

# UNMIK



United Nations Mission in Kosovo

Division of Public Information

## Media Monitoring

# ▶ **Local Media**

## ▶ **Media Analysis**

**8 December**

### UNMIK still waits for investigation's outcome, Serbs blame Rexhepi (*Koha Ditore*)

*On the issue of Saturday's attack against Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi in northern Mitrovica, **Koha Ditore** quotes UNMIK spokesperson in Mitrovica, Gyorgy Kakuk, as saying, 'There are ongoing investigations regarding yesterday's incident and until they are over we cannot say who is behind the attack'.*

*The paper also quotes Momir Kasalovic, senior member of the Serb National Council for northern Kosovo, as saying, 'Rexhepi's visit was aimed at provoking Serbs and presenting them as a destabilizing factor, blaming them for lack of cooperation with the international community and at the same time to clear Albanians from all crimes that they have committed against Serbs'.*

**Kosova Sot** writes that the attack illustrates the situation in Mitrovica. Right after the attack, the Kosovo Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi told journalists that 'this protest does not contribute to processes in Kosovo, you can see that some Serbs are not ready to accept integrity, and they still continue with parallel structures. Those who cause these problems must face justice. I am a citizen of Mitrovica, and this attack is not unusual for me. We citizens of Mitrovica are familiar with each other, but I did not know them' said the Prime Minister adding 'I will continue my work as a Prime Minister of all regardless of ethnicity, but the Police and KFOR should bring order to this part of the town'.

In a telephone conversation for '**Kosova Sot**' the mayor of Mitrovica, Faruk Spahia said that the 'attack was unacceptable for the municipal leadership and for the citizens of Mitrovica'.

'Serb extremists namely the bridge watchers are active in the northern part of Mitrovica and they are hindering the integration of the town', Spahia points out.

**Kosova Sot** runs another article on the same subject and they quote the member of the Assembly Presidency, Xhavit Haliti, as saying that the attack was organized by

Serbian secret services, which does not help the efforts of the Kosovo institutions and its political bodies for stability.

‘This way they are trying to hinder the process of the return of the Serbs to Kosovo, and this case shows that the international community needs to tackle the issue of parallel, paramilitary and secret services of Serbia in Kosovo more seriously’, Haliti says.

The Kosovo Government officials apart from condemning the act have refuted the statement of Serb Minister of Agriculture, Goran Bogdanovic that the PM Rexhepi knew he was not going to dinner. He is quoted to have said to Serbian media that the reasons of his absence were personal. ‘That morning I went to Pristina, to Rexhepi’s cabinet, and talked to the members of the World Bank’. He said he did not know that Rexhepi was going or where the dinner was to take place and who was organizing it. Bogdanovic also said that he and Oliver Ivanovic were invited to that dinner, and that the dinner was used to provoke Serbs for incidents before the Brussels’ meeting on 9 December.

The spokesperson of the Kosovo Government, Mimoza Kusari, has called the attack vandalism, and clarified that the visit of the PM had been announced. ‘However, at the end of the day, why should the Prime Minister announce visits within the administrative boundaries of Kosovo?’ she concluded.

**Shala: The ‘provocation’ of the Prime Minister of Kosovo (Zëri)**

*‘Not a single public reaction in Pristina regarding the attack against the Prime Minister in Mitrovica,’ writes Editor Blerim Shala in a front-page commentary in Zëri.*

Neither UNMIK nor local authorities have managed to find a couple of words regarding the threatening of the Prime Minister.

Instead of dealing with the true reasons of the attack against Prime Minister Rexhepi, some Kosovo Serb politicians, who are also members of local institutions, have referred to his visit as open provocation.

Therefore, if an Albanian official of Kosovo visits Kosovan citizens, it means that he is provoking local residents. And this is all about freedom of movement, isn’t it.

It is known that even the World Bank delegation came under attack in Mitrovica. A member of this delegation suffered injuries, while the UNMIK bus and three official vehicles were burned. This is the result of Prime Minister Rexhepi’s ‘provocation’.

It would be good if this would be the turning point when it comes to northern Kosovo. But we also know that for the time being it is useless to expect such a thing.

A proper organization of the international administration would not hesitate to launch firm measures against all those who are responsible for this serious incident in Mitrovica. This is yet another example for the activity of parallel structures, which in every report of the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan are qualified as obstacles to

progress in Kosovo. On the other hand, Kosovan officials should use this to emerge from the position of constant defense when it comes to the image of Kosovo.

**Flaka Surroi: From a different angle (Koha Ditore)**

*Koha Ditore* carries an opinion piece by Flaka Surroi, director of the Community Development Fund (CDF), who comments on the incident that took place on Saturday in northern Mitrovica, when Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi and a delegation of the World Bank came under attack by local Serbs.

I was especially interested in reading the report of your journalist about the attack that took place on Saturday in Mitrovica and I focused my attention on the part of the article that contained the press release that UNMIK issued regarding the incident. Bearing in mind the fact that quite accidentally and unintentionally, along with 17 people, I was subject to the abovementioned attack, I feel a moral obligation to describe Saturday's attack from a different angle from that of UNMIK. If for nothing else, to voice my pride and respect for the special unit of the Kosovo Police Service, whose members rescued us from lynching.

