



Photo by: Petrit Rrahmani for Prishtina Insight



First meeting of the newly established Kosovo Security Council.

## Delays Over Key Posts Condemned

Kosovo's government accused of dragging out the selection of heads for important state institutions.

By Shega A'Mula and the BIRN team in Prishtina

On the threshold of the first anniversary of the declaration of independence, Kosovo's government and parliament are racing to finalize work that has been delayed throughout the year.

In less than two weeks, the government finally recruited a chief for the Kosovo Intelligence Agency, formed the Security Council and attempted to choose a guardian of the public interest, an Ombudsperson.

Authorities have also rushed to fill other key public positions, such as police commanders.

Opposition parties have relentlessly criticized the hastened completion of these obligations, which they say should have been done months ago, not a few days before Independence Day.

"The government has left many tasks behind and now they are carelessly completing absolutely everything before the first anniversary of independence", Ardian Gjini, of the

opposition Alliance for the Future of Kosovo party, AAK, told Prishtina Insight.

Last Wednesday saw the inauguration of Kosovo's first Intelligence chief, former police lieutenant-colonel Bashkim Smakaj. Under the constitution, the President and Prime Minister are responsible for selecting the post, a decision which was months overdue.

Memli Krasniqi, government spokesperson, said delays had occurred because of the sensitivity of the position. "It is more important to get the right person for the job than to get someone quickly," he said.

However, security expert Ramadan Qehaja said the delays held negative implications for Kosovo, effecting stability and the overall image of the new country's institutions.

"If it was formed six or seven months ago, it would have planted its seeds throughout the whole territory of Kosovo, ensuring stability and becoming as effective as possible," he said.

The appointment of the head of the intelligence agency allowed for

the formal creation of the Security Council, an advisory body tasked with safeguarding Kosovo's national security and sovereignty.

The fragile and occasionally violent situation in the north of Kosovo remains the country's biggest security challenge.

Ibrahim Makolli, of the leading opposition Alliance for a New Kosovo, AKR, said the time lag had only increased the fragility of the situation in the northern Serb-dominated half of Mitrovica.

"The delay in completing these tasks conflicts with the constitution we ratified nine months ago, and this reluctance to take charge is creating a gap for more instability," he told Prishtina Insight. "The situation in the north might have been [further] under control if these institutions had been created earlier," he added.

Kosovo's assembly failed today to vote for an Ombudsperson, as neither candidates received enough votes.

The assembly has failed to vote in an Ombudsperson three times in the last two years. Policy analyst Ilir Deda, of the Kosovar Institute

for Policy Research and Development, KIPRED, says the government is to blame. "The parties want to politicize the institution; this was the case with the previous government mandate, and it is the same now," he said.

There has been similar criticism regarding delays over who is to run the Central Electoral Commission, CEC, an institution charged with organizing elections. This is the first time that Kosovars are fully in charge of organizing such polls.

Memli Krasniqi said the parliament rather than the government was responsible for selecting the Ombudsperson and the head of the CEC.

However, critics of the government say the two main ruling parties, the PDK and LDK, which hold most seats in the assembly, could have pushed for a decision on these institutions had they wanted to.

Ilir Deda, of KIPRED, said this clearly was not their agenda. "They have focused [instead] on getting more and more party loyalists into institutions that should be independent and comprise professional people," he says.

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The European Union must get Serbia to accept the EU law and justice mission to Kosovo and in turn also convince Kosovo Serbs to work with it, European Parliament deputy Doris Pack tells Prishtina Insight. Pack told Prishtina Insight in an interview that the EULEX law and justice mission meant to help Kosovo ...

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**Independence Brings Only Disappointment to Mitrovica**

While most Kosovars will soon be celebrating the first anniversary of Kosovo's independence, some people don't feel much cause to celebrate. Ramadan Fejza, an Albanian from Mitrovica, drives a blue "Nori" cab for eight hours a day, for which he earns about 90 to 100 euros a month. In his four-member family...

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# Haradinaj: Government Failing to Tackle Problems

One year on after independence, the opposition leader claims Kosovo has a government that focuses more on its image than on addressing key issues.

By Vjosa Musliu and Jeta Abazi in Prishtina

Kosovo's former prime minister, Ramush Haradinaj, says the current administration is governing without any plan and that political interference is delaying the formation of the key state institutions.

The leader of the opposition Alliance for Kosovo's Future, AAK, told Prishtina Insight that the government was not focusing on addressing essential problems but on public appearance.

Press freedom in Kosovo is considered low in the latest progress report of the European Commission and in the findings of Freedom House.

"The government has [tried to] ensure control over the media," Haradinaj said. By taking control of the media, the government was seeking to "polish up" its image.

The opposition leader adds that

the government has been too slow in setting up key institutions for the country, stipulated in the constitution that entered into force on June 15, 2008.

The government has been very tardy in establishing the Kosovo Security Force for example. The row over the selection process for members is still ongoing. The authorities also waited nine months after the ratification of the constitution to appoint a head for the Intelligence Service.

The Security Council was set up just six days before the first anniversary of state independence. Similar delays have been applied to the post of Ombudsperson and to the Constitutional Court.

While the government argues that it must not rush to create these posts and set up these institutions, the opposition camp holds that the reason for the delays is the government's desire to insert its own people into these key bodies.

"There is a package of nominations that the government would have liked to see in these institutions", the AAK chief said; this was especially true in the case of Kosovo's head of Intelligence.

Since Haradinaj's acquittal from The Hague, relations between him and Thaci have been icy. While the former has asked to meet the Prime Minister, Thaci has apparently refused to accept him.

During the funeral of Kosovo's former president, Ibrahim Rugova, both Thaci and Haradinaj were present but they did not shake hands with one another.

Senior leaders of the AAK have been hurling serious insults at Thaci's government, even comparing it to that of the Nazi German leader, Adolf Hitler.

Haradinaj and Thaci are both former members of Kosovo's Liberation Army, KLA, but went their own ways politically when they each founded their own political parties.



Ramush Haradinaj

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

## Editor's word

# Fol!



By Krenar Gashi

The first year after a country declares independence is crucial. Either the country gains momentum, and a clear course of how statehood will work is set, or the opportunity is missed.

This past year will never come again. I can see the point of some who boast about having built more schools and roads than ever before and, most importantly of all, of having successfully navigated a tricky year without seeing any violent incidents against the Serbs in Kosovo. But I can't help thinking about the missed opportunities and about how we never talk about them.

We never talk about the 50 per cent of our population who are unemployed. We built schools but don't do anything about the rigid academic environment that produces people who can't even spell and speak correctly – a virtual army of 30,000 youngsters, each year entering a job market that can't employ them.

We hardly ever talk about the fact that even in the post-UNMIK era, public enterprises are still headed by directors who are stalwarts of the ruling parties. Clearly, their interest is for these companies to make money to serve those political parties rather than to better manage and improve public services.

How about talking about my journalist colleagues who have never lent more support to the government than they do now. Why, do you think? It's definitely not because the government needs this support. Rather, it is because the government is still the number one employer in the country and the biggest business contractor as well as the greatest advertiser.

Why don't we talk more about freedom of the media? A single sentence in the constitution regulates freedom of the media in Kosovo. It says: "Freedom of the media is guaranteed." By whom, I ask? Who is guaranteeing it? How come that since independence, my colleagues have been receiving more and more threats and facing more and more direct censorship? When will we start talking about this?

Why can't we talk about bribery? Why do we never mention that over 50 per cent of our businesses openly admit having given bribes to get contracts from the government? And what about the 15 per cent of Kosovars who continue since independence to live on less than the equivalent of a US dollar a day?

It is not enough that we have refrained from killing each other, so let's not debate this first anniversary with smirks of self-satisfaction and with a refusal to talk about these problems. If we can't improve them instantly, we can at least start talking about them. So talk – fol, that is.



Peter Feith

## Feith Raps Kosovo Government For Reform Delays

BALKAN INSIGHT, BRUSSELS

Peter Feith, the head of the International Civilian Office in Kosovo and European Union Special Representative, criticized Kosovo's institutions for lagging behind in key reforms needed to guarantee progress in the new country.

Feith spoke during a debate in the European Parliament's foreign affairs committee on the occasion of the upcoming first anniversary of Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia.

"The Assembly is still falling short of fulfilling a key role in democracy: that of providing a main forum for political debate and parliamentary oversight and scrutiny", Feith said. "Many decisions are still taken by the government without significant involvement of the assembly; much of the political intercourse is still channeled through the press and potentially in

the streets".

He said that in past year the situation on the ground was quiet but warned that ethnic violence between Serbs and Albanians in Mitrovica as well as the reaction of Prishtina to the UN's six-point plan demonstrate "the fragility of the situation".

Furthermore, he said he was worried about the reaction of Kosovo Protection Corps in the process of establishing Kosovo's Security Force, a reaction that according to Feith can cause further tensions.

Feith said the EU should create a channel of communication between Prishtina and Belgrade, as a constructive attitude by Belgrade towards the EULEX mission is of crucial importance. Some deputies of the European Parliament went further and called on the EU to condition Serbia's process towards EU membership with the country's cooperation with the EU mission.

## Kosovo: No Talks Before Serbia Recognition

BALKAN INSIGHT, PRISHTINA

Kosovo's parliament speaker said Prishtina was under no obligation to negotiate with Serbia even on technical issues as long as Serbia had not recognized Kosovo.

International officials have long said that Belgrade and Prishtina must hold so-called 'technical talks' to deal with issues arising in Kosovo, especially regarding the Serb minority, but there has been no timetable and no agenda. The United Nations mission in Kosovo invited both sides to hold talks on cultural heritage earlier this week but both Serbia and Kosovo ignored the invitation.

"We cannot negotiate on technical issues with a country which has not recognized Kosovo", Jakup Krasniqi said.

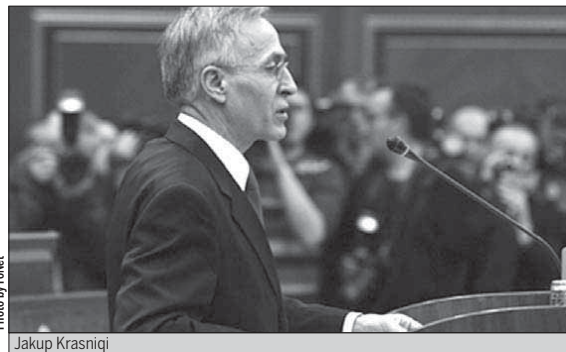
"Serbia has not recognized

Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state. Therefore, these negotiations are impossible; we cannot negotiate on technical issues".

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki - Moon has authorized the chief of UNIMK, Lamberto Zannier, to act as mediator between the two parties.

