



Division of Public Information

Media Monitoring

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➤ **Local Media**

➤ **Media Analysis**

25 January

Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn visits Kosovo (all dailies)

The visit by the European Union Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn to Prishtina yesterday is covered in all daily newspapers.

Zëri quotes Rehn as saying that the European Union is cooperating with its American friends on the future of the Western Balkans and also on future challenges, including Kosovo.

Rehn said that the EU would continue providing economic assistance to Kosovo and help it become a place of stability in the Balkans.

‘All institutions of Kosovo must fulfil their obligations towards international organizations, including The Hague tribunal,’ said Rehn.

Koha Ditore quotes Rehn as saying that the issue of Kosovo would be the one of the important topics in the meeting between US President George W. Bush and EU High Representative Javier Solana in February.

While in Prishtina, Commissioner Rehn met with PDSRSG Larry Rossin, representatives from Quint countries, President of Kosovo Ibrahim Rugova, Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, PDK Leader Hashim Thaçi, ORA Leader Veton Surroi as well as with Oliver Ivanovic, representative of the Serb community in Kosovo.

Spokesman for Kosovo Government, Arben Qirezi said, ‘Rehn expressed his support for the reform spirit of the Kosovo government and its commitment to continue implementation of Standards as well as for the start of talks on status of Kosovo’.

Petkovic persuaded by Haradinaj, takes on the Ministry of Returns (Koha/Zëri)

Daily newspapers report that after talks he had yesterday with Prime Minister Haradinaj, Slavisa Petkovic has accepted the offer to become Minister for Returns and Communities in the Kosovo Government.

Zëri reports that the Kosovo Assembly will confirm Petkovic’s appointment on Wednesday. Government spokesman Arben Qirezi said that Petkovic’s appointment is a done deal.

‘I accepted the offer of the Prime Minister to lead the Ministry of Returns and Communities and what remains to be done now is to get a vote of confidence by the Kosovo Assembly’, said Petkovic on Monday. Petkovic added that he has already prepared a return plan for IDPs.

Koha Ditore quotes an advisor to Prime Minister Haradinaj as saying that the latter gave a several-day deadline to the Serb List for Kosovo and Metohija to take the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. In the absence of such a decision, added the advisor, the Prime Minister would give this ministry to Petkovic.

‘Appointment of Petkovic minister is done by Kosovo Government and there is no reason why this should be different because it is a responsibility of the Government’, said Jeff Bielely, UNMIK Spokesman.

Daily newspapers also report that Petkovic’s appointment wasn’t welcomed by other political representatives of Kosovo Serbs.

Oliver Ivanovic, leader of Serb List for Kosovo and Metohija accused Petkovic to be a traitor of Serb people. Ivanovic said that people who want to take leading posts in Kosovo Government should have the legitimacy of the community, which they represent.

Milan Ivanovic from the Serb National Council said, ‘Petkovic’s appointment ought to serve Albanians and UNMIK to show the so-called multiethnicity of institutions even though they seat Serbs without true professional and moral values’.

ICG presents report ‘Kosovo: Toward final status’ (all dailies)

All dailies cover the latest report by the International Crisis Group ‘Kosovo: Toward final status’ that was released yesterday in Prishtina.

‘The situation in Kosovo is very dangerous and 2005 should result in the resolution of Kosovo’s status and this status should be independence, and other options such as division, return under Serbia or unification with Albania should not be taken into consideration,’ said Alex Anderson, head of the ICG office in Prishtina.

Koha Ditore reports on the front page that the ICG report has triggered reactions in Belgrade. Serb political parties have stated that the report is scandalous and added that the ICG was lobbying for the independence of Kosovo.

Under the headline ‘***Referendum on independence in 2006***’ ***Bota Sot*** reports that the ICG suggests conditional independence for Kosovo in its final report titled ‘Kosovo toward final status’.

‘The international community should be engaged in solving the final status of Kosovo by the end of this year, as on the on contrary the region could face new riots’, the paper cites the ICG report.

According to *Epoka e Re* the Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro, Vuk Draskovic has called the report of the ICG catastrophic and illegal and has stressed his strong opposition to creation of the Kosovo state.