I am not in any way going to dispute the description of your journalist about the time when the delegation and the Prime Minister were inside the restaurant, because it gives an accurate description of the event. A small detail that your reporter didn't mention is the fact that while the mob was stoning the restaurant, four French KFOR soldiers were having lunch inside. I am not in the position to say what were the orders of these soldiers and how they must react on certain occasions, but I can say that while stones were smashing into the restaurant, the four soldiers got up, put on their bulletproof vests and left the building from the very same door as we, the members of the delegation, did.

The delegation started its journey in Mitrovica probably seconds later from the Prime Minister. While the Prime Minister's car along with other vehicles turned right, the UNMIK bus that transported the delegation, and two vehicles of the KPS and a vehicle of the World Bank turned left. Traveling on the roads of Kosovar cities by bus is real arts, and the bus driver proved to be a true artist. Despite all this art, the outraged mob managed to get several meters close to us, and then they started throwing huge bricks and stones that smashed the windows on the back of the bus. One of the stones hit a member of the delegation and cracked the left side of his head. I can only imagine the pain that he must have felt.

I can say that this withdrawal in the style of American movies might have lasted five or ten minutes, but to us it seemed like five or ten hours, because we feared that someone might even use fire weapons. Fortunately, there were no gunshots.

Once we made it in front of the town's hospital, the leader of the KPS unit ordered us to get out of the bus and vehicles. The 12 members of the unit formed a circle around us and led us toward Suhodoll. We made it there, sometimes by walking fast and sometimes by running. They protected us with their own bodies and their impressive cold-bloodedness.

Somewhere in the middle of our ‘marathon’ we saw black smoke coming from the hill where we left our vehicles. We supposed that our vehicles were the ones that were being burned. No one seemed to care about the burning vehicles, except for KPS members, because their vehicles were new and they drove them with pride.

Once we reached Suhodoll, we stopped to have a little rest, because among us was an elderly man with a triple bypass, whom KPS members had practically carried on their backs while we were looking for a rescue. We planned on walking from there and using a small bridge to get to the city. But that was when an American police officer came by driving. With an uncivilized manner, he started criticizing KPS members. Furthermore, he accused them of creating unnecessary panic, because ‘there was no real threat in the north’. Maybe it was due to the ‘lack of threat’, that the KPS unit didn’t get the reinforcements they asked for while we were inside the restaurant. ‘Reinforcements’ came when we were already safe from danger. By setting up a ridiculous show, UNMIK Police came to pick us up and take us triumphantly to the regional police station. The whole procedure of transporting the members of the delegations was done in the presence of Suhodoll residents who were asking what kind of a recreational activity this was when they saw us 18 civilians and 12 police officers running as a flock of sheep and while Danish KFOR blocked the road and allowed no vehicle to pass in that direction.

This was the first time in history that Kosovo was being visited by a highest-ranking delegation of the World Bank – the financial institution that allocated numerous funds for the reconstruction and development of Kosovo. What was planned to be working trip turned into a bad nightmare for all the members of the high-ranking delegation. For us Kosovars who had survived war, this meant going back five years and a revival of fear and understanding of how little value life has in Kosovo today.

After reading the press release issued by UNMIK, one has the impression that this ‘condemnable incident’ was not a big issue, and that UNMIK had done its work with professionalism. I am leaving open the possibility of arguments for what has happened, but I want to reemphasize that when the delegation needed protection, there was only the KPS special unit and no one else. Thank God that the KPS boys were with us, because otherwise I wouldn’t be able to write this reaction.

### **For sake of ‘benchmarks’; hands not raised against Serb vandalism (Epoka)**

*Epoka e Re carries an opinion piece by columnist Ernest Luma, who writes:*

The most important officials of the country cannot feel safe anywhere. The example of Prime Minister Rexhepi is the latest, but not the last. We have often witnessed such acts in the last couple of years in Kosovo, and only during this year in Vienna, Budapest, Slovenia... In these places, political and institutional representatives of Kosovo were stopped, and thus their personal dignity and our national dignity was violated. After these acts, there were only some reactions and then everything was forgotten.

In the ‘free Kosovo’, members of the minorities, be they Roma, Turk, Serb or Ashkali – have more immunity than the representatives or leaders of Kosovan institutions.

Dr. Bajram Rexhepi is the Prime Minister of Kosovo. On Saturday, together with a delegation of the World Bank, he barely made it out of his native town, Mitrovica, after Serbs let out their vandalism.

If we speak according to UNMIK's logic, then on Saturday in Mitrovica the victims were the bearded Serbs who threw stones at the Prime Minister and the guests from the World Bank, whereas Dr. Bajram Rexhepi should be arrested, because with his presence he provoked the nationalistic feelings of minorities in the north.

On the same evening, UNMIK Police reported only 'problems in the public order' in the northern town of Kosovo. Nothing more, regardless of the fact that stones and insults had targeted the Prime Minister of Kosovo.

If a member of the Serb minority would suffer even the slightest injuries in all this mess, the whole world would know about it and Brussels, Vienna, the EU and the UN would be alarmed and Secretary-General Kofi Annan would be abashed. This would have undermined 'standards before status', and God knows what would have happened to the status.

It was great 'fortune' for the standards and for Kosovo that only the Prime Minister suffered from this scandal. It was also a great 'fortune' that his bodyguards showed self-restraint and altogether fled to the south. In all this misfortune, an international tasted the flavor of the multiethnic Kosovo and the Serb willingness for co-existence. He is certainly going to tell others how successful UNMIK has been in setting up order in Mitrovica.

Maybe Saturday's scandal should be silenced and faced with cold-bloodedness and no Serb vandal in the northern part should be arrested, because there are 'ongoing investigations', or due to other reasons...