Serbia does not recognise Kosovo's government as equals and is fighting to keep UNMIK as the designated counterpart in any dealings with Kosovo. The government in Prishtina on the other hand is trying to take its place as UNMIK's formal successor in the international arena.

"Unfortunately, neither experts from Prishtina nor those from Belgrade were part of the meeting for technical issues", said UNMIK spokesman Russell Geekie.



Jakup Krasniqi

Photo by Follet

# EU Must Press Serbia To Work With EULEX-Pack



By Vjosa Musliu  
in Prishtina

The European Union must get Serbia to accept the EU law and justice mission to Kosovo and in turn also convince Kosovo Serbs to work with it, European Parliament deputy Doris Pack tells Prishtina Insight.

Pack told Prishtina Insight in an interview that the EULEX law and justice mission meant to help Kosovo in its first steps "is not deployed as it should be" and is "still not fully established in the North". She stressed that Kosovo's Albanian leadership also has a lot of work ahead before the new state can start thinking seriously about EU accession.

Belgrade has vowed to never recognise Kosovo's declaration of independence and is keeping a firm hold on the pockets of Serb minority communities in Kosovo, setting up a network of parallel health, education and social security structures. Its pull is strongest around the divided city of Mitrovica, where Serb-inhabited land backs onto Serbia proper. In late December and early January, tensions in the town spilled over to violent protests, street fights and ambushes that injured several people and caused extensive damage, worrying diplomats about stability in the long-term.

"I think we should ask Belgrade to do more to make the people in Mitrovica understand that they should cooperate in their interest..."

I think we (the EU) should convince Belgrade to do so," Pack said.

"I hope that representatives of the EU have this question in their own daily agenda because this is important for the whole region and for the ongoing situation in Kosovo and Belgrade."

She said that Belgrade's continued financing of the divided flash-point city of Mitrovica was "worrying", and unfair to Serbs living elsewhere in Kosovo.

"Two-thirds of Serbs live in other parts of Kosovo and they will have to cooperate with the Kosovo government," she said. "They are citizens of Kosovo and they should take part in the life in Kosovo. If they don't do so, they are lost because they cannot forever count on Belgrade."

"There is a need to work with Belgrade to have a compromise to make EULEX accepted from the locals in Mitrovica. We have still to convince Belgrade that EULEX deployment is in its own interest."

Kosovo for its part should not get ahead of itself with only one year of independence under its belt, Pack said, which still has a lot of work ahead.

"Kosovo will be a member of the EU if it fulfills the conditions as all other countries," she said. "It is a new state. Look how long this process took for Croatia and how long this will take for Serbia. Don't ask me how long, but in principle it is the same procedure for every



Doris Pack

country. You have to have a transparent government, well working Parliament, fulfilling of the Constitutional tasks, make use of Ahtisaari's plan in your Constitution, and help the Serbs and all other minorities to feel like equal citizens and work for the future of the young generation."

She said that instead of constantly asking when Kosovo is to become an EU member, Kosovo's politicians have to "do the work and fulfill the conditions."

"We are not here to make it happen for you," she said.

Pack dismissed all notions that Serbia was getting any sort of special or 'soft' treatment from the EU.

"We take care of Serbia, because at the end of the day, it should be a member of the European Union, simply as others are, but we are not taking care of Serbia more than for others," she said.

"Sometimes people believe they (Serbs) have not been punished enough for what has been done in their name. I can understand the feelings but the fact is that we are working with them to fulfill the conditions. We have to take into consid-

eration that the actual government in Serbia is inheriting the heritage of Milosevic...and Kosovo's independence is the end of its policy."

She said the EU was not going to speculate now about how Serbia and Kosovo's relations might affect both their EU paths, but would cross that bridge when it got to it. One thing was for sure, she said, that she felt that the current generation of Serbs would not recognize Kosovo.

"So why don't we become realistic enough and clever enough to find a solution," Pack concluded.

## Comment

# Independence, One Year On

Freedom has not solved all our difficulties, but it has allowed Kosovo to at last start concentrating on other issues.



By Ilir Dugolli  
in Brussels

A year ago Kosovo declared its independence. As many friends warned us ahead of the declaration, independence did not make all our problems disappear. Yet it has certainly made it easier to turn to other issues and start paying them adequate attention.

Following nine years under international administration on February 17, 2008, Kosovo's democratically elected leaders declared Kosovo an independent and sovereign state. Parliament thereby reconfirmed its commitment to the recommendations of UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. In the light of the above, soon after followed necessary legislation, completing the architecture of a full-fledged state.

In the meantime, Kosovo has adopted a constitution that enshrines its profound commitment to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens, providing far-reaching protection for ethnic minorities.

During this first year of its existence, the new state, among other things, has progressed in the establishment of its security architecture, starting with the creation of the Kosovo Security Forces, Kosovo Intelligence Agency and Kosovo Security Council.

In order to measure how much has Kosovo achieved in its first year as an independent state, it is sufficient to recall the dire warnings made ahead of the declaration. Only then we can truly appreciate Kosovo's confident first steps towards the family of nations.

There were countless predictions that following the declaration of independence the new country would produce waves of refugees. Yet, a year later we have not witnessed even the earliest symptoms of such predictions. On the contrary, in spite of all the difficulties accompanying such a delicate process, Kosovo, both in legislation and in practice, has continued to work on creating conditions so that every Kosovar, regardless of ethnicity, can freely exercise his or her right to return.

There were also warnings that Kosovo would become a source of instability for the region. In spite of this, not only has Kosovo not

become a source of instability but independence has directly contributed to the pacification of the whole region.

No wonder that all Kosovo's neighbours, except Serbia, have recognized independence, primarily because they realized its effects on regional stability. By the same token, it is no surprise that attempts to change Kosovo's borders are objected to as vehemently by neighbouring countries as by Kosovo itself.

There was also some anxiety about how this new country would act on the international scene and whether it would cause more trouble than be a constructive factor.

A year later, we can see Kosovo's unambiguous desire and determination to seek membership of international organisations, abide by the international legal obligations and principles of international community that mark the relations among states.

In this context, Kosovo has already applied for membership of the IMF and the World Bank and intends to apply in due course to join other international organisations. At the international level, Kosovo is strongly committed to becoming a contributing member of

the international community. In order to make its contribution internationally and to strengthen friendly relations and cooperation with other states, the first ten embassies of the Republic of Kosovo have been established in late 2008 and the second wave of embassies is in the process of being set up. In its first year of statehood Kosovo has demonstrated full acceptance of the duty of responsible membership of the international community.

More than a year ago there were many warnings that subsequently did not materialize. During this year Kosovars did everything to prevent such dire scenarios from becoming reality, often in spite of serious provocations and direct challenges to its peace and security. There was also an abundance of well-intended advice that independence alone would not cause all our difficulties to evaporate. It should be clear by now that while not all our problems have disappeared, the events of February 17 2008 have certainly made it easier to focus more on other issues.

Ilir Dugolli is Kosovo's Charge d'affaires in Brussels

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# Kosovo Budget 'Depends on 150 Businesses'

A disturbingly small number of firms are responsible for a disproportionate percentage of the country's tax revenue.



Photo by Peitri Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

Kosovo's Customs remain the greatest contributor to country's budget



By Lavdim Hamidi  
in Prishtina

**K**osovo's budget effectively depends on customs duties paid by 150 big businesses, according to statistics provided by a customs spokesman, Adriatik Stavileci.

These firms paid around 410 million euro in import duties in 2008, comprising 70 per cent of a total of 604.8 million euro collected in customs that year.

The rest of the revenues from customs, about 195 million euro, was collected from all the other, smaller businesses, Stavileci told Prishtina Insight.

Customs duties in Kosovo cover about 70 per cent of the national budget. The remaining portion of the budget comes from the Tax Administration, which collected around 224 million euro in 2008.

The Tax Administration also collected money from the three largest public enterprises,

Post and Telecommunications, Prishtina International Airport, and Kosovo's Energy Corporation.

In 2008, Post and Telecommunications paid 34.5 million euro in taxes, its spokesman, Menduh Abazi, said. Customs duties and taxes collected at municipal and central levels secured a total national budget of just over 1 billion euro.

"The customs statistics show that the stability of the country's budget depends on 150 large businesses", the head of Kosovo's Chamber of Commerce, Safet Gerxhaliu, said.

Gerxhaliu said this dependence on the collection of duties from only a relatively small number of big businesses was unsatisfactory.

The statistics pointed to the existence of a large "informal" economy, comprising companies that pay no tax at all, he added.

"Of 92,000 registered businesses in Kosovo, only half pay any tax, while the main burden of the budget falls on these 150 solid, stable companies", Gerxhaliu noted.

The head of the Chamber of Commerce suggested the budget would have been much larger if businesses were more efficiently monitored.

Gerxhaliu also said more tax needed to be collected inside the country, from the Tax Administration, and less from the collection of customs on the borders.

## Five top businesses:

**Hib Petrol** - imports around 34.6 million euro, and paid 27.3 million euro in customs.

**Ex Fis** - imports worth 33.6 million euro; paid 13.8 million euro in customs

**Mamidoil Kosovo** - imports worth 26.4 million euro; paid 22.7 million euro in taxes.

**Elkos** - imports 24.7 worth million euro; paid 5.5 million euro in taxes.

**Bucaj** - imports worth 24 million euro; paid around 18 million euro in taxes.

# Norway Finances Kosovo Agriculture Project

BALKAN INSIGHT, PRISHTINA

**N**orway's government is financing four milk collecting points in different cities around Kosovo, part of a drive to improve milk quality and help the country's stagnating agriculture.

This project is to start in the Shipashnice village in Kamenica, eastern Kosovo, where a business center will be built for farmers to collect their milk reserves.

"Norway has implemented several projects in Kosovo," said Oystein Haugen, from the Association of Municipalities in Norway, which is financing the project. "Good results made us come here again."

Kosovo's agriculture is underdeveloped due to the lack of investment and damages to infrastructure caused in the 1998-99 war with Serbia.

Prime Minister Hashim Thaci has set agriculture as a key government priority for 2009, which has not encountered any concrete development until now.

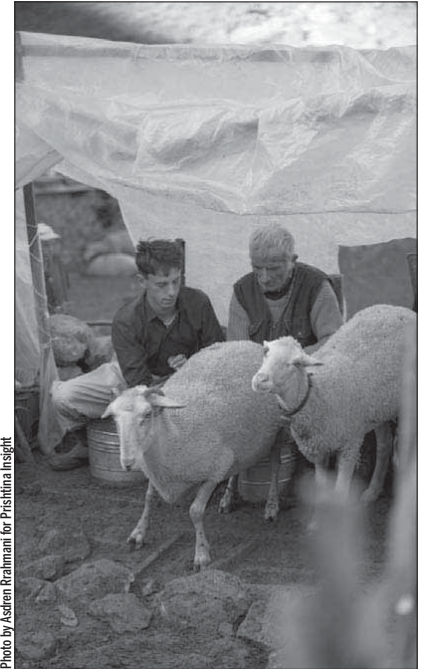


Photo by Astrid Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

Milking the sheep gets underway on a remote mountain farm. Shepherds stay here over the spring and summer.