Editorial: Starting the international debate on Kosovo's status (Zëri)

An opinion piece by the editorial office of Zëri notes that the ICG report in a very clear way shows the road map for Kosovo until the resolution of final status.

‘With this report, the International Crisis Group is trying to revive the international debate on the status issue,’ it was added in the editorial.

According to *Zëri*, the ICG report, to a great extent, resembles the report prepared by Kai Eide, the Norwegian Ambassador to NATO and Special Envoy of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

‘With his report in July last year, Eide had tried to alarm the UN and the Contact Group about the consequences of delaying the resolution of Kosovo’s status. Eide had even proposed concrete timeframes for the main Western countries to join the process of resolving the status. Consultations should have started in fall last year so that by spring this year there would be a clear position about all important issues related to the status: the appointment of the chief negotiator (or chief negotiators) and the international mechanisms and the proposal for the final status. Everyone that is aware of circumstances in Kosovo and Serbia, knows very well that Prishtina and Belgrade cannot agree on anything and let alone the issue of status, therefore, the West should have a leading role in this respect. However, months have passed since the Eide report was publicly supported by the UN and the Contact Group, but very little has been done in preparing the Western capitals for the status phase,’ says the paper.

Commenting on the ICG report, the paper says that it first and foremost rules out the options of delaying the issue of status. According to the ICG, the status of Kosovo should be known by the end of this year, and early next year a referendum should be held for the new Constitution of Kosovo, which is expected to be prepared in fall. ‘The most important part in this report is most probably the full clarification of Kosovo’s status and the evasion of dangerous versions for Kosovo such as its division.’

Another major detail in the ICG report, according to the paper, concerns Western decision-making on the issue of status. The decision-making should take place even if there is hard opposition from Belgrade and Moscow. Without Western decisiveness, there is no doubt that the process of resolving the status will be unsuccessful,’ the paper.

In closing, *Zëri* says that the ICG report also points out the obligations of local authorities in Kosovo in order to create suitable circumstances for the resolution of status. ‘The key task is to prepare a modern constitution, with legal guarantees for the rights of minorities. In reality, as can be seen in this ICG report, there are no obligations that cannot be met by Albanian politicians,’ the paper concluded.

Thaçi and Haradinaj meet and promise unity (all dailies)

All daily newspapers report that PDK leader Hashim Thaçi and Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj had lunch yesterday.

‘I briefed Thaçi on the achievements of the government and the plan for standards, and I also explained to him that we must slowly start cooperation and prepare for what are going to be talks on Kosovo’s final status,’ said PM Haradinaj.

Zëri reports that Thaçi has suggested Haradinaj not to be hasty with the process of decentralization. ‘We as PDK consider that, as far as the issue of decentralization is concerned, the government should wait: this issue should be debated at the Assembly, a law on reforms in local government should be promulgated and decentralization implemented in accordance with the interests of all citizens,’ Thaçi is quoted as saying.

Koha Ditore reports that Hashim Thaçi and Ramush Haradinaj could have been acting, but it turns out that they did not look at each other as ‘enemies’ in their first official meeting held at the PDK premises.

Epoka e Re writes on the front page that the concepts of Haradinaj and Thaçi on the status of Kosovo differ as the first has expressed his willingness to talk to Belgrade, while the second does not think so, but wants Kosovo get straight independent as there is no other solution.

According to the papers they agreed to continue similar meetings.

Solana: Status talks only after assessment of Standards (Epoka e Re)

The paper reports that EU High Representative Javier Solana said before Euro-Parliamentarians that future stapes regarding status of Kosovo will be known only after the implementation of Standards are assessed.

‘Only after that, we will see how the situation has developed and then we will see how to continue further toward status’, stressed Solana.

‘Mobtel’ doesn’t take into account UNMIK’s decisions (Lajm)

Lajm newspaper reports on page three that an internal decision by UNMIK six months ago to stop the activities of the Serb operator ‘Mobtel’ has proved to be weak against the ‘wild waves of this operator’.

The paper notes that Bjorn Hauksson, director of the Central Regulatory Unit had sent a letter to then-PDSRSG Charles Brayshaw about this issue. The letter was approved, says the paper, but it has never been implemented in practice.

Sources of the paper claim that the letter specifies that ‘Mobtel’ should free the frequencies it uses so that they would then be at the availability of the second mobile operator in Kosovo.