Even if they get on his neck, the Prime Minister should tolerate that for the sake of the standards and all UNMIK's achievements in the north, whereas police officers, be they KPS or UNMIK Police, should shut their eyes before such situations.

Only for the sake of the 'standards'...!

**Palokaj: Regret should come before apologizing (Koha Ditore)**

*Koha Ditore carries an opinion piece by correspondent Augustin Palokaj, who writes, 'If Belgrade was to listen to Mr. Holkeri's suggestion and apologize to Kosovar Albanians for everything that was done in the past it would be meaningless at this point because the majority of Serbs still hold racist positions towards Albanians and don't believe that something bad was done by them'.*

The process of reconciliation in the Balkans should be separated from politics, as tragedies of families are to be separated from political objectives. In Kosovo's case, this is difficult as Belgrade is using Kosovo Serbs for political goals. Serbian leaders do not only use the Serb population in Kosovo for their election campaigns, where they compete in who sheds more tears for their fellow countrymen in Kosovo, and who throws more stones over Albanians and the international community for

terrorism, Islamism, organized crime, etc, but they also use them in all international meetings where they have opened doors, although they have not got rid of Milosevician fascism, in terms of mentality and political goals. Such a stance of Belgrade is keeping Kosovo Serbs hostage and is preventing them from integrating in the Kosovo institutions, and in this way they are also keeping Kosovo hostage for as much as the international community allows them.

There are many problems in Kosovo that cannot be solved through a political decision or a military force. Such is the problem of the return of the Serb refugees to areas they left from and the process of reconciliation. Representatives of the international community have realized this and although they have reasons to be upset by the silence of Albanians regarding crimes against Serbs after the war, they still understand that Albanians find it difficult to look in the eyes of those in the name of which horrible crimes were committed against them. This could have motivated UNMIK head Harri Holkeri to suggest Belgrade apologizing to Kosovo Albanians for everything that has happened. I'm still not sure whether he suggested this or a 'mutual exchange of apologies'.

If Belgrade was to listen to Mr. Holkeri's suggestion and to apologize to Kosovar Albanians for everything that was done in the past it would be meaningless at this point because the majority of Serbs still hold racist positions towards Albanians and don't believe that something bad was done by them.

Apologizing without a prior regret for what happened, or just for political goals, would of little value. The public opinion in Serbia should first get aware of the atrocious crimes against Kosovo Albanians that were committed in their name. They should understand that there are mass graves of Albanian children and women in their yards. They should forget the propaganda that Turkey brought Albanians to Kosovo to colonize Serbian lands, they should get rid once and for all of the theories about uncivilized Albanians, with tails, and very dangerous, as they were taught by their academics.

The apology should come as a process and not in words. Just throw a look at the reactions in Serbia to Holkeri's proposal, from father Sava to all their politicians. Nobody sees it reasonable to apologize to Albanians. Holkeri, as any other civilized European, cannot understand that the majority of Serbs still think that Milosevic did not do any harm to Albanians. For them, it is Albanians to blame why NATO bombed Serbians. This is not a result of ignorance, since many Serbians were part of the apparatus that exercised terror to Albanians or that kept silent.

The example of apologizing to Bosniaks and Croats by the president of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Holkeri refers to, is not proper either, since it mostly pleases the international community and not the victims. That exchange of apologies between Mesic and Marovic and their apologies to Bosniaks has little value, since Marovic was not speaking in the name of Serbians. He did not have support in Serbia because he reached his post as a Montenegrin, and it is known that Montenegrins sincerely apologized to Croats from Dubrovnik and to Bosniaks long ago, since they realized they were wrong. I personally have heard some Serbs express apologies to Albanians. These were individual acts and had value since they understood what happened to

Albanians in Kosovo, and did not want to have their conscience burdened with such violence in the name of Serbian nation.

Kosovars should get over this. They must not connect tolerance towards Serb minority in Kosovo with stances of Belgrade or with whether somebody will apologize in their name or not. They should guarantee all the rights for Serbs, tolerate a normal life for them. Kosovars should do this for our Kosovo Serbs and for ourselves, and for the future. Crimes are something that need to be dealt with seriously by the courts, and Holkeri would honor Kosovars if he tried harder with UNMIK courts to prosecute war criminals, since the Hague Tribunal does no longer intend to convict any Serb for crimes in Kosovo.

Sentencing criminals is the best if not the only way to create preconditions for reconciliation and tolerance. Bosniaks and Croats will feel the best when the International Court of Justice in Hague, not the one for war crimes, declares Serbia guilty of aggression against them.

‘We need to do this for the sake of victims and the historical truth’, said the foreign minister of Croatia, Tonino Piculla.

What value would it have if Adenauer apologized for crimes of Germans during WW2, and if Germans continued with the refusing policy regarding those crimes. Serbs today continue with the refusing policy. Most of them consider as war in the territory of former Yugoslavia only the 78-day campaign of NATO bombing, and none of them wants even to think that there were wars and crimes during a decade, all of them triggered by Belgrade. They try to twist things over and present themselves as victims, and in this respect apologizing in their name would be of little value without recognizing the truth and without prior regret. The biggest risk even for Serbs is to try and equalize guilt for what happened in the last years of the last century, and also there is a risk for the international community to involve in this effort. This only pushes the moment of reconciliation, regretting and forgiving further away.