# Kosovo Market Important, Lucrative For Serbia



Photo by Follet

Belgrade

BALKAN INSIGHT, BELGRADE

**I**t is in Serbia's interest to sell its products in Kosovo since this trade brings Belgrade millions each year, Serbia's Trade Minister Slobodan Milosavljevic said.

Belgrade is currently blocking goods that enter Serbia stamped with the seal of the Kosovo Customs, despite Prishtina's protestations that this goes against the CEFTA regional free trade deal.

"Trade with Kosovo is going on without major problems," Serbian Trade Minister Slobodan Milosavljevic told Serbia's media. "That part of Serbia is extremely important for the Serbian economy, since goods worth more than

\$600 million are put on the province's market annually."

Trade with Kosovo is not a classical export, Milosavljevic said, but "sale of products on a part of our territory that is under a special UN custom protectorate."

Serbia has said it will continue to block Kosovo-made goods until they revert to being stamped with the seal of the UNMK customs authority, and Milosavljevic did not comment on the possibility of an embargo. "If some other problems appear, we'll react on that," he said, "but our interest is now to cover that part of the market with good quality products from Serbia."

# Independence Brings Only Disappointment to Mitrovica

On both sides of the ethnic border in this divided northern city, people say that the last year has brought no positive changes to their lives.



By Amra Zejneli  
in Mitrovica

While most Kosovars will soon be celebrating the first anniversary of Kosovo's independence, some people don't feel much cause to celebrate.

Ramadan Fejza, an Albanian from Mitrovica, drives a blue "Nori" cab for eight hours a day, for which he earns about 90 to 100 euro a month.

In his four-member family, he is the only one to bring any income home, and he finds it hard to list any positive changes in Kosovo's northern city since the declaration of independence. "There are just a few more new buildings around," he said.

Fejza is downbeat about the average Kosovar's life. "Think of a dog," he said. "It has a certain way of living. It is tied to the leash, eats what's given, and gets used to that sort of life. That's how we have become. We just have to accept the reality and try to live."

In ethnically divided Mitrovica, where Serbs live in the north and Albanians in the south, people south of river Ibar dividing line did not expect rapid change. But many hoped the Prishtina government would at least have more of a plan for them.

**"Albanian people were in a dream. We were brought up with that idea of being independent but since then nothing has changed in our lives and nothing has changed in Mitrovica either",**

*Valdete Idrizi  
an Albanian from Mitrovica*

In the Serb-run north, it is much the same. As one local cab driver said, there are more new buildings around, especially in Bosnjacka Mahala (Little Bosnia), one of the few multi-ethnic neighbourhoods in the north, where the Belgrade government is financing the erection of new apartments for Serbs - acts Prishtina view as illegal.

The Albanian mayor, Bajram Rexhepi, said he never expected rapid change. But he had hoped the rule of law would be seen to prevail more in the north than it had done. Unfortunately, he said, things had moved slowly, possibly because of the delayed reconfiguration of Kosovo's former UN



The bridge of Mitrovica dividing the city in two parts

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

administration, UNMIK.

On the municipal level, he said, there have been improvements in infrastructure. The central government had donated more than 10 million euro to upgrade roads in Mitrovica. The municipality was also trying to fix the problem of water supply and rebuild the houses destroyed during the 1999 conflict.

The municipality is currently waiting to hear from Prishtina about whether they will provide the local authority with funds to pay rents for about 300 families who migrated from north to south and cannot return home.

People in Mitrovica, like people throughout Kosovo, are also facing the same old problems of joblessness and poverty that they encountered before independence.

Mayor Rexhepi used to meet local citizens in his office every other Monday. He stopped, he said, because 97 per cent of the visitors only came to ask for a job or a place to live.

"I saw this being very counterproductive because I wasn't able to help those people," Rexhepi said. "I am not the kind of person to try to please people, when I know I can't."

The Mayor said there was little, if any, cooperation with the northern, Serbian municipality, which he insists is illegal.

Apart from some round tables organized by the International Civilian Office, ICO, and several NGOs, the two sides rarely meet. However, those round tables had helped bring people together and reduce tension.

Valdete Idrizi, an Albanian from Mitrovica and director of

Community Building Mitrovica, spends a lot of her time talking to both Albanians and Serbians and visiting ethnic enclaves, to find out what these people need.

She, too, has seen few signs of change since the declaration of independence.

"Albanian people were in a dream," Idrizi said. "We were brought up with that idea of being independent but since then nothing has changed in our lives and nothing has changed in Mitrovica either."

"Everyone is to blame: the international community, [the EU rule-of-law mission] EULEX, which is still not in the north, and our leaders, for not having a plan for Mitrovica."

"People are very tired of all this and this is why we have to use this momentum and do something," she said.

**"It's getting even worse. We don't feel the independence, or the constitution. And the Bosnjacka Mahala is just like an Indian reservation."**

*Nedžad Ugljanin  
an inhabitant of  
Bosnjacka Mahala.*

Momcilo Arlov, a Serbian colleague who runs the Center for Civil Society Development, said Mitrovica remains a symbol of division in Kosovo. Changes are unnoticeable and disappointing.

Politicians had for years mentioned the youth of Kosovo, 50 per cent of whom are below 25, as a potential benefit.

But Arlov said the same politicians needed to acknowledge that a land with the youngest population in Europe also had the highest unemployment rate among youth.

"Nobody has a right to take the chance of a better future away from young people, no matter their ethnicity," Arlov said. "But, unfortunately, with our wrong actions and by choosing to remain weighed down with the ballast of the past, that's what we are actually doing."

Nedžad Ugljanin, an inhabitant of Bosnjacka Mahala and a member of Bosniak Party of Democratic Action in Kosovo, says seeing how little the town has changed makes him very frustrated.

"It's getting even worse," he maintained. "We don't feel the independence, or the constitution. And the Bosnjacka Mahala is just like an Indian reservation."

He said many Albanians and even some Bosniak families had sold their homes and moved south, though he planned to stay together with other Bosniaks no matter what.

Maja Ficovic, a Serbian journalist living just outside of Mitrovica, believes both Albanian and Serbians in Kosovo are essentially pawns in the hands of others.

"This is all a game for the great leaders and this generation is paying for it," she said.

"The two parts of the city function as two countries," she added. "And I'm sure this is how it's going to remain for some time, except when it comes to business. People do work together then."

Fisnik Istrefi, 30, an Albanian

## A Taste of Kosovo Hajvar

Hajvar is embedded into Balkan cuisine, with rights to its specific origins best described as a tug of war match between the Balkan states. Nevertheless, Hajvar is a staple spread present at usually every Kosovar family breakfast.

An abundant amount of varieties are available at grocery stores across the country, but many families engage in traditional homemade preparation every year when red peppers are in season. In fact, everyone argues that their mother's homemade hajvar is the best tasting in all of Kosovo! So call over a friend, and enjoy this communal tradition over a Turkish coffee and some fresh lady gossip.



- 15 kg red peppers
- 1 litre oil
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Cut pepper in half, removing all seeds and stems.

Roast pepper halves in a pan until soft with a roasted skin. Remove from oven and peel the skins off.

Add peppers to a food processor and chop up into a smooth mixture.

Heat the litre of oil in a deep pan. Add pepper mixture, sugar and salt, and boil for a consistent medium heat for close to 5 hours.

When boiled, pour the hajvar mixture into glass jars, seal them accurately and place them in a cool place to rest. After 24 hours, you may enjoy your homemade hajvar, and hand out jars of your personal creation to family and friends. Hajvar is usually spread on warm bread, but can be eaten based on individual preferences.

working at the Medical Center in Mitrovica, agrees independence has meant little to local people, in concrete terms. "How can we celebrate something we don't really have?" he asked.

Fisnik might have a drink or two on the anniversary of Kosovo Independence Day, but this wouldn't necessarily mean he was really celebrating.

Though he lives in the south with a family of five, his apartment is in the north, and is being used by a Serbian family.

"Everyone hoped for a better life after the war, but nothing happened," he said. "Then everyone hoped for a better life after independence. Still nothing."

# Wild guesses of Mimoza Veliu

Photographer Mimoza Veliu's photo exhibition 'Delirium' is now showing at the National Art Gallery in Prishtina. The importance of experiencing this artwork is high.



By Arif Muharremi  
in Prishtina

**F**rozen faces of everyday human moving moments traveled across from Berlin to be exposed at the National Art Gallery hall in Prishtina. Mimoza Veliu's photo exhibition 'Delirium' developed after having lived in Berlin for a number of years, gaining experience along the way.

Pictured in a black and white technique, faces in Mimoza's pictures contain a tense emotion in a frozen state, giving a deeper meaning to the concept of the exhibition.

Afrim Spahiu, a photography professor says that the exhibition reflects the courage to experiment. "Mimoza with this exhibition had just opened to us the melting feeling of exploration which enriches the life and the soul", said Spahiu. "The black and white photos call for the history of happen-

ing and tell a story behind that history".

On the other hand Shkwizen Maliqi, an art critic, says that Mimoza's pictures reflect the desire to courageously exit from the vulgar balance of everyday life as well as from gravity and the body.

"She constructs images by asking models to move or jump, aiming to detach them from the surrounding reality of nature or urban settings", says Maliqi. "Mimoza manages to create images of individual delirium as the bodies stand in a state of dichotomy".

One cannot clearly conclude whether Mimoza's images are optimistic or sad. It's a question of the glass being half full or half empty, and Mimoza states the existing condition. She leaves all the options open, gives no hint and appeals for wild guesses.

Figures in her pictures are not passive, and she tends to use the light to reflect the dark side of humanity, capturing the very moment of the personal human mood and the way it is reflected. There is not a moment in her pictures where we can find a serene figure, and the dilemmas in their faces are replicated with their movements and mimics.

In the pictures, the author carefully measured the light and the space, aiming to create the best frame. Her pictures are also characteristic for having a certain deep perspective and the natural distance between the object and the background.

Alban Ramadani, a photogra-

pher, says that Mimoza's exhibition is a case to follow.

"During all these years we had photo exhibitions, but there was something missing all the time. Now, we can see a complete artwork, starting from the very clear concept, until the finishing finesses. It is a brave decision to expose these pictures in public", says Ramadani.