Lajm reminds that the operation of ‘Mobtel’ was allowed by the Office of SRSG’s Legal Advisor who at the time had written to the then Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi

telling him that the Serb GSM operator was allowed to exercise its activity on a temporary basis.

Grainca: Ferizaj has made visible progress on returns of Serbs (Zëri)

Zëri quotes acting Ferizaj Mayor Faik Grainca as saying that the local administration in Ferizaj was very committed to the implementation of standards.

Grainca said that Ferizaj had achieved the best results in the process of returning Serb citizens that were displaced from the municipality. In this respect, Grainca claims that the municipality of Ferizaj is one of the most positive examples throughout Kosovo. He said that even international officials were satisfied with the current pace of IDP returns.

Dharam Pal, the highest-ranking UNMIK official in Ferizaj, said that the return of Serbs to the village of Bablak shows the commitment of Albanian and Serb communities to build a good and safe future for all. 'Such an environment has paved the way for other projects for returns,' Pal was quoted as saying.

Zëri claims that two million euros, mainly from the budget of the Kosovo Government, were allocated for the return of IDPs to Bablak and the reconstruction of the infrastructure in general.

Adding to the issue of Serb returns in Ferizaj municipality, local officials said that so far 31 Serb families with 124 members have returned to Bablak, and another 15 Serb families would return until March.

Another LDK witness (L96) 'testified' against Limaj (Epoka e Re)

Epoka e Re reports that a witness who, according to the paper, is supporter of LDK testified in the Hague against the three former KLA members, Fatmir Limaj, Haradin Balaj and Isak Musliu.

The identity of the witness was not shown, as his face was covered and his voice was distorted by the computer.

The paper claims that according to the answers he gave he was a supporter of the LDK. The witness identified a room in which he said he was imprisoned by the KLA.

Collective contract off (Kosova Sot)

Kosova Sot reports that the heads of the Workers Union (BSPK) sent a letter on Monday to the heads of the Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF) asking them to allow a BSPK member to be present during the budget review for this year.

Agim Krasniqi, the head of the MEF Budget Department has stressed according to the paper that due to budget constraints the Collective Contract can only be partially implemented.

Therefore the application from January 2005 of the collective contract also known as the constitution of the workers remains only in paper.

The Government of Kosovo had accepted that the document, which is supposed to regulate the rights of the workers, was to start being applied from January. But now, facing lack of funds, the Kosovar legislative asks for partial implementation of it. On the other hand the BSPK categorically denies it.

The annual cost of the Collective Contract is said to reach €60 million.

Belgrade Media Update

Independence of Kosovo Totally Unacceptable, Warns Belgrade

Serbian President Boris **Tadic** reiterated yesterday upon meeting with the Commander of the Allied Joint Forces Command in Naples, American Admiral Michael **Mullen**, that the "*independence of Kosovo for me, as the President of Serbia, is unacceptable,*" and argued that "*the formation of a new army, with a hostile stance towards Serbia-Montenegro, in Kosovo and Metohija, as some fictitious independent state, would be absolutely unacceptable for security reasons and destabilizing for the region,*" adding that the new army of an independent Kosovo would maintain "*a hostile stance towards Serbia and Montenegro in the long term.*" Reacting to the ICG (International Crisis Group) report pleading for Kosovo's independence, Tadic further commented that independence was unacceptable because it would mean the "*further fragmentation of the Balkans, which would additionally destabilize the region. Kosovo's independence would produce a new inflow of refugees to Serbia and stagnation in the democratic development of the Serbian society, whereas without a stable, democratic, politically strong and economically stable Serbia, there cannot be a stable Balkans,*" **RTS** reported.

Serbia & Montenegro (SCG) Foreign Minister Vuk **Draskovic** stated in Brussels yesterday upon meeting with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, that the solution for Kosovo proposed by the ICG would be "*catastrophic for many generations and the future of Serb-Albanian relations,*" and added that it was "*legally impossible unless the UN Charter is violated. According to the UN Charter, sovereign states cannot be formed in the territory of other sovereign states contrary to their will, and Serbia-Montenegro is against the independence of Kosovo,*" **Beta** reported.

