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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Kosovo fails in bid to join INTERPOL (*media*)**

The leading story in most media is Kosovo’s failure to join INTERPOL after two rounds of voting on Tuesday. ***Koha Ditore*** reports on its front page that “Kosovo has lost another diplomatic battle with Serbia”. ***Zeri*** covers the news under the front-page headline ***The debacle at INTERPOL***, noting that it has been ten years now that Kosovo is failing to join the organization. In a different article related to the same issue, the paper notes that opposition parties are mobilizing for early elections. The paper also quotes political commentators in Pristina as saying that if the EU does not decide on visa liberalization for Kosovo in December, the Haradinaj-led government is likely to fall and Kosovo will go to early general elections. ***Epoka e Re*** notes on its front page that Kosovo’s institutions have blamed Serbia for the failed bid saying that it pressured member states to reject Kosovo’s request, but opposition parties in Pristina are blaming the government for the failure. The paper also quotes Sheremet Ahmeti, former Kosovo Police General Director, as saying that the failed bid should not discourage Kosovo and that Kosovo Police must continue to be stable, strong and fight crime. ***Bota Sot*** on its front page calls for the resignations of President Thaci, Prime Minister Haradinaj and Foreign Minister Pacolli. ***Kosova Sot*** notes in a front-page editorial that Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli should resign after Kosovo’s failure to join INTERPOL.

**President Thaci comments on Kosovo’s failed bid to INTERPOL (*media*)**

Kosovo President Hashim Thaci said on Tuesday he was disappointed that Kosovo failed in its bid to join INTERPOL. “In the integration processes, we are at a point that requires reflection, Serbia is pressuring the member states of INTERPOL. I want to thank the countries that have supported us. Kosovo has its own path as an independent country. Today’s failure highlights the need for greater political and institutional commitment. There are no winners today, and I can freely say that both Kosovo and Serbia have lost. Only organized crime has won,” he said. Thaci said Kosovo and Serbia must not obstruct one another in their processes. “INTERPOL is a mechanism of law and order and Kosovo wanted to contribute to peace and the war against terror. This should make it clear to the public once and for all that instead of obstructing one another, Kosovo and Serbia much reach a final agreement.”

**Mustafa: If we’re not accepted today, we will be accepted tomorrow (*RTK*)**

Isa Mustafa, leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK,) said Kosovo people should not loose trust in Kosovo due to the failure to become an INTERPOL member. “We have made an offer for Kosovo to become an ally. If we did not become a member today, we will become tomorrow. We should work to become members of this organization. We will win, we have allies, the U.S., Germany, Britain, Turkey etc.” Mustafa said.

**Vetevendosje calls on Thaci, Haradinaj and Pacolli to resign (*Insajderi*)**

Vetevendosje Movement representatives said on Tuesday that Kosovo’s failure to become a member state of INTERPOL is terrible news. Vetevendosje MP Xhelal Sfecla told a press conference on Tuesday that the failure is not a surprise. MP Albulena Haxhiu called on President Thaci, Prime Minister Haradinaj and Foreign Minister Pacolli to resign. She said failure to become an INTERPOL member is a set-back for Kosovo and added that this is a consequence of Kosovo’s leadership who should resign as soon as possible.

**Qalaj: We will apply again next year (*Zeri*)**

Rashit Qalaj, General Director of Kosovo Police, said on Tuesday that Kosovo won’t be discouraged by the failed bid to join INTERPOL and that it will apply for membership again next year. “We are not disappointed by what happened … Kosovo Police will become part of INTERPOL and we will try to join the organization next year … The failure to join INTERPOL has nothing to do with police but is directly related to political issue,” Qalaj was quoted as saying.

**UK disappointed with rejection of Kosovo’s bid to INTERPOL (*RTK*)**

The Embassy of the United Kingdom in Kosovo expressed disappointment that Kosovo's bid for INTERPOL membership resulted unsuccessful.  "The UK is disappointed that Kosovo’s Interpol membership application was unsuccessful in Dubai today. Kosovo worked hard to make the case for its membership to Interpol member countries. Kosovo’s membership of Interpol would enable better information sharing between law enforcement agencies, particularly in the Western Balkans region, and would improve European and global security. Organised criminals already co-operate easily across borders: to fight them effectively, our law enforcement authorities need to be able to do the same," is written in the press release.

**EU interested in dialogue, not INTERPOL (*Koha*)**

The paper reports that the European Union has no position following Kosovo’s failed bid to join INTERPOL. Maja Kocijancic, spokeswoman for High Representative Mogherini, told the paper on Tuesday that “the matter is for the member states of the organization”. “INTERPOL is an important partner for the European Union. We have a positive cooperation, including in the domain of police cooperation within the EU, on technical assistance to third countries and common security and defence policy operations, notably with a view to enhancing police cooperation and to build law enforcement capacities,” Kocijancic said in a statement. She also added that High Representative Mogherini stressed after the November 8 meeting that Kosovo and Serbia need to ensure an environment conducive for dialogue and refrain from words, actions and measures that are contrary to the spirit of normalisation.

**LDK calls for early general elections (*media*)**

The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) chairmanship met on Tuesday to discuss current political developments in the country, media report. “The LDK is confident that the country needs to go to early elections as soon as possible, because a minority government with client interests is damaging,” the LDK said in a press release.

**Removal of visas for Kosovo is not in the EU agenda (*RTK*)**

A diplomatic source from an EU member state in Brussels reportedly told dtt-net.com that the issue of liberalization of visas for Kosovo does not appear in the draft-agenda of the 6 and 7 December meeting of the EU ministers of justice and internal affairs. “Discussions at technical level are still going on. The current draft-agenda does not include visa liberalization,” said the source who preferred to remain anonymous.

**Veseli meets Mogherini in Brussels (*RTK*)**

The President of the Assembly of Kosovo met on Tuesday with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Frederica Mogherini. They discussed the situation in Kosovo, road towards European integration, especially implementation of Stabilisation Association Agreement and visa liberalization. Veseli said that Kosovo has fulfilled all the criteria for liberalization of visas and assessed that Kosovo’s membership at EU is the national goal of Kosovo. He also confirmed the institutional position of Kosovo to resolve through dialogue the open issues with its neighbors, especially with Serbia and expressed his conviction that that the dialogue will conclude with mutual recognition. EU High Representative on the other hand stressed EU’s commitment to support Kosovo on its European path, strengthening of internal capacities and facilitate the dialogue with neighbors.

**PSD: Dialogue is making Serbia more aggressive towards Kosovo (*RTK*)**

The Social-Democratic Party expressed its disappointment for the lack of sufficient support for INTERPOL membership in Dubai. This political party stressed in a press release that this serves to strengthening crime and affects regional and global security adding that Kosovo’s membership is unstoppable. According to PSD, this should serve as a lecture to the government, which should join opposition on reconfiguring the dialogue with Serbia as soon as possible. “Dialogue led by President Thaci is making Serbia more aggressive towards Kosovo each day,” the press release notes.

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