

UNMIK



United Nations Mission in Kosovo

Division of Public Information

Media Monitoring

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24 October

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Kosovo Media Highlights

Çeku: It's time to make major decisions for building a state (*Koha Ditore*)

Koha Ditore reports that General Agim Çeku, the commander of the Kosovo Protection Corps arrived Thursday afternoon in Prishtina after he had been arrested by Slovenian police in Ljubljana Airport based on an arrest warrant issued by Belgrade authorities.

'It is not concerning that Serbia has raised an indictment against me and other leaders of Kosovar institutions, because Serbia is Serbia, with or without Milosevic. Concerning however is the fact that an international institution such as Interpol recognizes Serbia's requests and recognizes its legitimacy over the citizens of Kosovo,' Çeku said. 'The leaders of Kosovar institutions have no immunity in other countries and sometimes even in Kosovo. These things are unacceptable and we must understand that Kosovar citizens are unprotected and still not free. We lack a state. We are unprotected and now we must make major decisions and build our own state as soon as possible.'

Assembly says Çeku's arrest was humiliating for Kosovo (*Koha/Zëri*)

Koha Ditore and *Zëri* report that the Kosovo Assembly has issued an official declaration saying that the arrest of KPC Commander General Agim Çeku was humiliating for Çeku, Kosovar institutions and the citizens of Kosovo.

The declaration noted that the Kosovo Assembly asks from international institutions in Kosovo and in other countries, including Interpol and Europol, not to recognize Serb decisions and arrest warrants issued against the citizens of Kosovo, ‘because Kosovo is under the jurisdiction of the United Nations and it has its own democratic institutions’.

Koha Ditore reports that Assembly Speaker Nexhat Daci has asked from the international administration in Kosovo to equip the leaders of local institutions with diplomatic passports.

Editorial: A difficult day for Kosovo (Zëri)

Zëri runs an opinion piece by the editorial office, which claims that the day when KPC Commander General Agim Çeku was arrested was certainly the most difficult and problematic days in postwar Kosovo. The opinion piece also claims that if Çeku hadn’t been released in the early hours of Thursday morning it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to control the outrage of Kosovars.

‘The international administration, by tolerating parallel structures in Kosovo and in Serbia, by ignoring the judicial threats made by the Serbian regime, bears a huge share of responsibility for the problem created for Agim Çeku and the Kosovar society. Furthermore, it seems that UNMIK is not even aware of how grave and serious the situation was in Kosovo on Wednesday, October 22nd, it was added.

Surroi: European police in the service of Milosevic (Koha Ditore)

In an opinion piece for *Koha Ditore*, publisher Veton Surroi writes, ‘The case of General Çeku proves the position of hostage in which the international community has placed itself vis-à-vis Serbia’.

Shala: How does Kosovo function in a day of crisis? (Zëri)

Zëri carries a front-page editorial by Blerim Shala who claims that the arrest of KPC Commander General Agim Çeku showed how local and international authorities function in Kosovo when they are faced with a serious problem.

‘In UNMIK everyone was waiting for Harri Holkeri, the chief administrator who was in Belgrade talking to Covic&Co, at the same time when the latter were trying to bring the KPC Commander to Belgrade. According to pure logics, Holkeri should have interrupted the meeting and return to Prishtina, and try to find a solution for its official. It is very true that Holkeri did his job afterwards, by sending a letter to the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs. But this letter only adds to the confusion of Serbia’s efforts to prosecute KLA fighters. Someone in UNMIK, who doesn’t know a thing about where he/she is or what he/she is doing, could say that this is an additional reason to have dialogue on practical issues and solve problems between Prishtina and Belgrade,’ Shala added.

Batic: UNMIK spokesperson – accomplice in crimes (Epoka e Re)

Citing information broadcast by Belgrade-based *B92* news agency, *Epoka e Re* reports that Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic said that UNMIK has received all the necessary documents for Agim Çeku and Hashim Thaçi. Batic also accused

UNMIK spokesperson Sunil Narula of being an accomplice of theirs in crimes committed in Kosovo.

Commenting on a recent statement made by Narula who said that UNMIK hasn't received information on KPC Commander Çeku, Batic said it was a pure lie. 'UNMIK has received everything, both the indictment and the court's verdict, and we have also sent many letters to Haekkerup and Steiner, therefore, this is nonsense and a pure lie. He knows everything about Thaçi and Çeku, and he is an accomplice of theirs in carrying out war crimes and I accuse him as an accomplice,' Batic was quoted as saying.