Reacting to the presentation of the last ICG report in Pristina yesterday, Dusan **Prorokovic**, from the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), insisted that the report should not be taken for granted, "*because the ICG is a non-governmental organization that does not carry any final weight for what it states in public,*" and added that its report is "*very malicious,*" as it paid more attention to views expressed by the Kosovo Albanian than the Serbian side. Zoran **Andjelkovic**, a senior official of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), said the ICG has been fuelling the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, especially the one in Kosovo, from its very onset, and added "*however, the question of Kosovo does not depend on the ICG but on how the Serbian cabinet performs in international relations and in talks with Brussels and Washington.*" Milan **Ivanovic**, President of the Serbian National Council (SNC) for Northern Kosovo, qualified the report as a "*biased analysis, which was in the function of carrying out Albanian interests. The ICG is working on the orders of the Albanian lobbyists and*

the Albanians are financing it. This organization doesn't carry any weight or objectivity," **Beta** reported.

Kosovo Serbs Condemn Petkovic For Joining Haradinaj's Cabinet

Kosovo Serb political leaders expressed dissatisfaction because Slavisa **Petkovic**, who leads the Civic Ticket Serbia in the Kosovo Assembly, accepted the position of the Minister for the Return of IDPs in the Kosovo Government. The latter announced yesterday that "*Premier [Ramush] Haradinaj today offered me the position of Minister for repatriation in the Kosovo Government and I accepted, so my appointment to this position will formally be confirmed on Wednesday,*" and commented that he already had a completed program for the return of Serbs with an economic aspect, meaning that a job will be provided for everyone who returns to Kosovo, **Tanjug** reported. The President of the Association of Serb Municipalities Marko **Jaksic** stated that Petkovic's engagement in the Kosovo Government would not bring anything good to Kosovo Serbs, and commented that "*in view of who the Premier is in that government, and who the ministers are, I can say, in ordinary language, like breeds like.*" The SNC leader Milan **Ivanovic** considers Petkovic's decision as an irresponsible move, which will harm the Serb people as "*the appointment of Petkovic is to serve the Albanians and UNMIK in their attempt to show off their seemingly multiethnic institutions, regardless of the fact that they include Serbs without expert or moral values,*" **RTS** reported. As for the leader of the Serb Resistance Movement (SPOT) Momcilo **Trajkovic**, he told **Beta** that he was not surprised at the appointment of Petkovic although the latter has no support among the Kosovo Serbs, which was shown at the elections, and added that he has to take responsibility for this move.

Representatives of the Serb List for Kosovo & Metohija reiterated yesterday to the EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli **Rehn**, who requested their participation in the activities of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) as the only way to resolve the problem of the Serb community in Kosovo, that they do not wish to take part in any process in the province that is not approved by official Belgrade, Goran **Bogdanovic** told **Tanjug**. Explaining that Rehn told them that the EU, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the UN consider the Serbian representatives who participated in the Kosovo parliamentary elections as legitimate, he commented, "*we insisted to talk with him about other matters – problems with the electrical power, decentralization in the province, the telephone area code which the UNMIK head wants to give to Kosovo, etc. We told Rehn clearly that we will not participate in any process in Kosovo without Belgrade's agreement.*"

Schieder Calls For Fair and Objective Resolution on Kosovo by Council of Europe

Inaugurating the January session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (CoE), that is to adopt a resolution on Kosovo based on the Report of the Committee for Legal Issues and Human Rights on the state of human rights in Kosovo, the outgoing President Peter **Schieder** stated that although the assembly was in the past critical solely of the Serb side for its behavior, it should adopt a critical stance regarding the entire situation in Kosovo because the Serbs are the victims. He added that the future of Kosovo depends on whether all the sides would accept living

together and mutually respect each other, and the CoE has to be objective and just in its assessment of the situation in the province, *Radio SCG* reported.

The SCG Parliament Speaker Zoran **Sami**, who heads the SCG Parliament delegation at the CoE Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg, submitted 25 amendments to the project of resolution on Kosovo, explaining that his country's fundamental objection was that it addresses the future of human rights in Kosovo, and not the current situation, which he described as highly detrimental for the Serbs and other non-Albanians, *Tanjug* reported.



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Kosovo Media Highlights

Thaçi and Haradinaj meet and promise unity (*all dailies*)

All daily newspapers report that PDK leader Hashim Thaçi and Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj had lunch yesterday.

