

### 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!

Nr.8, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2006

### THIS WEEK:

- **Gjilan protests against ethnic decentralization**
- **Exhibition in Vushtrri**
- **Impact of boycott of Serbian products**
- **Opposition criticizes decentralization**
- **Competences of the municipalities**

### Gjilan protests against ethnic decentralization

On Saturday, 9th September, the people of Gjilan protested against the division of their municipality into ethnic enclaves. The decision to hold this protest came from the leaders of the municipality, and the protest was organized by a council including representatives from Lëvizja VETËVENDOSJE!, LDK, PDK, AAK, and youth groups. We supported and cooperated with this protest because the political parties were opposing the decentralization plans of their leaders in the negotiation team.

Their leaders in the negotiation team have claimed that the protest was simply driven by personal political conflicts, as if their deal-making in Vienna has no direct consequences for Gjilan. In fact, Gjilan will be surrounded in the north, west and south by Serb majority municipalities with competences over policing and the judicial system, financed directly by Belgrade and run by politicians still directly controlled by Belgrade.

This is not about building a multi-ethnic Kosova, but about dividing it into ethnic enclaves. It is not about bringing government closer to the people, but about keeping, strengthening and expanding Serbia inside Kosova.

### Exhibition in Vushtrri

Last week, our photographic exhibition visited Vushtrri for 3 days. It was held in the House of Culture in the centre of town, and over 300 people came to see the photographs which explain and depict the actions that we have undertaken over the last year and half to oppose the negotiation process.

### Is the boycott working?

It is 3 months now since the start of our campaign to boycott Serbian products. During June and July, the value of imports from Serbia to Kosova fell. Whereas in May, 16 million euros worth of products were imported, in June, the value fell to 13 million euros, and in July, to 10 million.

But in August, the value rose to an unusual high of 19 million because importers began to mobilize against the boycott. They have imported more products and at the same time, lowered the prices, in order to recapture the Kosova market. In addition, registration of imports is now being enforced more rigorously on the northern border with Serbia, because more international forces have been sent there.

This month, we will be distributing leaflets with information about substitute products for building materials and hygiene. We will also be putting up two new posters as part of the campaign: 'Boycott this barcode', and for hygiene, 'Serbia cares for the burning and brightening of your clothes and houses'.

11 activists released from Lypjan prison, 6.09.2006.

The sentence of 1 month's house arrest (which they did not recognize) for Enes Tara, Albin Kurti and Vedat Xhymshiti was suspended, 7.09.2006

### Negotiations criticized in Parliament

Opposition members subjected the negotiation team to heavy criticism last week in Parliament. They criticized the negotiation team for its undemocratic structure, its secretive manner of operating, its daily capitulations, and the catastrophic consequences of the decisions that it is making. "I and my colleagues had to read the latest from Vienna in the local media", complained MP Hydajet Hyseni. "We're being kept in the dark, and I wonder why."

Mr.Hyseni pointed out that the decentralization process is merely centralizing power in the hands of Belgrade, not bringing government closer to the people. "In the name of decentralization, suburbs of Gjilan, Kosova's own success story in multi-ethnic living, are being cut

off from this city and annexed to a new Serb-run rural municipality 20 km away, behind 7 mountains", Hyseni said. "This cannot be beneficial to any citizen, regardless of ethnicity. Who are we supposed to benefit really, Belgrade or our own citizens!?"

### Competences offered to new municipalities by Prishtina

[Express, 5.9.2006]

- Municipal decisions cannot be suspended by central government - only challenged in court.
- Municipalities can teach the Serbian state curriculum in Serbian at the primary and secondary level, and at the University of North Mitrovica. Challenges to this curriculum by the Kosova government can only be made in court, with the exception of history, which will be judged by a commission in which the majority vote will be controlled by an international
- The police in a municipality will reflect the ethnic make-up of that municipality. The chief of police must be a member of the majority ethnicity. A local council, led by the municipality head, will have responsibility for the police.
- Judicial institutions must reflect the ethnic composition of the municipality
- Municipalities can work together with, and receive financial help from Serbia.

### Report of Independent Commission for Policing, Northern Ireland, 1999

"The police service should be representative of the society that it polices." But it is not "a matter of having catholic police officers to police catholic people, or chinese officers to police the chinese community. Indeed we would regard that kind of Balkanisation of policing as unhealthy. . . The point is that communities as a whole should see themselves as having a stake in the police service as a whole. If all the communities see the police as their police, there will be a better co-operative partnership between community and police, and therefore more effective policing."