During her time in Kosovo, Mimoza was engaged in print media, and was also known for her poetry. She is currently studying media design in Berlin.

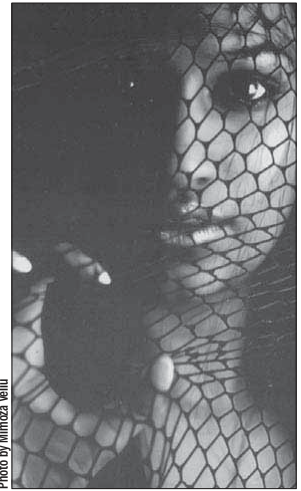


Photo by Mimoza Veliu



Photo by Mimoza Veliu



Photo by Mimoza Veliu

## Music Video Review:

# Clown's Testament

Metal band Troja released their new album last Monday. Earlier, they launched a video of the album's most likely hit, Amaneti i Clownit - the Clown's Testament.



By Krenar Gashi in Prishtina

**T**hey are hard enough and creative enough at the same time. The four Prishtina men who rocked the town back in the early 1990s are back on track. Following a few changes that the band underwent last year, Troja has returned with another music video, bringing the same old vibe, albeit in a different tune and with a different approach, and a definitely different feeling.

The lyrics for Clown's Testament were written by the band's former drummer, now frontman vocalist, Bujar Berisha, while the whole band took care of the music. It took them quite a lot of time to establish a perfect tune that could work with lyrics written in Kosovo's version of the gheg dialect of Albanian. Many ethno elements are included in the song, starting with the singing style, though far fewer than in their previous recording, "Jena na" (We are), the song they released last year.

The video is filmed in a desert-like scene,

which is the only scene throughout the four-and-a-half minutes of the song. The sunset is in the background while the band performs in its own way, with energy and style.

The first element one can immediately spot is the microphone of the vocalist. Instead of the usual cable that singers roll around their arms, this one has a thick chain, giving a clear impression of the state the singer is in. Lack of freedom is evidently the position from which he is reaching out to the audience, as his hands remain chained throughout.

The song kicks off with a very short smooth sentence in a fairytale style, declaring that "a few years have passed". But it immediately adopts a harsher tone, as the vocalist asks "who are these people that haven't been educated to learn that they ought not to steal from their own home?"

The climax comes just after the first part of the song, when the lyrics continue with: "There are some words I'm not able to say," which coincidentally or not, rhymes perfectly with a very common Albanian oath that could easily replace this line, without disrupting or distorting anything.

The creative sound of Florent Bajrami's guitar, gently accompanied by Agron Ejupi's semi-high notes on bass, and the energy that



Troja Band in a show

Violand Shabani brings by hitting the drums hard, compliment one another perfectly.

The song continues in the same context, talking about "these people", who cannot be anyone other than the people in power. The song accuses them of "brainwashing us" and for "taking away the sun", concluding that "their lies have been costing us too much," and that they have "taken our world away from us".

The feeling of anger is present throughout the story-telling process of the Clown's Testament while the singing tone is characterized by anger, too.

Revolutionary elements are not absent

from this song, especially in the conclusions that the singer makes regarding these people, that "I cannot stop them myself." Even the last sentence is quite revolutionary, saying that there are so many years, apparently of all the feelings expressed throughout the song, that he "can never forgive."

Although the lyrics were written some three years ago, the story behind them corresponds with the present day reality in Kosovo, which is why it is already being played widely and commented on. Interestingly, most music bloggers rate it as great and they're already quoting certain specific lines from the brilliant lyrics.



The ancient city ruins, seen from a distance

Photo by Asdren Rrahmani for Prishtina Insight

## The Haunting Charm of Artanë, or Novo Brdo

This famous hilltop metropolis, once famous for its silver production but long since fallen into ruins, makes for an atmospheric day out.



By Asdren Rrahmani

It was a sunny day and I was again getting one of those rushes in the middle of a working day – a rush to be out in the open and taking photographs. Therefore, I spent all afternoon deciding my next destination.

Then the ancient ruins of Artanë, or Novo Brdo, came to mind, so as soon as I was done with my work, I went home, quickly changed, took my photo gear and jumped into my car.

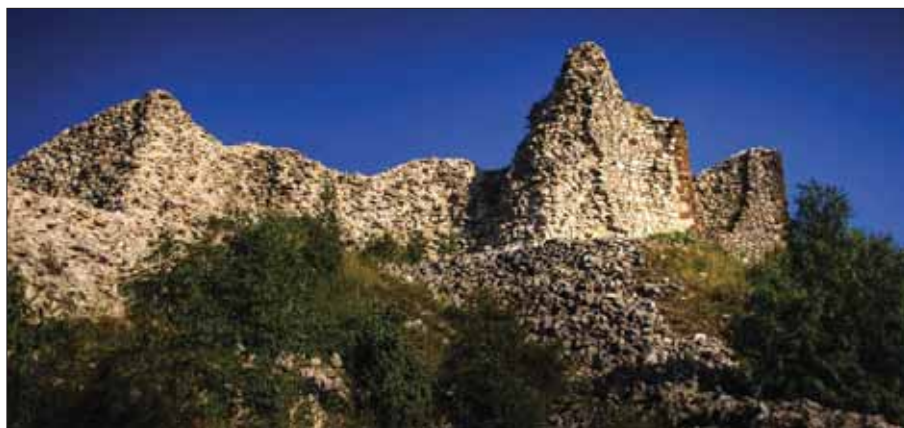
The afternoon weather was wonderful as I drove down the winding road by Badovci lake, an artificial lake that used to be the main water reservoir for Prishtina. Because of the lack of rain and snow last year the water levels had dropped significantly, and it wasn't much of an interesting sight, so I drove on

without stopping.

After half an hour I reached a road sign telling me to turn left, and after another 8 km, a second sign directed me to take another left. By now I could discern the ruins of the ancient city on top of the hill. I followed the road for 10 minutes and when I reached a point that looked suitable for my first photos, I stopped and took some wide shots of the ruins.

An additional 10 minutes of driving took me to the nearest point that could be reached by car, a 200 to 300 metre walk from my destination. It was nothing, so potential visitors to this site should know they can reach it by car, whether or not they are fond of long walks and climbing.

The Gumnishte fortress was built in the 14th century. With 15 ft-high walls, it was part of a fortified medieval city. Today, little of the actual fortress remains, though more than enough to give an impression of how imposing it once was.



Another shot of some of the ruins

Photo by Asdren Rrahmani for Prishtina Insight

As with many other historical sites in the Balkans, there are two sides to its history. Without going into describing both, I will just stick to an official one.

Thus, according to Wikipedia,

Novo Brdo was once a metropolis, with a huge medieval fortress built on the top of an extinct volcano cone, "the remains of which can be visited today".

The population at its height was estimated to exceed 10,000. "There were mines and smelting furnaces for iron, lead, gold and silver ores. Novo Brdo silver is known by its argentum glame (an alloy of silver with 1/6-1/3 gold). In 1450, the mines of Novo Brdo were producing about 6,000 kg of silver per year. The fortress came under siege for forty days by the Ottomans, capitulating and becoming occupied by the Ottomans on June 1, 1455".

The ruins overlook many villages that lie in the valleys below. You can also see the relics of an old mine in the distance, but I didn't approach the mines as I was waiting for the sunset in order to take a few pictures inside the ruins.

There, I took a few good shots before night closed in, and I started packing up my gear to make my way back. As I was going downhill back to where I had parked my car, I heard voices behind me, so I quickly turned on the camera and aimed it at the top of the castle,

hoping those voices would materialize into the shape of people on top of the castle.

And I was right. Just before I knew it, two persons, an adult and a boy appeared, passing by quickly. I only had one chance to take a shot, which I did. This photograph is now one of my favourites in the silhouettes category. I made it the desktop photograph on my computer and I am quite attached to it.

I only realised how nice it was once I'd opened it full size on the computer screen as opposed to seeing it on my camera display. It was my last shot of the day – a happy ending.

### How to get there:

Take the road to Gjlilani, which means a right turn below the city flyover. Drive through Gracanica and Badovci Lake and some 15 km past the lake, a sign will direct you to Klinia on the left. After another 8 km or so, a second sign directs you towards Novo Brdo, which should now be visible. An additional 4-5 km takes you right to beneath the ruins.



The entrance to the medieval castle with a view of the distant valleys below

Photo by Asdren Rrahmani for Prishtina Insight

Restaurant review: De Rada

# A Hint of Provence in Prishtina

This French-inspired brasserie scores high marks for tasty meat dishes, an extensive wine list and oodles of Latin charm.



By Rose Whitmore in Prishtina

The view may not include the Eiffel Tower but the cozy interior, extensive wine selection and camembert fritters of De Rada will take you to the heart of Provence without you ever having to leave Kosovo. Forget you're in downtown Prishtina. Put on your beret, grab your cigarettes (well, maybe another pack), and bring your copy of Les Misérables down to Rr. UCK for the full bourgeois experience.

Missing the French food that they enjoyed in London, Leonora Mehmeti and her husband Arian, opened De Rada three years ago, following the success of their wine bar, Bamboo. Named after the romantic Albanian-Italian writer Jeronim de Rada, their overriding aim was to offer guests exceptional hospitality – in which they have succeeded.

Since opening, De Rada has become a hot spot for locals and internationals wanting to be seen, or do some seeing themselves. This is not a hard task, with a patio designed for voyeurs and well-placed mirrors on stylish brick walls. Every detail speaks of comfort; the warm colors of a country café fill the room while leather chairs invite cigar smoking. French deco pieces and old photographs adorn the walls.

Featuring, among other items, leek terrine, house-made breads and kumquat marmalade, the menu at de Rada aims high and mostly hits the mark. For dinner, there are moderately priced warm and cold starters. Polenta, which comes with grilled vegetables, is topped with a fine balsam-

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight



Dining area of De Rada

ic glaze. The salads are fresh and varied but you have to enjoy dressing them yourself.

Entrées are on the more expensive side. Ranging from seven to 10 euro or more, there is no lack of variety; lamb, chicken, salmon, sea bass, dorado, beef – there are many cuts. Parma ham makes an appearance.

Since opening, De Rada has become a hot spot for locals and internationals wanting to be seen, or do some seeing themselves.

Most of the meat dishes come with the option of Béarnaise, Peppercorn, Madeira, or Rucicola and Parmesan sauces.

“We change the menu seasonally,” says Leonora, “And although the chef has a French background, you can see Italian influence as well.” Indeed, all the breads and pasta, except the spaghetti, are made fresh daily. Beginning a new rotation in the menu, more French-inspired cuisine, such as chicken stuffed with sausage and wrapped in bacon, will be reaching the dining room over the next few months.