'I briefed Thaçi on the achievements of the government and the plan for standards, and I also explained to him that we must slowly start cooperation and prepare for what are going to be talks on Kosovo's final status,' said PM Haradinaj.

Zëri reports that Thaçi has suggested Haradinaj not to be hasty with the process of decentralization. 'We as PDK consider that, as far as the issue of decentralization is concerned, the government should wait: this issue should be debated at the Assembly,

a law on reforms in local government should be promulgated and decentralization implemented in accordance with the interests of all citizens,' Thaçi is quoted as saying.

Blerim Shala: Political paths in the middle of winter (Zëri)

In a front-page editorial in *Zëri*, Blerim Shala says that yesterday's meeting between Haradinaj and Thaçi should be a sign of the establishment of normal political relations between these two highly important political figures.

'Even in cases of disagreement over very important issues, direct contacts help not only understand the different political positions but they also pave the way to a political rapprochement between the government and the opposition, and this is a necessity in Kosovo,' he added.

Shala also comments on Petkovic's appointment by saying that a major and long-expected turning point was achieved yesterday as far as the involvement of Kosovo Serb politicians in the government is concerned.

Petkovic persuaded by Haradinaj, takes on the Ministry of Returns (Koha/Zëri)

Daily newspapers report that after talks he had yesterday with Prime Minister Haradinaj, Slavisa Petkovic has accepted the offer to become Minister of Returns and Communities in the Kosovo Government.

Zëri reports that the Kosovo Assembly will confirm Petkovic's appointment on Wednesday. Government spokesman Arben Qirezi said that Petkovic's appointment is a done deal.

Daily newspapers also report that Petkovic's appointment wasn't welcomed by other political representatives of Kosovo Serbs.

Koha Ditore quotes an advisor to Prime Minister Haradinaj as saying that the latter gave a several-day deadline to the Serb List for Kosovo and Metohija to take the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. In the absence of such a decision, added the advisor, the Prime Minister will give this ministry to Petkovic.

Jessen-Petersen cancels Brussels, flies to Washington (all dailies)

Daily newspapers report that UNMIK chief Søren Jessen-Petersen had to cancel the meetings he was supposed to have this week and fly to Washington where his wife is expected to undergo surgery.

Zëri quotes UNMIK officials as saying that Jessen-Petersen is expected to return to Pristina on Saturday.

Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn visits Kosovo (all dailies)

The visit by the European Union Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn to Prishtina yesterday is covered in all daily newspapers.

Zëri quotes Rehn as saying that the European Union is cooperating with its American friends on the future of the Western Balkans and also on future challenges, including Kosovo.

Rehn said that the EU would continue providing economic assistance to Kosovo and help it become a place of stability in the Balkans.

‘All institutions of Kosovo must fulfil their obligations towards international organizations, including The Hague tribunal,’ said Rehn.

Koha Ditore quotes Rehn as saying that the issue of Kosovo would be the one of the important topics in the meeting between US President George W. Bush and EU High Representative Javier Solana in February.

ICG presents report ‘Kosovo: Toward final status’ (all dailies)

All dailies cover the latest report by the International Crisis Group ‘Kosovo: Toward final status’ that was released yesterday in Prishtina.

‘The situation in Kosovo is very dangerous and 2005 should result in the resolution of Kosovo’s status and this status should be independence, and other options such as division, return under Serbia or unification with Albania should not be taken into consideration,’ said Alex Anderson, head of the ICG office in Prishtina.

Koha Ditore reports on the front page that the ICG report has triggered reactions in Belgrade. Serb political parties have stated that the report is scandalous and added that the ICG was lobbying for the independence of Kosovo.

Draskovic says ICG report is unacceptable (Koha Ditore/Zëri)

Koha Ditore and *Zëri* report that in his meeting with NATO officials, the Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro Vuk Draskovic commented on the latest ICG report and said that it was completely unacceptable.

Draskovic also said that the report and the proposals for conditional independence were illegal, because in his opinion this option fails to respect UN Resolution 1244 and the principle that sovereign states cannot be created within a sovereign state.

Editorial: Starting the international debate on Kosovo’s status (Zëri)

An opinion piece by the editorial office of *Zëri* notes that the ICG report in a very clear way shows the road-map for Kosovo until the resolution of final status.

