

UNMIK



United Nations Mission in Kosovo

Division of Public Information

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▶ **Media Analysis**

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Is Holkeri going to return from New York with an ‘ace’ (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore reported that the SRSG Harri Holkeri, Pillar IV Head Nikolaus Lambsdorff and KTA chief Marie Fucci hope that from the meetings they hold on the East River, they are going to return with legal problems resolved and will be able to resume the process of privatization.

Two UNMIK senior officials as well as the KTA head will stay in New York and will discuss with senior UN officials the privatization process, its obstacles and they hope to return from there with an ‘ace’.

The paper further reported that no local members of the KTA Board are in the delegation. ‘I haven’t received an invitation to be part of the delegation and nobody consulted us regarding this visit,’ the KTA Board deputy chairman Ali Jakupi said.

The privatization process stopped a few weeks ago because UNMIK had identified legal gaps in the KTA regulation and the operational policies, *Koha Ditore* reported.

UNMIK Pillar IV spokesperson Monique De Groot said that UNMIK and KTA delegation would meet senior UN officials. ‘The delegation itself will have consultations with senior UN officials to find ways to overcome all issues that currently concern us,’ she said. De Groot further added that topics for consultations will be KTA’s legal problems, which will be discussed with the UN legal office.

The KTA re-stressed on Monday its commitment for successful implementation of the privatization process, the paper further reported. ‘With the approval of the Board, the KTA is reviewing its overall regulations and procedures in order to make sure that procedures are useful. The participation of the KTA in consultations with the UN is part of this process. When this process has been completed, we will go forward with a fair, transparent and efficient privatisation process, under the oversight of the KTA Board.’ said KTA.

The Serbian CCK said on Monday that privatization in Kosovo could continue only with the full respect of the international community as well as with the complete

agreement of Serbia as the largest stakeholder and property owner in Kosovo, **Koha Ditore** concluded.

On the same issue, **Zëri** reported that Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi said yesterday that during his stay in New York, Kosovo chief administrator Harri Holkeri was going to try and find a way to resume the process of privatization. He added that ‘he had promises that privatization process will continue’.

‘We are going to oppose this act with all we’ve got and I can say that this is not privatization, but thievery,’ Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic was quoted as saying.

Council of Europe recommends 180 sub-municipal units in Kosovo (Zëri)

Zëri claims to have managed to get hold of a summary of the report with the latest recommendations of the Council of Europe mission for decentralization in Kosovo.

“There must be 180 sub-municipal units with elected leaders. The average number of residents for one unit should be around 5,000; this number should be smaller in remote areas (at least 1,000), while in areas inhabited by a large number of residents the number can reach 15,000.”

“This means that a municipal unit will comprise of a group of villages. We also suggest creation of units in the seven biggest towns in Kosovo. It is recommended that these municipal units are given some clear responsibilities -- collecting some revenue, managing public property, some competencies in the education sector, in infrastructure and public services. The CoE mission for decentralization has finished the report on ‘reforming self-governance and public administration in Kosovo’ on the request of UNMIK.

According to **Zëri**, the report’s goal is to suggest ways to organize local authorities in full accordance with the standards of CoE and special conditions here in Kosovo.

“The main objective of the Reform is to bring decision-making processes closer to the people of Kosovo and make sure they are provided better public services and a more efficient public administration.”

In a special box in the article, the CoE Mission on Decentralization is said to have noticed indications of refusal and misinterpretation of the concept in the political circles in Kosovo. Firstly, the locals think that the status should be resolved first but “the European standards can be applied now, regardless of transfer of power and the final solution”, says the report.

Secondly, the Mission does not agree that the “reform is based on ethnic criteria, that it legalizes ethnic enclaves and that it damages the integration of ethnic communities to Kosovo structures.”

The Mission says the reform has been based on geographic and demographic criteria. One of the positive results is that all the communities will be enabled to treat their problems and will be involved in local government. At the same time, the reforms will

create conditions for elimination of “parallel structures”, and will provide the same framework and the same opportunities for all communities in Kosovo.

The reform is to tackle the ethnic issue but not as a starting point. This recommendation should be seen as a supplement of the CoE’s Final Report on Decentralization in Kosovo.

‘We foresee that the current municipalities will remain the key element of local administration, with a clear definition of its relations to the central and the sub-municipal levels. Gradually the role and the competencies of the sub-units will increase and they will turn into “local municipalities”, while the current municipalities will become “municipal districts”, the paper quotes the report.