### **Editorial: Standards and the parallel structures (*Kosova Sot*)**

*Kosova Sot* carries a front-page editorial about the parallel structures and their impact in the implementation of the standards.

UNMIK administration is not reaching any success in managing the UNSC Resolution 1244. The fact that the parallel structures are still active and aren't dismantled proves that the international mission is not administering a part of our country. There is one quarter of Kosovo's territory, which is out of UNMIK control. The UNSC session on Kosovo had always stressed the dismantling of the parallel structures, but there is nothing concretely undertaken in this direction. Responsibility belongs to the international officials who have the appropriate mechanisms to establish law and public order on parts, which aren't still under their administration. Lifespan of the parallel structures is detrimental for the processes before us. In particularly the operationalization of standards will be at risk if parallel structures aren't dismantled. UNMIK administration seems to be very clumsy when it comes to manage the territory as it is foreseen with the Resolution 1244. In the eve of announcing the operationalization of standards, it would be good to clarify a few things that are related to the international criteria. The Kosovar institutions cannot guarantee the

progress of standards in the parts that aren't under the control of the Kosovar authorities and UNMIK. You cannot require from them something that is supposed to be done by UNMIK officials and in the reality is undone. If the parallel structures continue their resistance, then a strategy should be compiled how to include such part of Kosovo's territory in the implementation of the standards. Kosovo should be considered as a unified country, not as a divided place. So, local officials and the politicians should pay more attention to this bitter reality. We should recall that on the table are all possible options regarding Kosovo's future. One option is Kosovo's division, and the existence of parallel structures is a great help to this option. It is time for the internationals to think seriously about dismantling the parallel structures. This is the only way to discuss status before 2005.

### **Lambsdorff: How I brought Marie Fucci to Pristina (*Koha Ditore*)**

In an interview for *Koha Ditore*, Nikolaus Lambsdorff, head of UNMIK Pillar IV, said that unfortunately he had to block the privatization and added that the process was not carried out properly prior to his arrival. Pillar IV head acknowledged that a Serb representative had made remarks related to the determination of SOEs status.

The paper further reports that attempting to justify his actions, Lambsdorff admitted that for the appointment of Marie Fucci as general manager of KTA, he had considered the recommendation of his adviser Herbert Schmid, who had known Fucci from before. The paper further quotes Lambsdorff as saying, 'I introduced Marie Fucci to every member of the board and to the Prime Minister. No one said anything against her. No one had anything against her CV. No one doubted that she was an expert on privatization'.

*Koha Ditore* further reports that KTA Board chairman Lambsdorff stated that KTA had recommend an American law firm to represent KTA in New York's court. Claiming a possible conflict of interest the paper further adds that the current Head of KTA Legal Office is a former employee of that law firm.

### **Decentralization divides Gjilan in 16 sub-municipal units, 5 of them with Serbian majority (*Zëri*)**

*Zëri* carries final report of the Council of Europe on decentralization in Kosovo. The paper further claims that the Gjilan municipality will have 16 sub-municipal units, five of them with Serbian majority.

Following the same issue, *Zëri* quotes Gjilan municipal president Lutfi Haziri as saying that the CoE report for Kosovo's circumstances is unacceptable and inapplicable. 'The report itself is inapplicable, is not tangible for the ordinary citizens and will cause disintegration of the minorities,' said Haziri. 'We have published our comments and concerns in a document regarding recommendations of the CoE,' he said. He added that five regions are too much in a territory such is Kosovo with 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>. This report doesn't regulate the relations but it spoils them and it might put minorities in enclaves. This will risk whole progress that has been achieved in the recent years,' said Haziri.

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# ► Headlines

## Main Stories

8 December

- **Lambsdorff: How I brought Marie Fucci to Pristina** (*Koha Ditore*)
- **Which are the three enterprises that are being disputed by UNMIK?** (*Zëri*)
- **UNMIK still waits for end of investigations, Serbs blame Rexhepi** (*Koha*)
- **KFOR and UNMIK allow the humiliation of Rexhepi** (*Epoka e Re*)
- **Spahija: Attack in the north, attempt to devaluate achieved results** (*Koha*)
- **Shala: The ‘provocation’ of the Prime Minister of Kosovo** (*Zëri*)
- **Hysa: Mitrovica is being ignored by international community** (*Epoka e Re*)
- **Who protects Kosovo’s VIPs?** (*Zëri*)
- **Todorovic doesn’t travel with Holkeri and Rexhepi to Brussels** (*Koha*)
- **Covic: We don’t need standards as replacement for sovereignty** (*Koha Ditore*)
- **Ivanovic opposes promotion of standards for Kosovo in Brussels** (*Zëri*)
- **Palokaj: Concretion should come before apologizing** (*Koha Ditore*)
- **Zëri and Koha Ditore form Joint Papers Association**

## Kosovo Media Highlights

### Lambsdorff: How I brought Marie Fucci to Pristina (*Koha Ditore*)

In an interview for *Koha Ditore*, Nikolaus Lambsdorff, head of UNMIK Pillar IV, was quoted as saying, ‘I introduced Marie Fucci to every member of the board and to the Prime Minister. No one said anything against her. No one had anything against her CV. No one doubted that she is an expert on privatization’.

### Which are the three enterprises that are being disputed by UNMIK? (*Zëri*)

*Zëri* reports that Hotel Adriatik in Mitrovica, the Concrete Factory in Mitrovica and the Wood Combine in Peja are the three enterprises about which UNMIK Pillar IV head Nikolaus Lambsdorff says contracts cannot be signed because they lack a clear status.