‘With this report, the International Crisis Group is trying to revive the international debate on the status issue,’ it was added in the editorial.

Walker appeals on non-equalisation of KLA members with Serb perpetrators

Epoka e Re covers a press conference by the head of the former OSCE Verification Mission in Kosovo, William Walker. The paper notes that Walker has called on the international community not to equalize former members of the KLA with Serb criminals. The press conference is covered in several other daily newspapers as well.

‘Mobtel’ doesn’t take into account UNMIK’s decisions (Lajm)

Lajm newspaper reports on page three that an internal decision by UNMIK six months ago to stop the activities of the Serb operator ‘Mobtel’ has proved to be weak against the ‘wild waves of this operator’.

The paper notes that Bjorn Hauksson, director of the Central Regulatory Unit had sent a letter to then-PDSRSG Charles Brayshaw about this issue. The letter was approved, says the paper, but it has never been implemented in practice. [*more in afternoon Media Report*]

UN backs border agreement between Belgrade and Skopje (Lajm)

Lajm newspaper reports on the front page that according to UNMIK, the demarcation of the border between Kosovo and Macedonia would be considered very soon because the time for talks on Kosovo’s final status is getting closer.

The paper also reports that UNMIK has however warned that the position of the United Nations is to respect the integrity of Macedonia as specified in the agreement between Belgrade and Skopje.

Kosovo Press Headlines

Koha Ditore

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Status of Kosovo should not remain hostage of Belgrade's refusals, Alex Anderson says

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'Takovo' sells illegal insurance papers in Graçanica

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Epoka e Re

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With Bush we will talk about Kosovo, says Rehn

Walker warns about former KLA members [not to be equalized with Serb criminals]

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Jessen-Petersen cuts short his visits

UN backs border agreement between Belgrade and Skopje

Jessen-Petersen in UNESCO on Deçan Monastery

90 European students meets Kosovo leaders

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SCG Parliamentary delegation submits amendments to human rights report on Kosovo (Tanjug)

Shieder: CoE must be objective regarding Kosovo (RSCG)

Tadic: Independence of Kosovo unacceptable (RTS)

Kostunica and Mullen discussed situation in Kosovo (RTS)

Slavisa Petkovic - Kosovo minister for return (RTS/Tanjug)

Kosovo Serbs' reactions to Petkovic becoming minister in Kosovo government (RTS)

Minister Davinic meets Admiral Mullen (RTS)

Søren Jessen-Petersen not coming to Brussels (RTS)

Grace received electricity; Priluzje, Batuse and Lipljan still in the dark (RTS/Tanjug)

Serbian Orthodox Church to withdraw charges (RTS)

UNESCO Director meets Søren Jessen-Petersen in Paris (RSCG)

Latest ICG report criticized and condemned (Tanjug)

Kosovo depends on ICTY cooperation (B92/Beta)

“Kids in Kosovo concentration camps“ (B92/SRNA)

Russia and China do not allow separation of Kosovo from Serbia (Blic)

EU Commissioner meets Serb representatives in Pristina (RTS/Tanjug)

During talks in Pristina, representatives of the Serb List for Kosovo told the EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn that they do not wish to take part in any process in Kosovo that is not approved by official Belgrade. The EU Commissioner requested Serb List representatives to participate in the activities of PISG, for, as he explained, that is the only way to resolve the problem of the Serb community in Kosovo, a participant in the talks, Goran Bogdanovic, told *Tanjug*. The EU, CoE and UN consider Serb representatives, who took part in the last assembly elections in Kosovo, legitimate, and so you must take part in all processes that are unfolding here, Bogdanovic quoted the EU Commissioner. We have clearly told Rehn that we don't want to take part in one single process without official Belgrade's approval, he said.

SCG Parliamentary delegation submits amendments to human rights report on Kosovo (Tanjug)

The SCG Parliament delegation at the CoE Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg submitted on the first day of the winter session 25 amendments to the Report of the Committee for Legal Issues and Human Rights on the state of human rights in Kosovo. Our basic objection relates to the fact that the proposed Resolution focuses on future implementation of human rights in Kosovo and not the current state of affairs, the head of the delegation and the SCG Parliament Speaker Zoran Sami told *Tanjug*.

