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Belgrade, Unmik start talks on key Kosovo issues

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Serbian Minister for Kosovo Goran Bogdanovic started talks with the chief of the UN Mission in Kosovo Lamberto Zannier on Wednesday on the most important issues for the Serb community in the northern part of Kosovo.

Bogdanovic said that during his meeting with Zannier he had requested the Serb members of the Kosovo police force to be placed under UNMIK's command if they decide to return to the service and to be part of the police chain of command that is in force in northern Kosovo.

"We insist that not only international representatives are judges and prosecutors in Kosovo's justice but to include Serb judges in this, mainly due to the dislike the Serb community has for EULEX," Bogdanovic said after the meeting with Zannier in Pristina.

The discussion on possible return of Serbs to the police service and functioning of courts in northern Kosovo will continue next week.

"We agreed to continue the dialogue. UNMIK representatives will meet with a delegation of judges from northern Kosovo and Serb representatives in the Kosovo police who have left the service after the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo," said Bogdanovic.

He described his meeting with Zannier as constructive, adding that he believes that Zannier had taken seriously those problems, announcing that he would not make a single move on his own but that delegations that will continue the talks will try to find a compromising solution.

"It is very important that local Serbs solve all of the problems, and the presence of the Serb representatives in the Kosovo police and justice in the north of Kosovo at today's meeting speaks in favor of that," Bogdanovic underlined.

Meanwhile, Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaci was critical of the meeting, calling it a "Belgrade spectacle".

"They cannot discuss anything that refers to Kosovo's independence and sovereignty, but only practical issues. Other issues were ended on February 17," Thaci said after a meeting with Zannier.