

Why Self-determination?

Self-determination is the right of all colonized peoples. The absence of preparation in the fields of politics, economics, society or education cannot be used as a pretext to delay independence. (UN SC Resolution 1514, 1960)

VETËVENDOSJE!
<http://www.vetevendosje.org>

Newsletter from the Movement for SELF-DETERMINATION!

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Explaining the Ahtisaari Packet

Today, Lëvizja VETËVENDOSJE! placed a large box representing Ahtisaari's plan for Kosova in the centre of Prishtina. On the first side, we placed a map illustrating his decentralization plan; on the second, a photograph of a church behind barbed wire, to illustrate the usurpation of our Orthodox history as exclusively 'Serb' through his plan for special protection zones; on the third, a picture of Kosova being squeezed for money to pay the €1,100,00,000 debt we will inherit from Serbia; and, fourth, a cartoon illustrating how the new ICM (EUMIK) office will control the Kosova provisional institutions like a puppeteer. The police unsuccessfully tried to stop us from displaying this box to the public.

Public meetings and roundtables on decentralization

This week, Lëvizja VETËVENDOSJE! held public meetings in Besianë, and Drenas; and two roundtables on decentralization in Lypjan and in Prizren.

Presheva Boycott

We congratulate the people of Presheva for their solidarity in boycotting the Serbian elections.

According to CESID, an election monitoring group, 12,837 people voted in the Presheva Valley. In contrast, local reports from the Albanian Coalition led by Riza Halimi, claim that 15,768 voted: 28% of the electorate in Presheva, and 18% in Bunanoc. Even these higher estimates show that the majority of the people of Presheva stayed away from the polls, demonstrating their refusal to recognize the state of Serbia which discriminates against them and offers democracy only to Serbs.

At present, CESID shows that the Coalition has not won enough votes for a deputy. According to Serbian election rules, they need to win around 15,627 votes. If the Coalition's estimate is correct, then they have won just enough to send Halimi to the Assembly, but there are reports of serious irregularities in the voting booths from which representatives

of the boycott group were denied access as monitors.

We have learnt now of two serious cases. First, in the village of Miratovc, voting unit 32, only 24 people voted, yet the list recorded 170 votes. When one villager entered as a voter to verify what had happened, he saw 12 members of his family listed as voting, despite the fact that they are all living currently in Switzerland and Austria. Second, in units 33 and 34, 148 people entered the booths to vote, yet the list declared 450 voters. These attempts to falsify the results, reveal so-called democrats playing with the dignity of the people of Presheva for personal interests.

Elections in Serbia

The CESID election states that the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) has won 29% of the vote in the Serbian elections. This is the party of former President Milosevic and is now led by Vojislav Seselj, currently on trial at The Hague for war crimes. The Democratic party (DS) of Tadic won 23% and the Popular Coalition led by Koshunica won 17%. Turnout was 62% in an electorate of 6.6 million. This means that the Radicals will keep about 81 seats in the Assembly, the Democrats increase their share to 65 seats, and the Coalition, take about 47 seats.

We were told by the EU and the Contact Group that the 'status' of Kosova had to be delayed in order not to increase the chances of the Radicals winning power in Serbia. It is clear from these results that the Radicals are as strong as ever. Just under a third of those who voted, still believe in the politics of Milosevic. Now, as the divided democrat block negotiates over who will form a coalition, no doubt, Kosova will be told it has to wait again, until a government forms.

All of this is just a smokescreen. When it comes to Kosova, there is little difference between the Radicals and the Democrats: they both believe that Kosova should not be given independence. It's just that the Radicals say they will fight to keep it, while the democrats know they can use plans such as decentralization to destabilize Kosova and maintain control. It should not be forgotten that under the so-called moderate Presidency of Boris Tadic, the war criminal Ratko Mladic has not been arrested.

No mention of 'independence'

This week, we heard a number of reports from anonymous sources that the 'i' word (independence) will not be mentioned in the Ahtisaari report. They also suggested that Ahtisaari will offer a deeper form of decentralization for Serbs in Kosova, but

on the other hand, the transfer of more competences to the Kosova authorities.

So, the price for NOT getting independence, will be deeper decentralization, which means the creation of an autonomous Serb entity inside Kosova. And, in order to give our politicians an incentive to sign the deal, they will be offered more competences that in essence are meaningless. It doesn't matter how many competences you have if, a) the executive power is held by the EU which can dismiss any politician not acting in accordance with the Ahtisaari plan, b) your exercise of these competences is conditional upon the supervision of the EU, and not the will of the people c) you cannot exercise these powers in zones controlled by the parallel structures of Serbia, and d) you have no sovereignty.

Demonstration in Geneva
Saturday 27th January at 14.00
UN HQ in Geneva, Switzerland.

Economist Article Response

In a critical response to an article on Kosova in The Economist, January 18th, Visar Ymeri wrote, "It is true that the dream of Great Albania (an Albania created through genocide and massive ethnic cleansing, the means used by Serbia and Greece for their States' 'greatness') never existed, while it is very true that the will to unify Albania has never gone away. One can say that it was somewhat diluted lately, especially during the 1990s. But it is an absolute mistake to consider it dead.

It is the negation of the Albanians basic right to self-determination that has diluted it. The Contact Group is denying the people of Kosova their right to freely choose their political status, and freely pursue their economic interests and cultural upbringing . . . Their framework for these negotiations, which denies Kosova the right to unify with any other country in the region, cannot be understood differently but as a tendency to constitute Albanians as a lesser people, not worthy of the basic democratic right already exercised by most of the people in the world. Moreover, this very prohibition intimidates Albanians, from expressing their will even in the most innocent and politically impotent manner, in an opinion poll. Knowing that all the powers that be, are against the people's political will, makes the people afraid from expressing it, let alone pursuing it. As such, not uniting with Albania is not the will of the people – it is the fear of the people."