilir Deda and Agon Maliqi from the civil society.

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