There is a recommendation about detailed financial analysis of the preliminary cost of the reforms. ‘We have assessed the cost for the first four years to be at least € 7,230,000.’ The report further recommends that Kosovo and international institutions should work together on this. “We see the year 2006 as the key moment, since elections for municipal sub-units will be held along with the municipal elections.” Some preparations need to be done by then – demarcating the sub-units, preparing facilities, training staff, nominating provisional councils, temporary leaders, etc.

Assembly speaker Daci meets Council of Europe Ambassador Civiletti (Koha)

Koha Ditore reports that Kosovo Assembly Speaker Nexhat Daci met on Monday with Council of Europe Ambassador Carlo Civiletti. The latter briefed Daci that the nine-month work on preparing the recommendations for decentralization is almost finished and that the official ceremony of finalizing the recommendations is expected to take place next week.

The Parliamentary speaker Nexhat Daci said that the CoE recommendations are based on similar laws applied in Europe today, and that they are based on geographical and territorial principles, not on ethnicity.

‘The information I received is very positive for the people of Kosovo, you know that it takes two or three months of waiting to get a document in Pristina’, said Daci, convinced that these reforms will create more efficient authorities at the municipal level.

Daci also said that the Kosovo Assembly would only adopt such laws that are functioning to dissolve parallelisms, and will not accept any sort of decentralization that would serve the purpose of legalizing parallel structures.

‘Recommendations aim at having minorities elect their representatives to the sub-municipal units, and to avoid parallel institutions’, stressed Daci.

Details of recommendations will be public next week, while according to Daci, the stance of the local institutions is to start decentralization only after the final solution of Kosovo has been solved. It was also mentioned that the process of reforms recommended by the European Council is in complete harmony with the Law on Local Governance in our country.

France: New initiative doesn't mean change of stance (Koha Ditore)

Citing information broadcast by the Belgrade-based *Beta* news agency, *Koha Ditore* reported that France is committed to the working plan for the implementation of standards in Kosovo and it also believed that the progress of the plan will be evaluated by mid-2005.

Beta quoted the French Foreign Minister as saying that France had actively participated in preparing new initiatives for Kosovo, that were launched last week by the UN Security Council and in close cooperation with all the partners of the Contact Group, as well as with SRSB Harri Holkeri and the United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations.

French official sources also told *Beta* that the guidelines that were prepared by the Contact Group and the United Nations were first of all based on the designation of a 'working plan' that would enable Kosovar institutions, first of all the Kosovo Government, to achieve progress in fulfilling the eight standards.

Havel: Self-determination yes, but how will this country will (Epoka e Re)

Epoka e Re carried an interview that the news agency *KosovaLive* conducted with former Czech president Vaclav Havel regarding the situation in Kosovo.

The dissident, dramatist and former president of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel, said that he was always an advocate to the rights of the nations for self-determination and the freedom of deciding freely whether or not to have an own state. Havel is the first president who visited Kosovo just after the war, in summer of 1999.

Questioned about the economic situation in Kosovo, its economic development and the fulfillment of the standards, he said that the situation in Kosovo were complex and unstable.

'There is no civil society, political parties are fragmented and not able to get an agreement on basic principles,' Havel was quoted as saying to the news agency *KosovaLive*.

'All residents of Kosovo must have their guaranteed rights, including the right to participate in civil administration, protection of monuments and historical places of all people and nations who live in Kosovo,' he said.

Regarding the transfer of competencies, he considered that this process didn't mean simply a transfer of UNMIK's sovereignty.

Havel further said that returns of refugees and minority integration should be a criteria for assessing the level of local authority's consolidation. 'A multi ethnic society cannot function unless all ethnic groups participate in the public activities,' Havel concluded.

Protesters give UNMIK a deadline until Friday (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore reported that around 300 former police officers from all cities and towns in Kosovo protested on Monday in front of UNMIK Headquarters in Prishtina. The

protesters reportedly wanted to meet Pillar I Head Jean Christian Cady, and later on, a senior delegation of the protesters met with Cady's advisor Nick Booth.

The request of protesters were to respect Resolution 690 of the Parliamentarian Assembly, which guaranteed the unconditional return to work, and an answer to all those who had passed the test but were not employed. The organization council of the protests also said that they wanted to hear a response to their demands by Friday. Booth reportedly offered guarantees to the delegation that their demands would be taken into consideration before Friday.

The council of protests said that if UNMIK Pillar I fail to meet their demands, the situation was going to escalate. Commenting on the issue, protest council chairman Njazi Alidema was quoted as saying, 'We are ready to go on hunger strike, if the problems of former Kosovar police officers are not solved within the next couple of days, because we have been waiting to go back to work for 13 years'.

Alidema also said that the former police officers respect UNMIK, KFOR and KPS but at the same time want their right to return to work to be recognized. The protest was reportedly peaceful.