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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**President Thaci in the U.S. to meet Pompeo, Bolton and Bush (media)**

The President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci informed that he has travelled to the U.S. where he is expected to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, the U.S. National Security adviser John Bolton as well as with former U.S. President George Bush. “Starting my week in DC, meeting with Secretary Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton to discuss our strategic bilateral alliance and progress in reaching comprehensive agreement between Kosovo and Serbia, enabling UN, NATO and EU membership for Kosovo. Looking forward to meet President Bush in Texas as well!” Thaci wrote on his Twitter account.

**Mogherini: EU will closely monitor situation in Kosovo north (*RTK*)**

EU High Representative Federica Mogherini told Belgrade daily Danas that EU will be closely monitoring the situation in northern Kosovo and that it will be in contact with all stakeholders. She added that competent institutions in Kosovo should be respecting the Law in complete. “As far as Oliver Ivanovic’s murder in Mitrovica North is considered, and which we strongly condemned, as we said in the past, we expect relevant authorities in Kosovo that deal with the rule of law not to spare themselves from the efforts to find the perpetrators,” Mogherini said. She said CEFTA does not allow illegal and arbitrary imposture of tariffs for products of one or more countries and based on Stabilisation/Association Agreement, Kosovo pledged to continue with fulfilment of CEFTA agreement.

**Kosovo denies having ‘black list’ with names of Serbian officials (*dailies*)**

Kosovo’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs slammed reports by Serbian media that Kosovo authorities have a black list containing names of Serbian officials which determines whose visit to Kosovo to allow or reject. The Ministry said Kosovo institutions uphold principles of the Brussels Agreement which clearly states how visits of officials from the both sides should take place. “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo expresses deep regret that even two decades since the end of war, media in the neighbouring country continue to publish fake news originating from the propagandistic politics of the government in Serbia,” the statement reads.

**Cuoci: Kosovo does not have full sovereignty in the north (*Koha*)**

COMKFOR Salvatore Cuoci told the paper in a front-page interview that Kosovo does not have full sovereignty in the northern part of the country and that therefore there are still problems how to make this region a full part of Kosovo. “Northern Kosovo is a region where Pristina does not have full sovereignty, therefore this is a place where there are still problems how to make it a full part of Kosovo. This certainly is due to the fact that the majority of Kosovo Serbs live there, and Albanians are in the minority. This is a region where Pristina is finding it difficult to be effective. This is also a region where there are parallel structures and they are mainly effective. So, I think that challenges are related to the fact that the delicate situation in that region is not found in other parts of Kosovo,” Cuoci was quoted as saying. Commenting on the eventual transformation of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) into Kosovo’s Armed Forces, the Italian general said NATO’s position is that this should be done through consensus with all stakeholders, including Kosovo Serbs. “This should be done through constitutional amendments because this will show that all citizens of Kosovo are in favor of this transformation,” he added.

**Governments of Kosovo and Albania to have joint meeting today (*dailies*)**

The governments of Kosovo and Albania will hold a joint meeting today in Peja/Pec and are expected to sign twelve agreements. The meeting will be opened by Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama and Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj who will announce the opening of a Kosovo customs point at the port of Durres.

**Vucic says meeting of Kosovo, Albania governments is hypocrisy (*media*)**

Several news websites report that Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic has reacted to the joint meeting of the governments of Kosovo and Serbia calling it a hypocrisy “because on the one hand Kosovo has introduced a 100-percent tax on Serbian and Bosnian goods, while on the other hand it is trying to remove borders and taxes with Albania”. “This is the peak of hypocrisy not only for Albanians living in Kosovo and Albania, but for all those that are allowing this to happen,” Vucic said on Sunday.

**Minister Rikalo announces protest in the north if tax is not revoked (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Minister of Agriculture, Nenad Rikalo, said on Sunday that Serbs will protest in northern Kosovo on Tuesday if the Kosovo government does not revoke the 100-percent tax on Serbian and Bosnian goods. “The situation is partly alarming, and we can already see a potential catastrophe. Pristina should not act with bad intentions which are clearly aimed against the Serb people living in Kosovo. The easiest way out is for them to revoke this decision … On Tuesday, we will continue with our activities if Pristina does not show readiness to remove the tax on Serbian goods. We will respond in peaceful fashion against their physical and legal violence,” Rikalo said.

