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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**U.S. Embassy: Opposition to get involved in dialogue with Serbia (*Zeri*)**

The U.S. Embassy in Pristina has called on opposition parties, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and Vetevendosje, to become part of the dialogue with Serbia saying this is not the time to stay in the sidelines and create obstacles in efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement. The U.S. Embassy stated to ***Zeri*** that it is encouraged to see a broader political engagement towards dialogue with Serbia and that it hoped other opposition parties will decide the join the process. “As President Trump highlighted in his letter: ‘Kosovo should seize this unique moment and speak with a unified voice,’” the Embassy said.

**Veseli: Dialogue (*Klan Kosova*)**

The news website carries an op-ed by Kosovo Assembly President and PDK leader, Kadri Veseli, on dialogue. Veseli writes that the people of Kosovo felt rightfully tired by “daily spectacles of accusations between political parties” and “a feeling that political consensus is hopeless”. “This sentiment was eliminated recently when the Kosovo Assembly unanimously adopted three laws for the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Army. The decision-making process on the Army is proof that Kosovo’s political landscape has the required strength to give a chance to internal consensus on matters of national interests”. Veseli notes that he has called a meeting in the Assembly on Wednesday - between the President, Prime Minister, the negotiating team, representatives of parliamentary groups from the opposition (LDK and VV) that are still not represented in the negotiating team – with the aim of coordinating on dialogue. “The motive is to build internal political cohesion on issues related to dialogue with Serbia … I felt disappointed, but not surprised, when I learned that LDK and Vetevendosje, seemingly as a response to my invitation, have called for an extraordinary session on Wednesday,” Veseli writes. [*full translation in the afternoon media report*].

**Gap between President and Govt threatens Kosovo’s position (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that this week’s meeting between heads of institutions and the negotiating team will try to narrow the gap between President Hashim Thaci’s position on border correction and the government’s position which opposes border changes. The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the Vetevendosje Movement (VV) will not attend the meeting. Sources in the ruling coalition told the paper on Sunday that leaders will try to find a joint approach in the meeting called by Assembly President Kadri Veseli, before the Assembly can vote on an official document on dialogue. Political commentators meanwhile argue that unless leaders find a united approach on the finale of the dialogue with Serbia, Kosovo’s position in the process will remain volatile.

**Thaci: Kosovo Army will move forwards – no turning back (*Bota Sot*)**

President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci said in an interview with the paper that U.S. role in the dialogue with Serbia is ‘irreplaceable’ and that the final agreement with Serbia should provide for mutual recognition and Kosovo’s membership in the UN. He said Kosovo Army has the support of not only the citizens of Kosovo and political parties but the support of the UN Security Council member states and those of the EU. “Kosovo Army will only move forwards, there is no turning back,” he said.

**KFOR: ROSU can go to north even without our permission (*Politika, RTK*)**

KFOR Spokesperson Vincenzo Grasso said that Kosovo special forces can act in the north without the permission of NATO’s peacekeeping mission. He told Serbian daily ***Politika*** that the Special Unit of the Kosovo Police have the mandate to act in any part of Kosovo, without KFOR’s consent.

**Bahtiri launches petition for unification of Mitrovica (*media*)**

Agim Bahtiri, mayor of Mitrovica South, announced that the petition that would initiate the procedure for amendment – completion of the Law for administrative borders of municipalities, aimed at unifying Mitrovica North municipality with Mitrovica, will commence on Monday. He wrote on his Facebook profile that citizens will be able to sign the petition at several points, organized by volunteers across the city.

**Mustafa: Ruling coalition being ‘patched-up’ with PSD (*Zeri*)**

Leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Isa Mustafa, said the ruling coalition partners are trying to “patch-up” through “hybrid and illegitimate teams” which he said only shows its lack of majority. Mustafa said the government’s attempts to present the negotiating team as that of unity through the support of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) which he said carries no more than 3% of citizens’ trust will not succeed. He said the dialogue with Serbia should be carried out without undermining the sovereignty of Kosovo. “Agreements need to enable Kosovo membership in international organisations,” Mustafa noted at the event marking the 29th anniversary of LDK’s establishment.

**Kurti: PSD ended up in PDK’s ‘lap’ (*Zeri*)**

Vetevendosje leader Albin Kurti said accused his former party fellows now Social Democratic Party (PSD) MPs of ending up in the ‘lap’ of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK). “This truth does not rejoice us but angers us as our predicaments are turning out to be accurate in that anyone who leaves Vetevendosje ends up in PDK’s lap,” Kurti said. He said the publication of text messages being exchanged between PSD MP Dardan Molliqaj and members of the coalition parties, Pal Lekaj and Bilall Sherifi, during the Kosovo Assembly’s vote of the budget show that the twelve PSD MPs have been ‘bought’ by President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci and Assembly Speaker Kadri Veseli.

**Serbia seeks new format of dialogue under UN supervision (*RTK*)**

Serbia’s Minister for Innovation and Technology Development Nenad Popovic said after a meeting with Russian officials that Kosovo’s 100-percent tax and endorsement of the Laws for creation of the army showed that the EU “does not have the power to offer guarantees that the reached agreements between Belgrade and Pristina will be respected.”

“These moves by Pristina as well as lack of reaction by the EU, burry the Brussels agreement. We now need a new format of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, which instead of the EU mediation, should be carried out within the UN framework, with mediation of the U.S., Russia and China,” Popovic said.

**Pristina University students to protest today over visa liberalisation (*RTK*)**

Students of the Pristina University will be protesting today in front of the EU Office in Pristina due to the lack of the visa liberalisation for Kosovo. “On Monday, at 11:00 hours, we will gather at the Faculty of Philosophy, to continue towards the EU Office. We call on you to participate in the symbolic action organized by us, students,” reads the notification of the students. They claim that through this action they demand accountability from the EU.

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