The wine selection is unusually good for Prishtina. Chosen by a local sommelier, the list contains more than 20 reds from Italy, Spain, France and Australia. A comprehensive description of each wine, as well as pairing selection, makes choosing easy, and simply a question of how much damage you want to inflict on your wallet. No



An evening atmosphere at De Rada

matter what, you'll surely get something you like. “Supply is the issue, we want something that will be continuous and we don't want to disappoint our customers,” says Leonora. When asked why only a few (mostly white) French wines were on the menu, she explained that, “What we have is mostly Italian reds because the supply is not available from France.” A 117 euro bottle of Contrabbasso Barolo from Italy tops the list in terms of price.

“We change the menu seasonally, and although the chef has a French background, you can see Italian influence as well”.

*Leonora Mehmeti, owner*

However, it is a slight disappointment that one of the most well crafted wine selections in

the region has only one Kosovo wine.

Where does De Rada fail? While the meat dishes generally live up to French standards, the pastas are more hit-and-miss. My tenderly cooked beef medallions were supposed to come with marinated Provencal vegetables. What arrived were a few grilled peppers, sprinkled with parsley, which begged the question about how “French” this really was.

On past menus, the grilled prawns with spinach were a delicious combination and the calf livers were the best in town. So, whether you want to blow your palate or just have a warm meal, come for the wine list, the décor and the friendly service of the multi-lingual, sometimes singing, waiting staff, and leave all assumptions about French food behind. You'll definitely feel comfortable and taken care of. Whether sipping coffee on the covered patio, improving your wine vocabulary or just enjoying the atmosphere, De Rada offers a touch of Latin charm and a taste of *le vie a Prishtina*.

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight



Friendly De Rada waiters at the bar

# Kosovo History Books Scrap Nationalist Myths

The new state is making its first attempt to de-nationalize its history books, deleting hate speech and toning down nationalism.



By Vjosa Musliu  
in Prishtina

An initiative of Kosovo's Institute of History, to compile new, more objective and more down to earth history books for primary school children, has been hailed as a milestone in an otherwise tense Balkans, where countries remain obsessed with glory, myths and a sense of superiority.

While "objectivity" remains a matter of perception and the new books are far from shedding all sense of national pride, teachers in Kosovo say they are a big improvement from the books of 30 years ago.

The working group for the books was composed of experts from the History Institute, the University history faculty, high schools and primary schools.

"These books are much more objective and much better rather than history books of your time or my era," Sabri Veseli, a history teacher at the Ismajl Qemajli primary in Prishtina, told Balkan Insight.

"They're more relaxed, don't foment hatred... and they don't call for nationalist revival and war, when wars have only led to tragedy."

Veseli, a reviewer of the new books, feels little regret for the old nationalist versions of history. "When it came to history, we were told what the regime wanted us to be told."

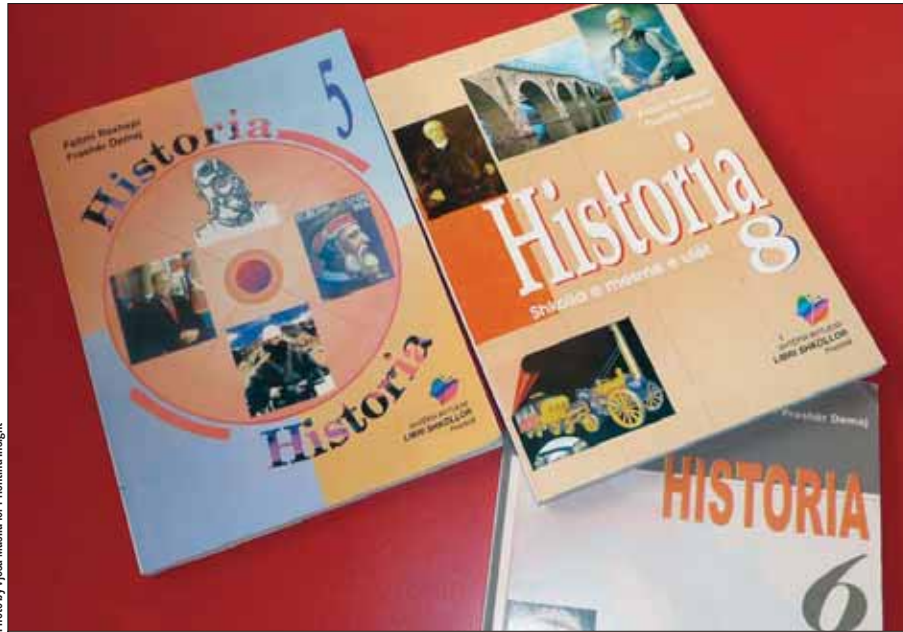
While Serbs were formerly described as "barbarians from the Carpathians Mountains who conquered Illyria between the 6th and 9th centuries," for example, the arrival of the Slavs in the Balkans is treated differently in the newer accounts.

Frasher Demaj, 35, secretary of the History Institute and main author of the new school books, has dispensed with terms such as "barbarian".

"Books for children aged 12 should not be imbued with such terms," he said. "And we don't give literary and poetic description of events."

Benedict Anderson, a writer on nationalism, recalls that nationalist writers and historical accounts are usually "vague and ambiguous and have an inferred meaning of a coming march".

This was certainly the case with the old history books and lectures. "Serbian hordes", "Greek ultra-



New history textbooks for this year's curriculum

Nationalists", and "the ambitions of the Slavs for Albanian land", were typical terms used.

And while the depiction of history can never be totally objective or neutral, always being prone to interpretation, the compilers of the new books have made a clear decision to dispense with hate speech and blatant discrimination.

They have also tried to make history more comprehensible to young minds. "We've applied the idea of telling history in the form of tales in order for it to be more acceptable to the brain of an average 11-year-old," says Demaj.

"We have been looking at the Western European and American model of simplifying history", Demaj added. "We want to be a model for the Balkans".

## No more Heroes?

Every Kosovo Albanian has the image of the "great leviathan" Skanderbeg imprinted in their minds. A popular Albanian film, in which the 15th-century warrior was played by a tall Georgian, has come to personify the Albanian who heroically delayed the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans.

A copper carving of Skanderbeg, astride his horse, is a feature of all Albanian houses. But new Albanian

historians have recently suggested that Scanderbeg was probably no taller than 167 cm and that his glamorous image was embellished for nationalist purposes.

Asked what they know best about the history taught by their professors, most 12-year-olds at Ismajl Qemajli primary school said they knew most about Skanderbeg and the Ottoman occupation.

"Scanderbeg is credited with deterring the further expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Western Europe", Lis Sinani, aged 11, explained.

While the tendency in older books was to embellish accounts of national warriors and heroes, Adem Jashari, the well-known commander of Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, is portrayed in more normal terms in the new books.

"Jashari is not portrayed as a superhuman but as one of the leading commanders of the KLA. He is a symbol of sacrifice because he sacrificed his whole family and his children were massacred at the age of two", adds Demaj.

Beside Skanderbeg, another national hero famous for his bravery is Mic Sokoli whose image, breast facing the enemy cannon, is an exemplar of what Anderson calls "banal nationalism". This term refers to national symbols that become prominent household and institutional norm, that they end up becoming unnoticed by society.

Sokoli has been removed altogether from the new history books precisely because they want to get away from these types of glorifications.

"Mic Sokoli is a typical glorification of a particular historical figure and these sorts of imbues are not necessary," Demaj points out.

The former emphasis on self-sacrifice in Albanian history, with its emphasis on courage and altruism was also used to show the weak and inglorious nature of the enemy, who hid behind cannons and artillery.

Berat Gashi, 43, graduate in History at the University of Prishtina, told Prishtina Insight

that the Sokoli myth had become a prototype for future warriors fighting for the national cause.

"Looking at it from today's perspective, Mic Sokoli represents an exaggeration of the brave warrior, and it is good that young generations are not imbued with these values," Gashi said.

## Serbs are neighbours:

The new books also offer more coverage of other nations' histories, with special attention given to Chinese, Egyptian, Persian and Greek Civilisations.

Professor Veseli told Prishtina Insight that if one did not know one's neighbour's history, one could not know one's own either. "Other people's history and culture must be learnt and studied; it's a treasure,"

he said.

The History Institute is proud to have expanded coverage of Ancient Greek civilisation "despite our tense relations with Greece", for example.

Asked whether primary schools would also learn about the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Professor Veseli said this was unlikely. "They are still young".

In popular Serbian mythology, Prince, or Knez, Lazar chose to lose the battle to the Ottoman army, preferring to win "the heavenly kingdom" over victory on earth. In Kosovo's new history books, the Christian army's rage against the Ottoman Turks in 1389 is described as "a joint force of Balkans troops led by Knez Lazar."

Demaj said the legend of the heavenly messenger visiting Prince Lazar was a myth, and there was no point in downplaying one's own myths in history books in order to replace them with others.

## A pace for traditional values:

While aiming to get rid of dihard nationalism and hate speech, the compilers of the new history books are keen to stress support for "strong and valuable" Albanian traditional values.

"The issue of religious tolerance is to be marked and stressed as a great feature of Albanians. We could give lessons to Western countries on their complexes about religious intolerance," Demaj said.

According to him, the fact that Albanians were neither expansionist nor hegemonic should also be emphasized in history, not to pose as victims but simply to show the nation's non-expansionist nature.

"Serbian history mentions Albanians only to label them as negative and destructive elements, but we don't want to imitate this sense of superiority or insult other nations," Demaj said.



Photos in the new books illustrating the poisoning of 7000 Albanian students by Serbian regime in 1990.



The Albanian hero, Mic Sokoli who showed his breast to the canon defending his friends has been removed from the new books.

# Balkan Earthquake is Felt Far Away



By Darko Duridanski

From the Basque country to the Caucasus, the implications of the former Serbian province's march to independence are being followed - and debated.

As jubilant Kosovars danced in front of the Newborn statue unveiled in the capital, Prishtina, to commemorate their long-awaited independence on February 17, 2008, many political leaders around the world watched the events with different emotions.

Their core concern was that granting independence to a former province could boost secessionist movements the world over, and not turn out to be a sui generis case, as Kosovo's European backers have insisted.

The debate over the "Kosovo precedent" was revived in August 2008, when Russian forces poured into the breakaway Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The conflict ended in Russia's recognition of the enclaves' independence, and the example of Kosovo as justification for this.

**"In an age of globalisation, small nations must become independent in order to defend their sovereignty".**

*Urko Aiertza Azurtza, a lawyer for Batasuna, from Basque nationalist party*

"We argued consistently that it would be impossible to tell the Abkhazians and Ossetians that what was good for the Kosovo Albanians was not good for them," the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, wrote on August 27, 2008, in the Financial Times.