Shieder: CoE must be objective regarding Kosovo (RSCG)

The CoE Parliamentary Assembly was previously critical only towards the Serb side, but now one should be critical towards the entire situation in Kosovo, because Serbs

are victims, the departing Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly Peter Schieder stated in Strasbourg. The future of Kosovo depends on whether all the sides would accept living together and mutually respect each other, and the CoE has to be objective and just in its assessment of the situation in the province, underlined Schieder who is to end his three-year term of office.

Tadic: Independence of Kosovo unacceptable (RTS)

Serbian President Boris Tadic has reiterated that independence of Kosovo is unacceptable, and warned this would be a precedent both for the region and other European countries. "Independence of Kosovo for me, as the President of Serbia, is unacceptable," Tadic stated at a joint press conference with NATO Admiral Michael Mullen. Responding to a journalist question on the ICG report that mentions the possibility of independence of Kosovo, Tadic underlined that such a possibility would lead to a precedent that would be dangerous both for the region and other European countries. As reasons against that possibility he mentioned the creation of a new army in Kosovo that would be potentially unfriendly towards Serbia for years, a new wave of refugees and destabilization of Serbia, and the fact that an independent Kosovo would not have its own resources but would rely on organized crime, which would destabilize the region.

Kostunica and Mullen discussed situation in Kosovo (RTS)

Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica had talks in Belgrade with the NATO South Wing Commander, Admiral Michael Mullen, on the current situation in Kosovo and especially the difficult position of the Serb community whose safety in the province is endangered, the government press office stated. Kostunica acquainted Admiral Mullen with the Serbian Government's endeavors aimed at improving the position of Kosovo Serbs. The Prime Minister underlined that is necessary to create conditions for the safety of the Serb community as well as for the return of refugees and IDPs. Mullen emphasized that KFOR forces guarantee safety to Serbs in Kosovo and are ready to efficiently prevent any attempt of repeated violence of March last year.

Slavisa Petkovic - Kosovo minister for return (RTS/Tanjug)

Slavisa Petkovic has accepted the proposal by Kosovo Premier Ramush Haradinaj to head the provincial Ministry for the Return of IDPs. Following the meeting with Haradinaj, Petkovic told *Tanjug* that he had accepted the premier's proposal and that he would be formally appointed to this post on Wednesday. He stated he already had a completed program for the return of Serbs with an economic aspect, meaning that a job will be provided for everyone who returns to Kosovo.

Kosovo Serbs' reactions to Petkovic becoming minister in Kosovo government (RTS)

Kosovo Serb political leaders expressed dissatisfaction because AM Slavisa Petkovic accepted the position of the Minister for the Return of IDPs in the Kosovo government. President of the Association of Serb Municipalities Marko Jaksic stated that Petkovic's engagement in the Kosovo government would not bring anything good to Kosovo Serbs. SNC leader for northern Kosovo Milan Ivanovic believes that this is an irresponsible move, which will harm the Serb people. Petkovic should help

Albanians and UNMIK create a false impression of multiethnic institutions regardless of the fact that they include Serbs without expert or moral values, Ivanovic said. Petkovic must know that he does not have the support of Kosovo Serbs, stated SPOT leader Momcilo Trajkovic.

Minister Davinic meets Admiral Mullen (RTS)

The SCG Defense Minister Prvoslav Davinic and Commander of Joint NATO Forces in Naples, Admiral Michael Mullen, agreed in Belgrade that contacts and talks should be in the future regular in order to prevent incidents in the south of central Serbia and Kosovo. After the meeting, Davinic conveyed Mullen's assurances that KFOR was undertaking security measures in order to provide a stable situation in Kosovo and prevent possible unrests. In the part of the talks concerning the security situation in the three municipalities in southern Serbia, it was assessed that it is necessary to continue the initiated dialogue in order to meet the needs of the Serb and Albanian population in the area, Davinic said.

Søren Jessen-Petersen not coming to Brussels (RTS)

UNMIK Head Søren Jessen-Petersen has cancelled the visit to Brussels, well-informed sources in the EU report. The news has not been officially confirmed in Brussels. It has been unofficially learned that the reasons of canceling the visit are exclusively private.