### UNMIK still waits for end of investigations, Serbs blame Rexhepi (*Koha Ditore*)

On the issue of Saturday’s attack against Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi in northern Mitrovica, *Koha Ditore* quotes UNMIK spokesperson in Mitrovica, Gyorgy Kakuk, as saying, ‘There are ongoing investigations regarding yesterday’s incident and until they are over we cannot say who is behind the attack’.

The paper also quotes Momir Kasalovic, senior member of the Serb National Council for northern Kosovo, as saying, ‘Rexhepi’s visit was aimed at provoking Serbs and presenting them as a destabilizing factor, blaming them for lack of cooperation with the international community and at the same time to clear Albanians from all crimes that they have committed against Serbs’.

### **KFOR and UNMIK allow the humiliation of Rexhepi (Epoka e Re)**

*Epoka e Re* reports that with the violence against the Prime Minister and the delegation of the World Bank, Serbs from northern Mitrovica once again proved the postwar ‘successes’ in Kosovo and revealed the negative side of KFOR and UNMIK.

*Epoka e Re* also reports that four police vehicles and a bus of the World Bank delegation were burned during the incident.

### **Spahija: Attack in the north, attempt to devalue achieved results (Koha)**

*Koha Ditore* reports that Faruk Spahija, President of the Municipal Assembly in Mitrovica, has harshly condemned the incident caused by Serb extremists on Saturday when they attacked a restaurant in northern Mitrovica, where members of the Executive Board of the World Bank and Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi were having lunch.

‘The attack by Serb extremists was aimed at devaluating the results that have been achieved recently in the field of security and freedom of movement in both parts of the city,’ Spahija added.

### **Shala: The ‘provocation’ of the Prime Minister of Kosovo (Zëri)**

‘Not a single public reaction in Pristina regarding the attack against the Prime Minister in Mitrovica,’ writes Editor Blerim Shala in a front-page commentary in *Zëri*.

‘Neither UNMIK nor local authorities have managed to find a couple of words regarding the threatening of the Prime Minister. Instead of dealing with the true reasons of the attack against Prime Minister Rexhepi, some Kosovo Serb politicians, who are also members of local institutions, have referred to his visit as open provocation. Therefore, if an Albanian official of Kosovo visits Kosovar citizens, it means that he is provoking local residents.’

### **Hysa: Mitrovica is being ignored by international community (Epoka e Re)**

*Epoka e Re* reports that during an interview for the *BBC*, political analyst Ylber Hysa said that the latest incident in Mitrovica is proof that the international community is ignoring the problem of the divided city.

### **Who protects Kosovar VIPs? (Zëri)**

*Zëri* reports that thanks to his knowledge of the terrain and the support of his own forces, Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi escaped the worst scenario on Saturday when a crowd of Serbs in northern Mitrovica had attacked him and a delegation of the World Bank while they were having lunch in a local restaurant.

### **Todorovic doesn't travel with Holkeri and Rexhepi to Brussels (Koha Ditore)**

*Koha Ditore* reports that the inter-ministerial coordinator at the Kosovo Government, Milorad Todorovic is not going to be a member of the Kosovar delegation at the upcoming forum of the European Union in Brussels.

Todorovic told *Koha Ditore* that he wasn't going to travel to Brussels due to family obligations and health problems.

### **Covic: We don't need standards as replacement for sovereignty (Koha Ditore)**

Citing information broadcast by Belgrade-based *Beta* news agency, *Koha Ditore* reports that Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic said that the latest version of standards for Kosovo hasn't included all of Belgrade's remarks, and that therefore he has called for an urgent meeting of the Serbian Government.

Covic said that Belgrade had already received the final version of the plan for standards. 'We don't need standards as replacement for sovereignty. Those who want to come out and make a trade let them say so. I don't want to do this,' Covic added.

### **Ivanovic opposes promotion of standards for Kosovo in Brussels (Zëri)**

Commenting the decision not to attend the upcoming meeting in Brussels, Oliver Ivanovic, a member of the Kosovo Assembly Presidency, said that UNMIK didn't provide representatives of Kosovo Serbs with a final version of the plan for standards in time.

'Since we haven't received the final version of the document by Friday, as it was foreseen, it is clear that we don't want to go to Brussels and be informed on standards and thus become part of the environment there,' Ivanovic added.

### **Palokaj: Concretion should come before apologizing (Koha Ditore)**

*Koha Ditore* carries an opinion piece by correspondent Augustin Palokaj, who writes, 'If Belgrade was to listen to Mr. Holkeri's suggestion and apologize to Kosovar Albanians for everything that was done in the past it would be meaningless at this point because the majority of Serbs still holds racist positions towards Albanians and don't believe that something bad was done by them'.

### **Zëri and Koha Ditore form Joint Papers Association**

*Zëri* and *Koha Ditore* have formed the Joint Papers Association, 'with the aim of overcoming numerous obstacles in the media environment in Kosovo'.

A communiqué signed by publishers Veton Surroi and Blerim Shala noted that *Koha Ditore* and *Zëri* would work together in treating common problems in their work.

