



Division of Public Information

MEDIA MONITORING Headlines

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3 November 2009

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Kosovo Media Highlights

Bentler: Kosovo not threatened from outside (*Koha Ditore*)

Koha Ditore reports that KFOR Commander General Markus Bentler is convinced that the security situation in the country and in the region has made positive steps in recent months. Although he outlined several challenges which are of concern to security forces, Bentler guaranteed that there is no military threat to Kosovo from the outside.

“The security situation in the region in general is satisfying. I do not see any military threat from outside. This is good news for all Kosovo citizens. There are no signs that there is danger”, said Bentler in an interview with *Koha Ditore*.

Ethnic tensions, the situation in the north, unresolved issues with Serbia, and the fragile economy, according to Bentler, can be bypassed if the Kosovars continue to see their future with hope.

Rexhepi requests dissolution of parallel structures (*Koha Ditore*)

Mitrovica Mayor Bajram Rexhepi called on security structures to act determinedly to dissolve Serb parallel structures operating in the north of Kosovo. He said this would enable citizens of all communities to live and work without problems. Rexhepi said several isolated incidents occurred in the north over the last two weeks, but that they had no impact on the overall security situation.

With regard to reconstruction activities in the north, Rexhepi said that both Albanians and Serbs are working without any problem. “This calm situation is a result of the engagement and good coordination between municipal and security structures such as Kosovo Police, KFOR and EULEX,” Rexhepi said.

Discovery of a child’s body is confirmed (*dailies*)

Koha Ditore reports that Kosovo observed a day of mourning on Monday in honor of the victims of the Tisza River tragedy, while authorities continue the search for other bodies. On Saturday, Serb police found the bodies of three victims which are believed to belong to the group of Kosovars attempting to cross from Serbia into Hungary via the Tisza River. The discovery of two bodies on Saturday was also confirmed by Kosovo police, while the discovery of the body of a one-year-old girl was confirmed on Monday. This brings the total number of victims to nine, six of which were discovered in Serbia and the other three discovered in Hungary.

ICO: Political and social discontent on the rise (*Zëri*)

Zëri reports that the International Civilian Office conducted two public opinion surveys in Kosovo between April and June 2009. While 40 percent of Albanian respondents trusted that their living conditions would improve April, this percentage dropped to 37 percent in June. At the same time, while 18 percent of Serb respondents believed that better conditions would be achieved in April, this figure dropped to 10 percent in June.

On the work of the Thaçi-led Government, 29 percent of Albanian respondents said in April that they were satisfied with its work, while 34 percent expressed satisfaction in June.

According to *Zëri*, the most interesting outcome of the poll was a confirmation by 30 percent of Serb respondents that they would take part in Kosovo local elections.

Demarcation with Montenegro is more complicated (*Zëri*)

Zëri reports that while officials of Kosovo institutions claim that the contested Montenegro-Kosovo border will soon be resolved, without giving any deadlines, representatives of villages near the border announced protests if the issue is not soon addressed. “Montenegro’s placing signs within our territory makes many of the villages by the border lose their properties, and this is the reason why we are going to protest,” said Rrahman Jasharaj, from “Vëllezërit Kosovë – Malësi a Madhe – Martin Dreshaj”.

Although officials from the Montenegrin Government had first said that the boards set within Kosovo territory were not actual border signs, the General Director of Montenegrin Police, during a recent visit to Kosovo, said that the boards were set in Montenegrin territory.

Zëri reports that Kosovo opposition parties consider that this as a result of the Government's negligence.

Hyseni to visit Skopje, Ivanov to visit Pristina (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore reports that Kosovo Foreign Minister Skënder Hyseni is due to visit Skopje this Friday. Furthermore, it was announced that Macedonian President George Ivanov will make an official visit to Pristina at the end of the month, upon the invitation of Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu.

It was unofficially confirmed that Minister Hyseni will be welcomed by his Macedonian counterpart, Antonio Milosovski, this weekend in order for them to discuss the opening the embassies.

Milliband objects to comparison of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia with Kosovo (Express)

Express reports that British Foreign Minister David Milliband told Russian radio station *Echo Moscow* that Great Britain does not recognize the independence of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia. He stressed that London opposes the comparison of Kosovo with the two separatist Georgian territories. "Yugoslavia seized existing as a state," said Milliband, who assessed that Kosovo's independence is a product of Yugoslavia's disintegration.