Advocates for the self-determination of various regions and provinces echo those sentiments. Some surveys estimate that there are over 200 secessionist movements worldwide.

In the Caucasus, outside the aforementioned Georgian enclaves, an unresolved conflict simmers over the ethnic Armenian province of Nagorno Karabakh in Azerbaijan, while secessionist movements are active in the Russian republics of Chechnya and Dagestan. In China, there are the Tibetan and Uygur (Xinjiang) independence movements and in Africa, conflicts continue over the Western Sahara in Morocco, and South Sudan. Kurdish nationalism, meanwhile, involves several states - Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

However, after travelling to two very different lands in which there are strong secessionist movements, Abkhazia and the Basque Country, it seems for the time being, at least, that international fears about the impact of Kosovo's independence are largely misplaced. Separatists are certainly interested in events in Kosovo and draw courage from

them. But there is little evidence that Kosovo's independence or recognition has significantly boosted their prospects of statehood.

## If Kosovo has it, why not Abkhazia?

At the bridge over the river Ingur, the only entry point to Abkhazia from Georgia, stands a monument of a pistol with its barrel tied in a knot. Erected as a symbol of disarmament, it is a small version of the sculpture, Knotted Gun, by the Swedish artist Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd. It expresses the aspiration of all the residents of this unrecognised country for peace. But real peace still eludes this troubled land. The battered streets of the capital, Sukhumi, evoke a country that emerged from war yesterday, though the fight against Georgia ended in 1993.

With a population of around 220,000, and recently recognised by Russia, Abkhazia sees Kosovo as a possible role model, despite the fact that Russia, a staunch ally of Serbia, has bitterly opposed Kosovo's independence, warning it could have a domino effect around the world.

The Abkhazians do not compare their situation directly with Kosovo but use the "double-standards" argument to insist they are entitled to the same treatment. By this, they mean the Western claim that Kosovo's recognition is a sui generis case, which cannot be applied elsewhere.

Kosovo was also an autonomous province until the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic stripped it of its autonomous status and incorporated it into Serbia in the early 1990s.

Georgians resent comparison between their struggle to regain control over their lost provinces and Serbian tactics in Kosovo. "The independence of Kosovo has worried us, although these conflicts are different and the reasons behind them are different," says Alexander Rondeli, of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, in Tbilisi. "In Kosovo we saw the extremist measures of the Serbs towards the Albanians but in Abkhazia the Georgians have been the victims of ethnic cleansing," he adds, referring to the several hundred thousand Georgian refugees from Abkhazia in the 1990s.

Temur Iakobashvili, Georgia's Minister of Reintegration, makes the same point. "I don't see similarities between Kosovo and Abkhazia, these are different conflicts," he says. "The Kosovars were subject to ethnic cleansing, and here, this is the case with the Georgians, which is a significant factor."

Diana Chachua, 22, a Georgian refugee from Abkhazia, remembers the day Kosovo proclaimed independence with pain. "I knew it was bound to happen but was still shocked," she recalls. Georgians rarely travel to Abkhazia these days, she adds. "It is only Abkhazians that travel across the bridge."

Since Kosovo's independence, Russia has strengthened its ties with South Ossetia and Abkhazia,

abolishing border controls and granting many locals Russian passports. Their currency is the rouble. Vjacheslav Chirikba, a foreign policy adviser to the Abkhazian President, Sergey Bagapsh, says if Kosovo is entitled to statehood, so is Abkhazia. During the early years of the USSR it was a separate Soviet republic, he notes, and now it meets all the criteria for a recognised state. "Both main factors are met, political and state structure, plus economic sustainability, so where is the problem?" Chirikba asks. "Abkhazia will never be a part of Georgia," concurs Maxim Gvindzhia, Abkhazian Deputy Foreign Minister. "Independence for us, as in the case of Kosovo, is an issue of self-preservation. Independence is the only guarantee of the preservation of our nation."

Tim Judah, an expert on both the Balkans and the Caucasus, says the conflict was inevitable, regardless of Kosovo's declaration of independence.

"Even if Kosovo hadn't existed, the conflict in South Ossetia would not have been avoided," he says. "Russia is naturally very interested in using Kosovo as an argument. But Russia is not really interested in South Ossetia or Abkhazia, it is more interested in preventing Georgia from joining NATO."

## A model for the Basques?

While Abkhazians - and Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh - mull the dilemma of enjoying de facto but not de jure independence, the Basques face a very different challenge: how to peacefully convert their existing regional autonomy to full statehood inside a developed Western democracy.

Despite the terrorist attacks launched by the Basque independence movement, ETA, over the past 40 years, most Basque people now see peaceful talks as the only path to independence.

**"I don't see similarities between Kosovo and Abkhazia, these are different conflicts. The Kosovars were subject to ethnic cleansing, and here, this is the case with the Georgians, which is a significant factor."**

*Temur Iakobashvili, Georgia's Minister of Reintegration.*

They welcome Kosovo's independence. Iratxe Urizar, who works in Bilbao for an organisation that helps Basques in Spanish jails, says Basque nationalists viewed the events in Kosovo as affirmation of the principle of self-determination. "People here were happy for Kosovo," she says. "What connects us is the right to self-determination."

Historically, the Basque Country comprises seven provinces, four in Spain and three in France. Although the nationalist movement is spread over all seven, it is stronger in the three provinces in Spain, Alava, Biscay and Guipus-



Photo by FoNet

coa, which form the Basque Autonomous Country.

The autonomous Basque government proposed a referendum that would have paved the way for a referendum on independence, planned for 2010. However, the central government in Madrid strongly opposed the plan and Spain's highest court in mid-September ruled the referendum unconstitutional. The conflict between Madrid and the Basques over the referendum coincides with a similar conflict over Kosovo: the Basque government supports Kosovo's independence, while Madrid does not. According to the Basque President, Juan Jose Ibarretxe, events in Kosovo show the right of nations' to self-determination cannot now be denied. "The 21st century is the century of identity and nations; it is the century of respect for the will of the people," he said in February, following Kosovo's declaration of independence.

A survey by the Basque government claims that 78 per cent of Basques want the referendum to go ahead. They believe the process of self-determination has started, and that there is no turning back. "In an age of globalisation, small nations must become independent in order to defend their sovereignty," says Urko Aiertza Azurtza, a lawyer for Batasuna, a headline Basque nationalist party that the Spanish government has banned.

The Spanish government, on the other hand, steadfastly refuses to recognise Kosovo's independence, one of five remaining EU refusniks - alongside Romania, Slovakia, Greece and Cyprus. The government also denies most Basques support independence, saying only 30 per cent want it.

## The criteria for statehood is unclear

Back in Kosovo, whose independence had been recognised by 54 states at the time of writing, ordinary people are aware their struggle has stirred hopes among other small nations that feel occupied, repressed or enslaved. "I fully support those initiatives for independence that look to Kosovo, those nations striving for independence that are truly repressed and seek liberation," says Agon Hamza, a law graduate in Pristina.

But while ordinary people sympathise with liberation movements, Kosovo leaders refuse to let their country become a standard-bearer

for other liberation movements. "We have always stressed that Kosovo has special characteristics," Kosovo's President, Fatmir Sejdiu, has said. "It is a case sui generis and cannot be used as a precedent for other conflict zones, areas or regions."

Experts in Kosovo are more nuanced, saying it is hard to define the standards by which a nation has a right to break away and start an independent existence.

One local NGO, the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development, KIPRED, in a study released late last year, lists several criteria. These include borders established in the previous system before the dissolution of the state, the presence of an ethnic minority subjected to ethnic cleansing or serious violation of minority rights, and the existence of democratic structures recognised by the international community.

Since then, however, Macedonia has moved back from the brink and been praised for its management of minority issues. Following an internationally-brokered peace deal signed in Ohrid in 2001, fighting has ended, minority rights have improved, and the wind's been taken out of the sails of the separatist campaign.

"In the short term, there is no danger of instability spilling over from Kosovo into Macedonia," Biljana Vankovska, professor of political science and defence at the Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, says. "But any continued regional fragmentation, such as the division of Kosovo, or the separation of the Republika Srpska from Bosnia, may shift the tectonic plates. Many things will depend on the interests of the US and Russia in the region."

Professor Hewitt says in the final analysis such cases cannot be judged solely from the point of view of international law: the moral aspect of the case for independence must be included.

"If a country by its actions loses the moral right to control this or that region, which may or may not be populated by an ethnic minority, then that region or ethnic minority has the right to press its case for self-determination," he says. "Some laws are there to be broken."

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Demolished houses in Jale

## EXCLUSIVE- World Bank Demolished Albania Village

Aiding and Abetting Destruction



By Besar Likmeta and Gjergj Erebara in Tirana

A World Bank project meant to safeguard Albania's coast was used to demolish parts of a village and leave many families homeless, according to an internal report, which also notes allegations of corruption and attempts at a cover up.

The report of the International Development Association, IDA, obtained by Balkan Insight, shows that a World Bank project on coastal zones management in southern Albania aided the demolition of informal settlements in the village of Jale, in disregard to the Bank's policies of forced displacement.

The investigative panel also accused World Bank management of misrepresenting facts during the probe and hampering the investigation by withholding access to data, while it notes the unusual lack of recollection of facts and crucial events by staff. Investigators say that several WB staff members both in headquarters and on the field were "coached" to provide unusually consistent but factually incorrect or misleading information.

"The World Bank is concerned about the errors that were made by management and staff in the context of the project. In accordance with our internal processes, the Bank is reviewing actions of its staff, and, if warranted, will take appropriate action," the statement said.

### Bulldozed Lives

The village of Jale is situated on the coast of the Ionian Sea, on the road linking the port of Vlora with Saranda, and is considered by many as one of the most beautiful hamlets on Albania's Riviera.

The area was neglected by the Stalinist regime of the late Enver Hoxha, its landscape spared the mass industrialisation that blighted other parts of the country. When the regime imploded in 1991, the majority of the houses in the village were little more than shacks, and most of the residents left for Greece and Western Europe to seek a better life.

By 2006, when Albania adopted a law for the legalization of illegal construction, the houses in Jale were a fraction of the estimated 220,000 unauthorised buildings across the country.

"They [police] surrounded the village like we were in a state of war", recalls Vasilika Koka, who saw her parents' house in ruins. "All the police forces, snipers in watching positions... for three days the road was blocked and no one could bring even food."

As they proceeded over the pleas and curses of the villagers, the construction police would tell the residents that they should not worry.

The televised scenes of the demolition caused a fury. The head of the Union of Civil Liberties party, Vangjel Dule, who represents the area in parliament, slammed Prime Minister Sali Berisha, arguing that the demolition was being done for business interests close to him.