Del Ponte doesn't bring new indictments in Prishtina (Koha Ditore/Zëri)

Koha Ditore and *Zëri* carry reports from the visit by ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla del Ponte to Prishtina yesterday. Both papers quote Del Ponte as saying that eventual indictments against former KLA members could be raised next year, because now that The Hague tribunal is close to finalizing investigations, the prosecutor's office will raise the indictments when it believes that they are ready for trial.

During a joint press briefing with UNMIK chief Harri Holkeri, Del Ponte also said that the main problems for investigators of actions committed by former KLA members are the willingness of witnesses to testify in trial and the access to military documents archived in Belgrade.

Lambsdorff: This is why I blocked privatization (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore reports that UNMIK Pillar IV head Nikolaus Lambsdorff has refuted the possibility of the process of privatization being blocked after a request by Serbia, and admitted that he had personally made this decision because the KTA Board had refused to sign three contracts due to the lack of legal immunity.

'An indictment was filed in the New York Court against the Kosovo Trust Agency. The indictment was not filed in Kosovo, and the Kosovo Trust Agency had no guarantees that it has immunity for indictments filed outside Kosovo,' added Lambsdorff.

Numerous ambiguities regarding recent decisions of KTA Board (Koha Ditore)

Koha Ditore claims that UNMIK Pillar IV, which manages the Kosovo Trust Agency, seems to have deviated the decisions that were made in the last meeting of the KTA Managing Board about the resuming of the process of privatization.

The paper claims that the Albanian members of the KTA Managing Board have issued a joint statement yesterday and said that the claims made in a communiqué issued by UNMIK Pillar IV were inaccurate.

Fieschi: Kosovo must be a place of stability, not disagreements (Zëri)

Zëri reports that Pascal Fieschi, head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo gave a report before the Permanent Council of the OSCE in Vienna.

‘Kosovo is gradually facing the challenges of self-government, but international assistance is going to be necessary in order to ensure sustainable development and progress,’ Fieschi was quoted as saying.

Solana: Toward a European Kosovo (*Koha Ditore*)

In an article for *Koha Ditore*, Javier Solana, the High Representative of the European Union writes, ‘I expect both parties to show serious commitment to dialogue and to appoint technical working groups in areas which they have identified. The European Union stands willing to assist and facilitate this process, and we believe that with the support and commitment of the US and other international partners we are going to see positive and concrete results that will improve the daily lives in Kosovo and in the region. The European Union will continue to assist Kosovo. The final responsibility however, remains on the people of Kosovo. Our partnership is a guarantee for success’.

Kosovo Press Headlines

Koha Ditore

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- **Çeku: Time to make big decisions to build the state**
- **War with press releases, privatization again in question**

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Epoka e Re

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- ‘Idea’ covers 60 % of Kosovo market with ketchup and mayonnaise
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Belgrade Media Highlights

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- Solana visits Belgrade (*Blic*)
- President Marovic’s interview to Balkan (*Balkan*)
- Holkeri wrote to Rupel (*Danas*)
- Slovenians arrested and immediately released Ceku (*Vecernje Novosti*)

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Francis O'Donnell's interview to Politika (*Politika*)

"I think that, viewed on whole, you have excellent political leaders in SaM who brought your country a good reputation and managed to send very positive signals to the region, the EU and the world. For example, President Marovic has made with President Mesic a brilliant gesture of mutual apologies and reconciliation of the two countries. Therefore, the same could be done on the internal plane, and here I first of all have in mind the "truth and reconciliation" between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians. The beginning of the Serbian-Albanian dialogue in Vienna is only the first step. The UNSC will, of course, observe how things are further going to develop, but things happening on relation Belgrade-Pristina are essential. It really isn't the most important thing at this moment as to how the dialogue is going to end regarding Kosovo's status, it is important to reach an agreement on concrete, practical matters as soon as possible, and I believe the best solution will appear by itself later on," said the permanent UN representative in SaM Francis O'Donnell in an exclusive interview to *Politika* on the occasion of the UN Day, 24th October.

Solana visits Belgrade (*Blic*)

The EU High Representative for Foreign Policy Javier Solana has assessed following the meeting with Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic, that "it is up to the citizens and parliament of Serbia to decide" on the resolution of the political crisis in Serbia. Zivkovic expressed expectation that the international community will commence to implement in a right way investigations on the crimes committed against Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. Solana agreed that the composition of working groups that should deal with the issues of importance for the daily life of citizens in Kosovo should be balanced and constructive, as well as that "the manner of representation as seen in Vienna should not be repeated."

President Marovic's interview to Balkan (*Balkan*)

How do you comment the arrest and then the release of Agim Çeku?