Ferati: Local elections in the north in six months (Kosova Sot)

Local Government Minister Sadri Ferati is quoted as saying that Kosovo institutions will organize local elections in the north of Kosovo six months after the 15 November elections. Ferati said that there are signals that in predominantly Serb municipalities in the north, there are signals that a significant number among the Serb population will take part in the elections.

Creation of investigative commission for RTK fails (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore reports that the Kosovo Assembly rejected the request of 43 Assembly members for the creation of an investigative commission on financial misuse in public television. The nomination of the new RTK board convinced the members of the Assembly to give more time to the General Auditor and board.

PTK director buys cars worth €120,000 (Zëri)

The head of Kosovo Post and Telecommunications (PTK), Shyqyri Haxha, is reported to have used €120,000 of PTK's to purchase two luxury Range Rovers. PTK officials said that the purchases were carried out in accordance with procurement regulations and that the cars will be used by management. "In this year, PTK has achieved

satisfactory financial results by making a high profit,” said company official Menduh Abazi.

Kosovo Press Headlines

Koha Ditore

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- **Kosovo not threatened from outside**
- **Progress report discussed: For visas in December**
- **Establishment of RTK investigative committee fails**
- **Foreign Minister Hyseni to visit Skopje on Friday**
- **Authorities confirm discovery of a baby’s body**

Other headlines

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- **Rexhepi calls for dissolution of parallel structures (4)**
- **CDHRF: ICTY office in Kosovo to be led by locals (7)**
- **Shala: Adoption of President Clinton (10)**

Zëri

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- **Kosovo mourns Tisa River victims**
- **University of Kent confirms Haxha is its employee**
- **Assembly rejects request for investigation into RTK**
- **Kosovo-Montenegro demarcation will be more complicated**
- **Government exceeds planned expenses by € 300,000**
- **Three more bodies discovered**

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Kosova Sot

Front page

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- Malësia Reisen: We gave €5,000 and our name was not read out
- AAK against coalition with Thaçi
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- Editorial: Mute police

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- Deputies: EULEX is also responsible (4)
- Balkans in EU by 2014 (4)
- London against comparison of Kosovo with Ossetia and Abkhazia (5)
- Illegal companies violate Kosovo's sovereignty (8)

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Front page

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- Visa liberalization when criteria are met
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- Serbia's "Elektroekonomia" is an illegal company (8)

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- Haziri: As you wish
- Three more bodies found in Tisa
- Ballots arrived

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- Makes the request official (5)
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- Again about the Progress Report (6)

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- Political games for votes

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- One law for the fathers land (10)

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- Assembly refuses investigation of RTK

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- Business is a guarantee for economic development (10)

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- RTK will not be investigated (4)
- EC: Larger control in procurement (4)

Belgrade Headlines 2 November 2009

- Founders of Kosovo Serb Council excluded (*Blic*)
- Sejdiu: We will resolve the dispute with Montenegro (*Blic*)
- Simic: Far from defence of Kosovo (*Danas*)

- **Russian Ambassador to Bosnia & Herzegovina: We are defending the survival of Serbs (*Vecernje Novosti*)**
- **Inzko: Reform in Bosnia & Herzegovina is a condition for EU accession (*Kurir*)**
- **What is Dodik's next move? (*Danas*)**

Founders of Kosovo Serb Council excluded (*Blic*)

The Serb National Council (SNV) for Kosovo-Metohija passed a decision to exclude Rada Trajkovic, Momcilo Trajkovic and Randjel Nojkic from the SNV in response to their open calls to Serbs to take part in the upcoming local elections in Kosovo. Momcilo Trajkovic, one of the founders of the SNV KiM, was excluded due to his candidacy for the post of mayor of the new municipality of Gracanica.

Sejdiu: We will resolve the dispute with Montenegro (*Blic*)

Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu has stated that possible border disputes with Montenegro will be resolved in the border demarcation process. "If we have some possible disputes, this will be resolved during demarcation, so we will know where the Kosovo and Montenegrin borders are," said Sejdiu.