"In the [demolition] process are illegally hidden sinister interests linked to Berisha," said Dule at the time in parliament.

Berisha denied any ulterior motive, and a spokesperson said he "has only one interest, the law and only the law, and any interpretation beyond the legal context is a speculation and untrue."

The investigative panel found a direct connection between the project and the demolition of Jale, and described the project's role as "paving the way" for the demolition.

In March 2007, some two weeks before the demolition order, the project coordinator, Jamarber Mallezi, who happens to be Berisha's son-in-law, sent a letter to the head of the construction police asking the demolition of the houses without a permit in Jale. Attached to the letter were two CDs with the aerial photography financed by the project, indicating the houses to be demolished.

"The articles were conned and paid for [by someone]," said Mallezi for Balkan Insight, adding that he had denied any wrong doing on his part at the time as well, but the local press had not published his reply.

The Bank confirmed to Balkan Insight that its Board of Executive Directors will meet to discuss the report of the investigative panel as well as the management's response.

It also concluded that the World Bank's management response "was particularly unhelpful and non-informative and at times in total conflict with factual information that had been long known to management."

### Hiding the Truth

In a memo sent on November 24, 2008, with the report attached, the investigative panel expressed its concern to the Bank's Executive Board of Directors on what it calls "misrepresentation of facts" by bank management and staff.

"We are disturbed to report that during its investigation the panel received certain documentation that misrepresented critical project facts," reads the memo.

The investigative panel concludes that it encountered unusual difficulties in having access to accurate and complete information.

"It may be an exceptional case, but the fact that it happened is of great concern," the memo states.

Besar Likmeta is BIRN Albania editor. Gjergj Erebara is an editor for AlbanianEconomy.com. Balkan Insight is BIRN's online publication.

## Serbia Protests, Dinamo Cancels Kosovo Game

BALKAN INSIGHT, BELGRADE

Croatian soccer champions Dinamo Zagreb have called off their planned friendly with Kosovo's Trepca 89 on February 17, meant to mark the first anniversary of Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia.

Dinamo's decision came after the Serbian Football Association (FSS) lodged a protest to FIFA and UEFA, the world's and Europe's soccer governing bodies, calling the friendly "a slap" to the FSS.

"We have notified FIFA and UEFA about the situation, as no one asked the FSS permission to play this match, and that's not in compliance with international rules," FSS general secretary Zoran Lakovic was quoted as saying.

"It's also a slap in the eye to the Serbian Football Association from the soccer authorities of the self-declared state of Kosovo and Dinamo Zagreb," he added, according to the website of Serbian broadcaster B92.

Kosovo's clubs and its national team have so far been deemed ineligible for entry in inter-

national soccer competitions but its teams have played several friendly matches, mostly with clubs from countries which have recognized its independence.

Dinamo's officials, who had earlier called the friendly "a perfect opportunity" to build up the team's form ahead of a crucial Croatian league derby with traditional rivals Hajduk Split on Feb. 22, said they changed their mind on reflection that making the trip to Kosovo's capital would have made their fixture list "too congested."

"Regrettably, we've had to cancel our trip after because we have assessed that our league match with Hajduk Split is too significant for the friendly match in Prishtina to be played at this time, but we will be happy to rearrange the fixture for another date," the Croatian club said.

The match would have certainly infuriated Serbs, whose strained, competitive relationship with Croatia since the 1991-95 war translates into intense rivalry at sports events that occasionally erupts into crowd violence.



Dinamo Zagreb during a recent friendly

## Macedonia Opens Mother Teresa House

BALKAN INSIGHT, SKOPJE

Macedonia is formally opening a Memorial House dedicated to the late Mother Teresa, humanitarian and Nobel Peace Prize winner, to commemorate her birth in the Macedonian capital Skopje.

Mother Teresa was born as Agnes Gonxhe Bojaxhiu in 1910 in Skopje to an ethnic Albanian family. She founded the Missionaries of Charity in India, which she ministered for over 40 years. In 1979, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work and that of her charity, which operated hundreds of hospices for the poor, orphans and people with leprosy, tuberculosis and AIDS.

The Memorial House, funded by the Ministry of Culture, is part of a series of events to mark the 100th anniversary of Mother Teresa's birth. It was built a site that is only a few hundred meters from her actual birthplace, and which is where the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church stood before it was razed in the 1963 Skopje earthquake.

The service consecrating the building will be performed by the Bishop of Skopje and Apostolic Exarch in Macedonia, Monsignor Kiro Stojanov. Mother Teresa's spiritual father, Dr. Leo Maasburg, is arriving from Vienna especially for the event, state news agency MIA reported.

Although her life was dedicated to helping people irrespective of their national and religious affiliation, her heritage is hotly con-

tested by both Albania and Macedonia, with both states rushing to consolidate their claim.

Skopje has put up a statue of her in the centre of the city, while Albania has named its international airport, a hospital, a square and a state medal after her. She is also a much beloved figure in newly-independent Kosovo, where most towns have a square named after her, while a new cathedral is currently under construction at Prishtina's Mother Theresa road.



Mother Teresa Statue in Skopje

# Key Political Figures of Kosovo's First Year of Independence

## Hashim Thaci

Hashim Thaci is currently Kosovo's Prime Minister, and the first to govern Kosovo as an independent country. He was born in Drenica on April 24, 1968. After High School, Thaci went on to study philosophy and history at the University of Prishtina, exemplifying leadership capabilities through student presidency, which organized the division of the Albanian segment of the university as protest to the Milosevic regime in 1989. Thaci continued his postgraduate studies in history and international relations at the University of Zurich in 1993 and also became a high member of the Kosovo Liberation Army. His role included tasks such as financial accumulation and army training, which pushed Serbian authorities to convict him of terrorism, of course tried in absentia. After participating as the leader of the Albanian Kosovars in the Rambouillet negotiation, Thaci founded the Democratic Party of Kosovo and became Prime Minister of the provisional government installed in 1999. He went on to win elections again in 2007, with a 34 percent win at the polls.



Hashim Thaci

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

## Fatmir Sejdiu

Fatmir Sejdiu became the first president of an independent Kosovo after its declaration of independence in 2008. Sejdiu was born in Pakastica, a small village near Podujevo on October 23, 1951. He became a professor at the University of Prishtina, and an early protestor against the Milosevic regime with fellow political figure Vetton Surroi. Sejdiu joined the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, becoming a prominent figure within the party, and succeeding former President Ibrahim Rugova after his death in 2006. Sejdiu went on to participating actively in Kosovo status talks in Vienna, gaining political acclaim for his patient work from the international community. Sejdiu won elections in the third round of voting on January 9, 2008, after resigning from his post in order to begin a presidential term.



Fatmir Sejdiu

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

## Ramush Haradinaj

Former Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj and founder of the current opposition party the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, AAK, was born on July 3, 1968 in the village of Glogjan in Western Kosovo. Haradinaj graduated from high school in Gjakova, and went on to study law at the University of Prishtina. He moved to Switzerland in 1989, joining the initiation of the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, while engaged in numerous jobs from construction to night club security to secure an appropriate income. He returned to Kosovo in 1998, and became the commander of the Dukagjini (Western Kosovo) zone for the KLA. After the end of the conflict in 1999, Haradinaj became a deputy commander of the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps, later moving on to become president of the AAK party. In 2004, he successfully formed a coalition with Ibrahim Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, party, and became Prime Minister of the Assembly. However, he was indicted for war crimes only 100 days into his term, and was forced to resign and head to The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague. Haradinaj was acquitted on April 3, 2008, and returned to an independent Kosovo to a praising Albanian allegiance. He has since gained leadership of the AAK party again, and become persistent in requesting for early elections, as oppose to the intended date of 2011.



Ramush Haradinaj

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

## Pieter Feith

Pieter Feith is a Dutch Diplomat and is currently the European Union Special Representative, EUSR, and head of the International Civilian Office, ICO, in Kosovo. Feith was born on February 9, 1945 in Rotterdam, and studied political science at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland, and completed grad school at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the United States. He completed a variety of United Nations and NATO missions around the world, serving as a political advisor in NATO's mission in Bosnia. Feith became involved in Kosovo's political development in 2008, after approving the Constitution as part of an EU team in April of last year. Feith's role is to ensure the implementation of status agreements which ensured Kosovo's declaration of independence, and advise governmental decisions and procedures.



Pieter Feith

Photo by Petrit Rahmani for Prishtina Insight

## Yves De Kermabon

Yves De Kermabon was born on November 4, 1948 in France, and attended a Military Academy and college in his native country. He later joined the French Army and became a commander of various missions in places such as Africa and Bosnia. Kermabon became the Commander of the NATO force in Kosovo, KFOR, in 2005, and was made special advisor to Javier Solana, the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which paved the road to his current position of the leading the largest ever European Union mission, EULEX, in Kosovo, which is implementing the rule of law in the new country. Kermabon directly reports to Solana in Brussels, which then reports to the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.



Yves De Kermabon

Photo by Joliet

## Lamberto Zannier

Italian Diplomat Lamberto Zannier was on June 15, 1954 in the north eastern municipality of Fagagna in Italy. Zannier obtained a law degree from the University of Trieste, and later began work at the Italian Foreign Ministry. He spent 30 years working for the ministry, and contributed to an array of European councils and negotiations such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague. In 2006, Zannier became the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE, assuming responsibility of overlooking several missions throughout the Balkans. In June 2008, the United Nations Secretary General appointed Zannier as the United National Special Representative for Kosovo, and head of the administrative mission, UNMIK. Zannier has stated that UNMIK will now play a more political role in the new country, making way for the overall implementation of EULEX.



Lamberto Zannier

Photo by BIRN Kosovo

## Kosova's Son-in-Law "The Birthday Wish"



By Casey Cooper Johnson

Close your eyes. Make a wish. Now blow out the candle. On the first birthday of Kosova's independence, there is certainly an awful lot to wish for. Many people wish that there would be electricity all day long. Plenty wish they had jobs. Some wish for better education for their children or a functional healthcare system. Somebody wishes for a better government and an end to corrupt institutions. Someone else wishes for more countries to recognize Kosova. Internationals wish that the Kosovars would just hurry up and democratize and become more European, while the Kosovars wish the "internationals" would leave them alone and just send money. In general, we all wish that Kosova's first year of independence had turned out just a little bit better.

But me, I'm a pragmatist. I take the candle from the cake and save it for the next time the power cuts off. I don't believe in wishes. Nobody ever made a revolution by wishing it. The KLA and NATO didn't liberate Kosova shooting wish guns at Slobodan Milosevic. And nobody ever built a successful country by just ratifying a Wishonstitution in the Wisharliament.