# **Kosovo Press Headlines**

## **Koha Ditore**

### **Front page**

- **How I brought Marie Fucci to Pristina?**
- **Link to Zurich ruins love between creators of Airline carrier**
- **TV sessions brings negative image of deputies, causes losing voters**
- **UNMIK still waits for end of investigation, Serbs blame Rexhepi**
- **Energoinvest workers: Former leadership had betrayed us**

### **Other headlines**

- ***Koha Ditore* and *Zëri* create Joint Papers Association (2)**
- **Kosovo officials candidates for elections in Serbia (3)**
- **Covic: We do not need standards as a replacement of sovereignty (3)**
- **Abbreviation RAE is artificial name (6)**
- **Recent controls by KFOR and Police (6)**
- **Asllani is proud about cooperation with Germans (6)**
- **Awareness of disabled children's parents is necessity (7)**
- **Palokaj: Concretion should come before apologize (10)**
- **Surroi: From another point of view (11)**

## **Zëri**

### **Front page**

- **Who protects Kosovo's VIP?**
- **Which are the three enterprises that are disputable by UNMIK?**
- **Shala: The 'Provocation' of Kosovo's Prime Minister**
- **First flight, step towards independence**
- **Knowledge of terrain helps Rexhepi escape Serbian attacks**
- **Covic: If Kosovo is the price for integration of Serbia into Europe, we do not want that integration**

### **Other headlines**

- ***Koha Ditore* and *Zëri* create Joint Papers Association (2)**
- **PM Rexhepi participates at Balkans Forum in Brussels (3)**
- **American sergeant found dead in Monteith (4)**
- **Decentralization divides Gjilan in 16 sub-municipal units, 5 of them with Serbian majority (5)**
- **Handicrafts as presents for international diplomats (6)**
- **Covic: We don't need to exchange standards with sovereignty (6)**
- **Ivanovic against promotion of standards in Brussels (6)**
- **Ahmeti: Ohrid agreement is a historic document (7)**
- **COMKFOR participates in operation for dislocation of bridge (8)**
- **OSCE organizes three days training (8)**
- **Egyptians have different identity than Romas and Ashkalis (9)**
- **Trauma and war stress are still present for women (9)**

## **Bota Sot**

### **Front page**

- **Kosovar leaders travel to Vienna**
- **Kosovo imports €1 billion and exports €30 millions annually**
- **Three senior Macedonian officials investigated for massacre in Luboten**
- **First status, then decentralization**
- **Attack against PM Rexhepi came after the brutal attack of Covic against Holkeri's authority**
- **Spahija condemns attack against PM Rexhepi**

### **Other headlines**

- **Delay of recognition of independence is in favor for Serbia and mafia (2)**
- **Turkish Army Chief of Staff Ozkok meets COMKFOR (2)**
- **Buçpapaj: Internationals do not see through their eyes, they watch Kosovo just through their mind (4)**
- **Somebody was killed for liberty somebody makes speeches... (5)**
- **Zogaj: Tell us Mr. Qosja, how did you kiss Janullatos hand? (6)**
- **Privatization is one of the standards for Kosovo's independence (7)**
- **Naim Maloku's concern about the KPC (7)**
- **Manipulations with minorities in Albania (8)**
- **Albanian lobby: Do not ask what your country can do for you, but ask yourself what you can do for your homeland (9)**
- **Macedonians should learn Albanian history (10)**

## **Kosova Sot**

### **Front page**

- **Belgrade receives the final plan on standards before Pristina!**
- **Editorial: Standards and the parallel authorities**
- **Haliti: Attack is an act of Serb secret services**
- **Who is going to investigate on the 12 suspended KPC members**
- **'Mabetex' wins the tender, though the offer was € 1 million more expensive**
- **Parliament: a positive mark, but it could have been better**

### **Other headlines**

- **An illustration of the situation in Mitrovica (2)**
- **Rugova: We want to be members of World Bank (4)**
- **By silence you do not show efficiency (4)**
- **World Bank allocates € 16 million for Kosovo (4)**
- **An American soldier found dead in Camp Monteith (4)**
- **Kosovo Air Company 'Kosova Airlines' starts first flights (6)**
- **How dangerous pesticides are (6)**
- **Voting with open lists ensures qualitative elections (7)**
- **Many families will spend the winter in the open (10)**

## **Epoka e Re**

### **Front page**

- 'Xhevdet Doda' high school, neither a school nor a church
- KFOR and UNMIK allowed humiliation of Rexhepi
- For the sake of 'benchmarks'; hands not raised against Serb vandalism

### **Other headlines**

- SNC accuses Rexhepi: He cannot come to Mitrovica as a Prime Minister (2)
- Lieutenant Daryl Brooks died from a wound caused by a weapon (2)
- Number one of Turkish Army today in Kosovo (2)
- World Bank allocates over € 16 million for Kosovo (3)
- Around 200 pedagogues have remained out of jobs (4)
- Serbia an obstacle for all positive processes in the Balkans (5)
- Final version of 'Standards' first in Brussels - without Kosovo Serbs (5)
- Ministry of Education has politicized schools (7)
- Pamphlets with messages against UNMIK (8)
- Rugova and Rexhepi cut the ribbon talking about independence (8)
- 'Sunday Mirror' British journalists bought 'weapons' in Kosovo (8)

## **Belgrade Media Highlights**

- UNMIK requests Kosovo authorities to erase new names (*Vecernje Novosti/Beta*)
- Zivkovic: Terrorism protected under international protectorate (*Blic/Fonet*)
- Albanian gangs most dangerous in Europe (*Politika/Tanjug*)
- Nejmedin Spahiu: It is not so bad (*Glas*)
- Rexhepi's visit to northern Mitrovica (*Politika*)
- Solana on Kosovo and Metohija (*Politika/Beta*)
- Nebojsa Covic's interview to Politika (*Politika*)
- Assassination of Covic prepared (*Vecernje Novosti/Fonet*)
  