**Radojicic: I will not surrender, Albanians wanted to kill me (*RTK*)**

Milan Radojicic, deputy leader of the Serbian List, is sought by Kosovo Police for suspected involvement in the murder of Kosovo Serb politician Oliver Ivanovic. Radojicic issued a press release on Sunday saying that he is not a murderer and that he has nothing to do with Ivanovic’s murder. He also published a video where special units ROSU are seen in action to arrest him. “They came to my flat where I live with my wife and small children armed up to their teeth with a single aim – to kill me,” he wrote. He said he will not surrender as he does not want to be used “as a puppet from those who lead war against Serbia”. According to him, Kosovo authorities want to get rid of him because he is one of the political leaders that “oppose the occupation of Mitrovica North”.

**Vulin threatens Kosovo with military intervention (*RTS, RTK*)**

Serbia’s Minister of Defense Aleksandar Vulin called on Sunday for implementation of CEFTA agreement saying that Serbia has continuously respected it. “If Europe is not capable of respecting its own agreements, then why does Europe exist,” Vulin asked. “We have done what we were supposed to, we have proved so many things to Europe. It is the time now for Europe to prove itself,” he said. He also said that Albanians’ actions cannot be predicted as they act as KLA did. Vulin said Kosovo Serbs are in a difficult position and Serbian state will be able to help them. “We have ensured all the pre-conditions. It is in hands of state leadership to decide whether we are going to intervene or not,” Vulin said.

**Serb athletes not allowed to play in Kosovo without Ministry permission (*media*)**

Kosovo’s Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports, Kujtim Gashi, told the media on Sunday that a volleyball team from Serbia was stopped at the Jarinje border crossing because they did not get a permit from the Kosovo Volleyball Federation to play a match in Kosovo. “Athletes will not be allowed to enter our country without permits from our sports federations,” Shala is quoted as saying in ***Bota Sot***. He also said that Kosovo Police, Customs and the Ministry of Interior Affairs were notified about the decision.

**Kurti: Kosovo and Albania cannot have two approaches towards Serbia (*Zeri*)**

Commenting on the Albanian government’s position against the Kosovo-imposed tax on imports from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vetevendosje leader Albin Kurti said Albania should support Kosovo in its foreign policy. “We are one nation in two countries and cannot therefore have two different policies towards Serbia,” Kurti said. He said he believed the 100 percent tax will have positive results but said the government of Kosovo should have employed full trade, political and economic reciprocity to Serbia.

**Hoti calls for new elections (*Bota Sot*)**

Head of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) parliamentary group, Avdullah Hoti, has called for new elections and said the issue of border correction needs to be urgently removed from the negotiating table. In a Facebook post, Hoti said no Kosovo official should be allowed to discuss changing of borders. “We expect the resolution to be approved at the Assembly and all Albanian parties demonstrate their opposition to this issue with concrete actions and not only words,” Hoti wrote.

**Kosovo government building lit in orange to end gender-based violence (*Koha*)**

Kosovo’s government building glowed in orange on 25 November to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It also showed a white ribbon and names of women that as a result of gender-based violence. At the same time, Kosovo’s Agency for Gender Equality declared open 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign.

**Minister Hoxha: No violence against women shall be tolerated (*Bota Sot*)**

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Kosovo’s Minister of European Integration Dhurata Hoxha said no type of violence against Kosovo can be tolerated. “The world cannot be a happy place if half of it is threatened or is subjected to violence,” Hoxha wrote.

**Richardson: Corruption, a big threat to people’s trust in institutions (*Koha*)**

Ulrika Richardson, head of the UNDP mission in Kosovo, told the paper on Sunday that corruption is a big threat to people’s trust in the institutions. She said Kosovo authorities have drafted good laws and policies that enable building trust between the people and institutions, “but the issue is translating them into justice for all in Kosovo – women, men and children”. She also said that the sectors that suffer the most from corruption are education, healthcare and public procurement. Richardson also highlighted the campaign “16 days of activism” aimed at combating violence against women, domestic violence and promoting gender equality.

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