Simic: Far from defence of Kosovo (*Danas*)

"Serbia is still far from fulfilling both foreign policy priorities – EU membership and resolution of the Kosovo issue. When it comes to the EU, a certain degree of concrete progress has been achieved, and here I have in mind the certain visa liberalization for Serbia. When we speak of Kosovo, success is partial, but we can conclude this only after a decision is reached in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Still, it is also a question as to how much the ICJ decision will change the positions of the sides to the dispute," Predrag Simic, professor at the Political Science Faculty in Belgrade, told *Danas*.

Russian Ambassador to Bosnia & Herzegovina: We are defending the survival of Serbs (*Vecernje Novosti*)

The protectorate in Bosnia & Herzegovina is slowly becoming an obstacle to negotiations and the country's development, the new ambassador of the Russian Federation to Bosnia & Herzegovina, Aleksandr Botsan-Harchenko, told *Vecernje Novosti* in an interview. "The Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia & Herzegovina had a good role and we supported it very much as the key international civil presence following the conflict in Bosnia & Herzegovina. It is now entering into insignificant individual matters and seems a burden that is quite opposite to the strategy for domestic leaders and institutions to be passing decisions on their own."

Russia, along with the Republika Srpska (RS), is the only one advocating the closing of the office. Can this be worked out?

"Russian is not changing its position, and we believe that the OHR should be closed. However, our partners still are not ready for such a step."

You were a member of the Russian delegation during the Dayton negotiations. Should this agreement be changed at any cost?

“Dayton is good, because it stopped the war and fulfilled its role, and is key to the entire region. As regards the organization of a state with two entities with strong jurisdictions, it is also the result of compromise. That is why I think that entities must exist and that this will remain in Bosnia & Herzegovina for a long time.”

It seems the international community subordinated the protectorate mechanism to the interests of the Bosniaks?

“I would not come to such radical conclusions. However, your question certainly has ground and reason. Russia advocates the concept of strengthening central institutions along with strong entity institutions. We think that this is possible within the Dayton Accords.”

What is the solution for Bosnia & Herzegovina’s to emerge from the present crisis? Most negotiators accuse Premier Dodik for the failures.

“Premier Dodik remained constructive and immediately sent an invitation to domestic leaders to agree without foreigners. I do not understand completely, and I regret that this initiative has not been accepted. We do not think it is possible for the Bosnian leaders to give up entity jurisdictions ‘overnight.’ Dialogue in itself that would improve the functionality of Bosnia & Herzegovina can go step by step, without pressures, and with the increased presence of the international community and mediators. As regards the Butmir process, I personally think that such negotiation is not good. We agreed within the Council for Peace Implementation on closure of the OHR. The Constitution or amendments to the Constitution have never been a condition for closing the OHR.”

You were a member of the Troika negotiations on the final status of Kosovo. How do you assess the situation in the province?

“We do not accept this kind of Kosovo. There is a lot of proof that the present solution is not good. The living standard or any other standard have not been achieved. There is a high degree of crime and the province is *de facto* divided. That is why Kosovo, with such a solution, remains a ‘black hole’ for the region and Europe. A unilateral solution is not good and is unfounded. As a member of the Contact Group and the negotiating Troika, I can say that there was room for talks in 2007. A lack of progress in negotiations cannot be an excuse for a unilateral solution. If there is no progress, negotiations must become more intensive. If everybody would have a balanced relation within negotiations on Kosovo, then we would also have a balanced solution.”

Inzko: Reform in Bosnia & Herzegovina is a condition for EU accession (*Kurir*)

The High Representative in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Valentin Inzko, told Austrian daily *Kronen Zeitung* that Bosnia & Herzegovina cannot accede to the EU without strengthening its central institutions and completing constitutional reforms. “Not doing so would threaten stability in the region in the long term,” warned Inzko. He added that Bosnia & Herzegovina is on a decisive road, but that this was also the case with the international community, where there are two schools of thought. Inzko

explained that one of these schools advocates for “the abolishment of the international representative, which would represent an end to Bosnia & Herzegovina’s independence.”

What is Dodik’s next move? (Danas)

“If some of the leaders of the Bosnia & Herzegovina parliamentary parties call a meeting in order to discuss the open issues for Bosnia & Herzegovina in order to accelerate its Euro-Atlantic path, I will respond. However, if this meeting on Bosnia & Herzegovina’s future is called by some of the foreigners, I will boycott this meeting,” said Republika Srpska Premier Milorad Dodik.

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