- Nebojsa Covic on organized crime (*Blic*)
- UNMIK and SNC condemn Rexhepi (*Blic*)
- Rexhepi's cabinet on terror of 'bridge-watchers' (*Vecernje Novosti/Beta*)
- Kosovo Serbs not to travel to Brussels (*Danas/B92*)
- Covic requests urgent government session (*Glas/Beta*)
- Svetozar Marovic: Talks on Kosovo to last long (*Politika*)
- Miroslav Kopecni's interview to Balkan (*Balkan*)

### **UNMIK requests Kosovo authorities to erase new names (*Vecernje Novosti/Beta*)**

UNMIK has requested Kosovo institutions to use names for towns and villages in Kosovo that were used until 1999. The Head of UNMIK's administration department Francesco Bastagli has requested in a written form the ministry for public services and

the municipal assembly to respect the official names of settlements in accordance with the regulations that were signed in 2000 by the then UNMIK head Bernard Kouchner. “It was noticed that problems had been created because names in official documents are not written in accordance with regulations that officially offer the names of 30 municipalities in the official language,” said Izabella Karlowicz. She warned that official documents that don’t respect adopted official names, would not be valid.

### **Zivkovic: Terrorism protected under international protectorate (*Blic/Fonet*)**

Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic has stated that Belgrade is the safest city in the Balkans, and that the highest level of crime and terrorism exists in Kosovo and Metohija that is under international protectorate. Addressing the participants of the International Conference on Regional Cooperation in Combating Organized Crime, Zivkovic said that crime and the state leadership; the police and judiciary are not linked anymore in Serbia. Stressing that there is no justified and unjustified terrorism, Zivkovic assessed there was protection of terrorism on the part of Serbia’s territory that is under international protectorate.

### **Albanian gangs most dangerous in Europe (*Politika/Tanjug*)**

Albanian gangs are the most dangerous criminal groups in Europe, said the Chairman of the International Anti-Corruption Organization Greko and member of the CoE Committee for Organized Crime, Drago Kos. Foreign criminal groups don’t have much influence in Slovenia, although some unsuccessful attempts by criminal gangs from former Soviet republics have been registered, Kos said in an interview to the Slovenian daily Dnevnik. The Committee’s report states that organized crime is transferred from the east to the west of Europe. Kos expressed assurance that Albanian groups over-exceeded in crime Italian gangs, like Koza nostra.

### **Nejmedin Spahiu: It is not so bad (*Glas*)**

The President of the Assembly of NGOs in Kosovo and Metohija Nejmedin Spahiu has assessed that terrorism is a big problem in the southern Serbian province, but not as big as Zivkovic said. He added that better cooperation between Belgrade was necessary for curbing down organized crime in this region. “I don’t think that somebody is protecting terrorists in Kosovo and Metohija, but I think that the fight against organized crime is insufficient as everywhere else,” said Spahiu.

### **Rexhepi’s visit to northern Mitrovica (*Politika*)**

The unannounced arrival of Kosovo Premier Bajram Rexhepi to northern Kosovska Mitrovica has caused citizens to be unsatisfied. His visit to a pizzeria downtown, where he had lunch with World Bank representatives, was accompanied with booing and hisses, and the entrance glass on the doors of the pizzeria were broken on that occasion. KPS special units were securing in front of the pizzeria that is owned by a Serb. Seeing what the situation is outside, Rexhepi left the pizzeria through the side entrance with World Bank representatives and Albanian journalists, and headed with UNMIK vehicles with KPS policemen and one bus towards the hospital. While the journalists headed towards the Mitrovica healthcare center, a strong detonation was heard. According to witnesses, some of the jeeps of Rexhepi and his strong security suddenly started to burn. Witnesses also state that UNMIK vehicles and the bus went through the hospital gate with high speed and stopped in front of the administration building. After they left the vehicles, Rexhepi and his guests headed towards the

“Three Towers” settlement, where only Albanians live, in order to easily arrive to the southern part of the town.

### **Solana on Kosovo and Metohija (Politika/Beta)**

EU High representative for Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana has assessed that the fulfillment of standards is an important step towards the beginning of the resolution of Kosovo’s final status. “We will approach the resolution of the final status in the right manner, in accordance with UNSCR 1244, and the Belgrade authorities and elected Kosovo institutions’ leaders will join this process, as well as the political representatives in Pristina,” said Javier Solana. Solana said that independently from what will be Kosovo’s final status, stepping up of standards is the only way for Kosovo, and stressed it is necessary for Kosovo to be stable and draw closer to European standards and values.

### **Nebojsa Covic’s interview to Politika (Politika)**

*You remind that Kosovo and Metohija is a problem of all of us, i.e. the state. Will the new government be ready to immediately continue with the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue or is it waiting for the parliamentary election results?*

“I think that talks will be continued immediately, in the sense of the implementation of UNSCR 1244 and the arrival to a parliamentary autonomy. Everything is possible within it, even standards before status, but nothing outside of it. It means that Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of FRY according to the Resolution, i.e. of SaM. Not a single Serbian politician has the right to renounce a single part of the country’s territory, and this bothers some of them. The ‘amputation’ of certain parts of the country can lead us at the end to have Belgrade streets being cut off with scissors. We must be a serious state that respects territory. Otherwise, we will have a big problem in defending the country. Some politicians spoke a lot of things at lunches and dinners, as if it is ‘confidential’ and then they were good, which Covic isn’t, because I say the same things at lunches and dinners and on official occasions. There can’t be one state policy at dinners and another one in the cabinet.”