What I believe in is something a bit more substantial than mere wishes. I believe in...magic tricks. Yeah, you heard me right. Magic tricks!

Have you ever seen what a good magician can do? Pull money from your ears. Guess the card you picked. Saw a lady in half! That's useful stuff, and that's what Kosova needs. We need magicians, not wishers!

That is why on Kosova's first birthday party, I am abandoning my long tradition of going out for sushi and karaoke to celebrate, and instead have decided to bring one hundred of my favorite magicians from around the world to come and perform miracles on our needy little nation. We're gonna pull electric bunny rabbits from KEK's hard hats. We're gonna turn corrupt officials into frogs. We're gonna break human rights loose from the chained underwater cage, and leap over the Mitrovica bridge on our motorcycles. We'll produce factories and farms from our bags of tricks and pull good teachers out of children's noses. And as the big birthday surprise, we are going to hypnotize Presidents Tadic and Putin and make them irrevocably recognize Kosova's independence. It's gonna be a real spectacular show, ladies and gentlemen.

And to all you members of the international community, if you are truly committed to helping Kosova develop into a healthy, democratic nation, send home your experts, officers, diplomats... and bring in the magicians! That's right, it's time for magic, and we need all the help we can get. Anyone got a direct line to David Copperfield's office? He can be our new special envoy to Kosova. Really, this can work.

For the past several years, when we have asked our elected officials and international administrators why more hasn't been done to stabilize and develop Kosova, they reply that they don't have magic wands. Well, get one fast, or move over, because here comes the People's Birthday Brigade of Nation Building Magicians and we're taking this country by storm. Puff! (That was me disappearing.)

Easy

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		7	2				8	5	
								3	
					3	9			

Medium

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7						5			
3		9		8					4
		7		5	8			3	9
	8	4		7		5	6		
6	3		9	4		8			
4				6		3		8	
			3						6
						2			

Hard

					4			9	
3	9			8					
	4	2	3	5		6			
			9						7
			8	3	1				
1					7				
		7		9	6	4	8		
				1			6	2	
6		7							

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Down

- 1: Black-and-white divers
- 2: Kind of coffee
- 3: Refusing to face reality
- 4: Nighttime visitor
- 5: 28,800 seconds before midnight
- 6: Merest
- 7: Antsy
- 8: Word of frustration
- 9: Cornmeal concoction
- 10: Colored eye part
- 11: Mr. Peanut accessory
- 12: Microbrewery offerings
- 15: Foamy pick-me-up
- 21: Droop
- 23: Publisher Henry and romance novelist Victoria
- 25: Monthly payment, for many
- 27: Like lemons
- 28: Brings up
- 29: Epic accounts
- 30: Small songbird
- 31: Extreme weariness
- 32: Own the throne
- 35: Life of Riley
- 37: Leave in, to an editor
- 39: Sales pitch
- 40: Type of admiral
- 43: Changes
- 45: Neoterics
- 47: Stop
- 49: Fifth calendar page
- 51: Smoker's choice
- 52: Reduces in intensity
- 53: Antitoxins
- 54: Kind of hammer
- 55: Wart giver of folklore
- 56: Not fooled by
- 58: Wild about
- 59: Place at an angle
- 62: Blubber

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14					15		16	
17					18					19			
20					21		22			23			
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27	28						29	30			31	32	
33					34	35				36			37
38					39					40			41
42				43						45			
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					50				51				
52	53	54								57		58	59
60						61				62		63	
64						65						66	
67							68					69	

Across

- 1: Sums up
- 5: Got out of Dodge
- 9: Typographic measure
- 13: Ammonia compound
- 14: Piano piece?
- 16: Spoken
- 17: Pottery oven
- 18: Lava, while underground
- 19: Pat response
- 20: Potatoes
- 22: Deductive reasonings
- 24: TV spy Maxwell
- 26: Bon or won follower

- 27: 'M\*A\*S\*H' procedure
- 29: Need air conditioning
- 33: Many millennia
- 34: Warm, in a sense
- 36: IRS concerns
- 38: Campaigned for office
- 39: They can really put on a show
- 41: Strike
- 42: Lady's companion
- 44: Rational
- 45: Conjuror
- 46: Floodgates
- 48: Quantity
- 50: Player's peg

- 51: Small fasteners
- 52: It'll give you a lift
- 57: Legendary Himalayan creatures
- 60: Hit hard
- 61: Kind of boom
- 63: Curling surface
- 64: Scottish hillside
- 65: Cafeteria customer
- 66: Memo
- 67: Tired adages
- 68: Blue fish in 'Finding Nemo'
- 69: Frosty's composition

Embassies and Liaison Offices in Prishtina

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Easy

2	4	9	3	7	9	1	8	5
7	3	1	5	8	4	2	9	6
9	5	8	1	6	2	7	3	4
1	8	2	4	9	7	5	6	3
5	9	3	8	2	1	4	7	9
4	9	7	9	5	3	8	2	1
8	1	4	7	3	6	9	5	2
9	7	9	2	1	5	3	4	8
3	2	5	9	4	8	9	1	7

Medium

7	4	9	2	1	8	3	9	5
9	5	2	4	9	3	7	8	6
8	1	3	7	9	5	2	6	4
2	7	8	1	4	9	5	3	6
1	6	5	3	7	2	4	8	9
6	3	4	8	5	9	7	2	1
4	2	7	9	8	1	6	5	3
3	9	6	5	2	4	8	1	7
5	8	1	9	3	7	4	6	2

Hard

6	5	3	8	2	7	1	9	4
2	9	7	3	1	4	5	8	6
1	8	4	9	6	5	7	3	2
6	3	8	7	4	2	9	5	1
5	2	9	1	3	8	4	7	6
7	4	1	5	9	6	3	2	8
8	1	9	6	5	3	4	2	7
4	7	5	2	8	1	9	6	3
3	6	2	4	7	9	8	5	1

Solution (Reserved)

A	C	I	P		D	E	L	F		S	D	D	A						
L	A	R	O		L	A	D	E	F		A	E	R	U					
E	N	I	L		A	M	G	A	M		N	L	I	K					
S	E	S	E	H	T	N	Y	S		S	D	U	P	S					
				N	O	T		T	R	A	M	S							
				R	E	T	L	E	W	S		E	G	A	I	R	T		
				S	E	X	A	T		R	A	E	N		N	O	E	A	
				T	I	H		S	R	E	G	A	T		S		N	A	R
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				S	D	A	R	B		E	E	T							
				S	I	T	E	Y		R	O	T	A	L	A	C	S	E	
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## Independence Day Celebrations



### Philharmonic Orchestra Concert

Kosovo's philharmonic orchestra will host a gala concert to mark the one year anniversary of Kosovo's February 17 declaration of Independence. The concert will be held at the Prishtina's Red Hall, at 6 pm.

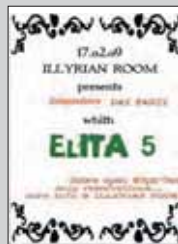
### RTK concert at Mother Teresa Square

Radio Television Kosovo, in association with the Municipality of Prishtina are organizing an outdoor concert in front of Hotel Iliria on Mother Teresa Square to celebrate our country's one year independence. Over 30 popular artists will take part in the event, such as Alma Bektashi, Leonora Jakupi, Sabri Fejzullahu, Adelina Ismajli, AdelinaThaqi, Jehona Sopi, Nrg Band, Capital T, Rona Nishliu, Nysret e Merita Muçiqi, Nikollë Nikëprelaj, Lindita Hakaj, Mhrije Braha, and Naim Abazi. The one of a kind concert will begin at 21:00 and be transmitted live on RTK.



### Rock band Elita 5 at Illyrian Room

Legendary Kosovar rock band Elita 5 will be performing their hits at Illyrian Room, located at Hotel Iliria one the evening of Independence Day. Enjoy a vibrant atmosphere and extraordinary celebratory mood at this venue. Reservations can be made directly at Illyrian Room.



prepared by Shraga A. Mula

### St. Valentine's Day Event

Odyssea Bistro Bar is happy to offer you and your partner a unique evening with a live performance of Latino Band and a glass of champagne from the house in Odyssea's magical atmosphere. Entry price is 7 euro per person from 19:00. The Band performance begins at 20:00 pm.



Reservations should be made in advance at 044 556 444.

## Kino ABC

### Fool's Gold

Benjamin Finnegan is a deep-sea treasure hunter certain he's onto the find of the century in waters near an island close to Key West owned by a murderous rap star to whom Ben is in debt. Ben's flat broke and recently divorced from Tess, his long-time research and diving partner whom he still loves. She's nearby, working as a steward aboard the yacht of Nigel Honeycutt, a multimillionaire. The rapper has hired a rival treasurer hunter. Can Ben convince Nigel to bankroll his search, convince Tess to work with him, keep the rapper and his thugs at bay, and find a Spanish treasure hidden for centuries and rich beyond imagination? Starring Matthew McConaughey and Kate Hudson. Showings at 18:00, 20:00 and 22.00.



### Kosovo Art Gallery

The Kosovo Art Gallery will usher in the first anniversary of Kosovo's independence with the opening of a collective exhibition to mark 30 years of the Gallery's operations. Three works from every exhibited artist in the past 30 years will be presented at this exposition.



Opening February 17, at 19:00

# Theatre

### National Theatre

**Friday, February 13 – 20:00**  
Play "Martin Couple" by Eugène Ionesco, directed by Bekim Lumi

**Saturday, February 14 – 20:00**  
Play "Tartuffi" by Moliere, Directed by Rahim Burhan

**Thursday, February 19 – 20:00**  
Ballet "Sleeping Beauty" by P. I. Tchaikovsky, Directed and Choreographed by Silvia Tomova

**Saturday, February 21 - 20:00**  
Performance "Man(n) Wird Mensch" by Philip and Stefan Lirsch from Austria

**Tuesday, February 24 to Saturday, February 28 – 20:00**  
Comedy "Dejziland" by Kristofer Durang. Directed by Agon Myftari

For reservations call:  
038 224 397 or 044 430 693  
**ticket price: 3 euro**

### Dodona Theatre

Directed By Sokol Plakolli

**Thursday, February 19 –**  
"The stewardesses" by Marc Cameloti, Directed by Armond Morina

**Thursday, February 26 -**  
The stewardesses" by Marc Cameloti, Directed by Armond Morina  
For times and reservations call 038 230 623

**Monday, February 16 –**  
"Ali Hoxha, Hoxh Alia" by Haqif Mulliqi, Directed By Xhemajl Luta

**Wednesday, February 18 –**  
"Zooligy Recital" by Eduar Allbe,

For reservations call:  
038 230 623 or 044 430 693  
**all plays begin at 19:30**

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