"It is obvious that there had existed political reasons over which the police had brought the releasing decision and that these reasons are linked to Mr. Holkeri and his initiative in Kosovo. Çeku's arrest in Slovenia at the request of Interpol did not guarantee some long-termness because there exist specific political relationships that could mean that this gentleman can be tried in The Hague if he committed some war crime, and not in Serbia."

Why didn't you go to Vienna on 14 October for the beginning of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue?

"I had been announced, but I didn't go because I worked on others going. I decided not to go around 9-10 p.m."

What made you decide this?

“Exhausting talks with Solana and Holkeri for us to do everything so Serb representatives would go to Vienna. I estimated that talks without representatives from Serbia would not have legitimacy in the right sense of that word. Thinking what is more important, for me to be there or Serbia’s representatives, I estimated that the second thing was more important.”

Couldn't you travel together to Vienna?

“We could have, but I thought that we should give priority to Serbia because it was a dialogue of a commencement where things were much more stricter from what I would have made them. I didn't want to disturb, if I may say so, the strictness of the reception. Perhaps I would have shaken hands with Rugova and then there would be problems. And I would shake hands with him and everyone else because, if we think to talk, then we must shake hands as well. We will not resolve a single thing with fists on the table. We must go in the direction of facing the reality. Kosovo will never be what it has been, and what is important is for us to create safety conditions so our people who wish to do so can return, as well as the conditions for the progress of European standards in Kosovo.”

Holkeri wrote to Rupel (*Danas*)

UNMIK Head Harri Holkeri has requested Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitri Rupel to urgently release Çeku. “Since this matter is under my jurisdiction, the warrant of arrest issued by the Serbian authorities is not legally valid,” stated Holkeri in his letter to Rupel.

Slovenians arrested and immediately released Çeku (*Vecernje Novosti*)

KPC Commander Agim Çeku has been suddenly released from custody in the Kranj court, where his hearing should have continued. The Slovenian ministries of justice and interior affairs have refused any comment in connection with that decision. The Slovenian police did not wish to confirm or deny the unofficial information that the release of Çeku, suspected of committing criminal acts against Serbs in Croatia and Kosovo, had been categorically demanded by UNMIK.

Zoran Zivkovic: Kosovo status problem (*Vecernje Novosti*)

“I can praise the action by the Slovenian police and the people who arrested Ceku, but there has been pressure on the Slovenian government for him to be released. I understand the stand of the Slovenian government, but I can't agree with it. We have commenced with the procedure of requesting an extradition, but Ceku had already been released at the time, Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic told a press conference in the Serbian government.

Nebojsa Covic: Different standards (*Vecernje Novosti*)

“I am very disappointed with the release of Agim Çeku in Slovenia and we will hardly be able to cooperate in such a way,” said Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic. “I have asked for verification of members of the Albanian delegation prior to talks in Vienna. And I didn't permit for our “White Book” on the involvement of some people from Albanian political high circles in organized crime to be published so it wouldn't create a bad climate and atmosphere. But, standards are different. All criminals, regardless of their nationality, should go to prison.”

Dragoljub Micunovic: Hypocrisy (*Vecernje Novosti*)

Micunovic has assessed that the international community's behavior in this case is hypocritical. This is something we have already seen, where decisions and requests of our police forces are not respected, but when by some mistake our man is arrested, the officer in Macedonia, then one week had to pass so we could drag him out of prison, said Micunovic and added at issue were, in fact, double standards.

Covic: No dialogue without multi-ethnic delegations (*Glas/Beta*)

The Serbian and SaM delegation will not attend the continuation of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue if the Kosovo delegation is not going to be multi-ethnic, said Covic. "If the international community is not able to provide a multi-ethnic composition of the Pristina delegation, then how can we expect it to provide a multi-ethnic Kosovo and Metohija," said Covic.

Batic: I didn't give guarantees for Thaci (*Danas*)

I had been asked, I can't say who asked, but it was requested that I give guarantees that Hashim Thaci will not be arrested on the basis of our warrant of arrest that was submitted to Interpol if he is in the delegation of Kosovo Premier Bajram Rexhepi for the dialogue in Vienna. I neither wanted nor was able to give such guarantees. Thaci, supposedly, should have been in Rexhepi's delegation, Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic told *Danas*. "I had telephone conversations on that issue. This, however, is not under the authority of the Justice Ministry because the entire case is on the relation court-police-Interpol. I didn't have authority to decide on this, and even if I had I wouldn't have decided positively and given guarantees because we can't have different standards, especially not towards those who had committed crimes against us, added Batic.