*What do you think about the proposals to form a Ministry for Kosovo and Metohija, and does this mean the abolishment of the CCK?*

“That is actually my old idea and I am grateful that they remind me of it. Without any connections to the abolishment of the CCK, the Ministry for Kosovo and Metohija within the Serbian government would mean that this is an independent Serbia in which, I repeat, we wouldn’t need this ministry. That is why we should view regionally all ideas on independence,” Nebojsa Covic told *Politika*.

### **Assassination on Covic prepared (Vecernje Novosti/Fonet)**

The Head of the CCK Nebojsa Covic has confirmed to *Fonet* that an assassination on him had been prepared. Covic didn’t wish to speak about the details, but confirmed that he received this information seven-eight days ago. He said he didn’t step up security and that he freely arrived in Serbia’s south. Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic also told *Fonet* that he had information that an assassination on Covic had been prepared.

### **Nebojsa Covic on organized crime (Blic)**

Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic said that members of organized crime acted as a multinational company. "The Balkans was and still is an attractive area for criminal activities", Covic said at the International Conference on Regional Cooperation in Combating Organized Crime organized by the Balkan Political Club. "In some countries of the region there is political will to deal with the organized crime. Nevertheless, the achieved results are still unsatisfactory", Covic said. As the Head of the CCK, Covic said that the southern province had become "a generator of organized crime and a stronghold of criminals". "The strong Albanian drug mafia is buying arms, financing paramilitary armies, paying influential organizations and individuals in the world so that they would support the idea of an independent Kosovo". According to him, some international officials, diplomats, soldiers and policemen appeared as "part of the chain of maintaining and inflicting corruption and organized crime".

### **UNMIK and SNC condemn Rexhepi (Blic)**

UNMIK police have announced that Kosovo Premier Bajram Rexhepi had gone to a restaurant in northern Mitrovica without any announcement at the same time when the World Bank delegation was also there. "Unknown attackers threw pelts on the restaurant. Several windows were damaged, while the premier left the premises unhurt," the UNMIK police statement said. SNC for northern Kosovo has rejected any connection of the incident in northern Kosovska Mitrovica and the visit of the World Bank officials in that part of the town, and condemned Kosovo Premier Bajram Rexhepi and his security for causing unrest. SNC has assessed that Rexhepi's visit "was aimed at provoking Serbs."

### **Rexhepi's cabinet on terror of 'bridge-watchers' (Vecernje Novosti/Beta)**

Kosovo prime minister has accused a group of Serbs known as the "Bridge-watchers" of being behind an incident in Kosovska Mitrovica. "The behavior of the Serb hooligans of the so-called "Bridge-watchers" is nothing new. For almost four years now they have terrorized the non-Serb population of northern Mitrovica", said a statement from the office of Bajram Rexhepi.

### **Kosovo Serbs not to travel to Brussels (Danas/B92)**

Kosovo Serb representatives will not attend the presentation of the plan for standard implementation in Brussels. Namely, a document, the implementation of which would be the condition for commencing the debate on Kosovo's final status, will be presented at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the EU and western Balkans in Brussels on 9 December.

### **Covic requests urgent government session (Glas/Beta)**

Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic has stated that "not all remarks" by Belgrade had been included in the last version of the standards for the southern province, because of which he will request an urgent government session. Covic reiterated that "it is most important that the full respect of UNSCR 1244 must be in the standards, meaning that article 10 and annex two of article five of the Resolution clearly state that 'Kosovo and Metohija's status is an essential autonomy within FRY' and now Serbia and Montenegro."

### **Svetozar Marovic: Talks on Kosovo to last long (*Politika*)**

Asked about the problem of Kosovo and Metohija, which is “continuously generating dissatisfaction and benefits the growing of nationalism and radicalism,” SaM President Svetozar Marovic said: “Talks on Kosovo will last long, long. Quite concrete issues must be resolved. For example, that refugees can return and live there according to European standards. Only then will we be able to talk about Kosovo’s political fate. To talk while respecting the reality, meaning that – when Kosovo is at stake – there is no way back. Kosovo will never be in a place it used to have in Serbia and Yugoslavia. One should look for new solutions that will respect the stands of the majority nation, but also to protect the minority and its rights. Kosovo will calm down when we adopt European standards of co-existence.”

### **Miroslav Kopecni’s interview to Balkan (*Balkan*)**

*How does one resolve the problem of Kosovo and Metohija and what is the future of that part of Serbia?*

“Some think that we ought to give up Kosovo and forget about that ulcer, while others say that Kosovo should be divided, but the stand of DA is that there is no hand that could sign that Kosovo is not part of Serbia. The easiest thing is to give up Kosovo, but no country will give up part of its territory voluntarily, because the Spanish will not give up Basque nor will the English hand over Northern Ireland just like that. I think the international community has made wrong estimates and that it thought it would introduce order much faster. This didn’t happen and Kosovo is not a multi-ethnic, civilized community as planned. But, Kosovo is today the cleanest ethnic region in Europe with 99% of Albanians, and remember that the bombing began over the alleged ethnic cleansing in Kosovo,” SaM Ambassador in Slovakia and DA candidate, Miroslav Kopecni, told *Balkan*.