Grace received electricity; Priluzje, Batuse and Lipljan still in the dark (*RTS/Tanjug*)
More than 80 Serb households in the village of Grace have received electricity, but Priluzje, Batuse and Lipljan, where the situation is extremely difficult, are still without electricity. Grace inhabitant Jovan Mihajlovic told *Tanjug* that more than 80 Serb households in this village received electricity after six days, but warns it might be disconnected again.

Serbian Orthodox Church to withdraw charges (RTS)

The Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church has confirmed the decision to withdraw the charges filed before the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg against Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy, the Serbian Orthodox Church announced. At the session, presided by Serbian Patriarch Pavle, the Holy Archbishop Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church, together with the Committee of the Holy Archbishop Assembly for Kosovo, has brought the decision, which confirms its decision from the session of 28 December 2004 according to which the charges filed by the Raska-Prizren Bishop Artemije are being withdrawn.

UNESCO Director meets Søren Jessen-Petersen in Paris (RSCG)

UNESCO Director General Koichiro Matsuura had talks in Paris with UNMIK Head Søren Jessen-Petersen about the protection of the Serbian cultural heritage in Kosovo. Matsuura pointed to the necessity of respecting criteria for the protection of world cultural monuments, and Jessen-Petersen announced that UNMIK would continue in its efforts to reconstruct Serb churches, monasteries and cultural monuments damaged

or destroyed in the Albanian extremists' violence in March 2004. Jessen-Petersen particularly spoke about the reconstruction of the Decani Monastery that was listed in 2003 as a world cultural heritage. It was agreed at the meeting that the donors conference on the protection of the Serbian cultural heritage in Kosovo takes place in Paris on 13 March 13.

Latest ICG report criticized and condemned (*Tanjug*)

The report of the International Crisis Group for Kosovo, in which this organization assesses that the best solution for that Serbian province is independence, was widely criticized and condemned by most officials and political parties in Serbia, but also with certain warnings that the Report is linked with the fulfillment of the so-called ICTY obligations. NS leader and Serbian Minister for Capital Investments Velimir Ilic gave a statement to parliament reports, saying that the stands of this Group "have nothing to do with reality" and that the Group has done nothing concerning respect of the agreement on Kosovo, but, quite the contrary, has actually given the province attributes of statehood.

Kosovo depends on ICTY cooperation (*B92/Beta*)

DS Vice-President Dusan Petrovic has said that the status of Kosovo will depend on the Serbian Government's cooperation with the ICTY. As a result of the International Crisis Group's report that recommends independence for Kosovo, Petrovic has said that Serbia's influence in Kosovo will be a lot less significant if all international obligations are not taken care of, especially those concerning the ICTY. "The prospects of Serbia in Kosovo are a lot worse now than in the past several months or years. The question of extraditing Hague suspect is something that is the responsibility of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica alone; he must decide whether the country will respect its international obligations. He has a great responsibility, but, on the other hand, all ministers and representatives that support the government hold themselves personally responsible for the possible failure in fulfilling all responsibilities to the ICTY and compromising the interest of the country and all its citizens," Petrovic said.

"Kids in Kosovo concentration camps" (*B92/SRNA*)

Rada Trajkovic has stated that the international community and UNMIK are, with their work in the region, keeping Serbian children living like concentration camp prisoners. "Serbian children in Kosovo are living through something that is unimaginable for the 21st century. These children do not know what traffic lights, concrete, buses, pool or movie theaters look like. All the things are located a kilometer or two from them in Pristina, a city Serb people are not allowed to enter or even approach," Trajkovic said.

Russia and China do not allow separation of Kosovo from Serbia (*Blic*)

"Without Serbia's permission there will be no independence of Kosovo. Even if Serbia agrees and confirms Kosovo as an independent province, Russia and China would not support this. The main reason of giving no support to this process is that the same thing could be applied to their countries," the Director of the Forum for Ethnic Relations Dusan Janjic told *Blic*. "Kosovo could proclaim independence, but it would not gain international confirmation without Serbia's consent. The EU has set up

certain criteria concerning independence and Kosovo does not fulfill it. Just because of that Albanian lobbyists are trying to find adequate support in Serbia and win independence. I am certain that the problem of Kosovo will not be resolved this year.