



# KOSOVO

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## Brussels round: Good start versus bad influence

KosovoCompromise Staff

The second round of direct talks on the future status of Kosovo on Sunday in Brussels lasted an hour longer than planned, the EU High Representative Javier Solana noted “smiling faces”, Belgrade and Pristina finally exchanged views – but this time neither did the two sides arrive to a “rapprochement” wanted by the Troika.

All sides at the end of the four-hour meeting in the EU Council headquarters remained on their positions: the Troika wants the process to intensify and to find common ground, Belgrade wants substantial talks without artificial limits, and Pristina is waiting for “its day” – December 10, after which it plans to proclaim unilateral independence.

An honest negotiation process in the Kosovo case requires three parties, but the best answer to the mood in the current process was given by the member of the Albanian delegation Veton Surroi who, at the end of the round, said: “we did not want these talks, it is Belgrade and the international community who wanted them”.

The lack of interest of the Kosovo Albanians might be frustrating for the Troika and for Belgrade, but it is realistic and expected given the almost daily promises received by the Kosovo Albanians, primarily from Washington, that the independence of Pristina would be recognized.

Belgrade’s reaction was, thus, expected as well when it said that the Brussels meeting was a “good start”, but that in order to reach success negative influences on the process had to be dismantled.

“We believe it is possible to find a compromise, but artificial deadlines will not be of help”, Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said.

“Without forcing on deadlines, we could actually achieve the effect of speeding up the finding of a solution because both sides would then want to find a solution”, he added.

The minister for Kosovo Slobodan Samardzic also said that the talks would be “much easier and relaxed if there were no deadlines”.

“Promises about what will happen after December 10, that is the announcement of a unilateral proclamation of independence, are putting a heavy burden on the talks (...) without these negative effects, in a longer period of time and with the mediation of the ‘troika, we could reach a joint result with Pristina”, Samardzic said.



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“We do not have a problem with December 10 being a deadline for the Troika report to the UN Security Council (...) we only have a problem with promises about a unilateral declaration of independence after December 10 and a subsequent recognition of such act by some states”, he added.

The Pristina officials once again underlined that the independence of Kosovo after December 10 was “only a matter of days”.

Kosovo’s Prime minister Agim Ceku said that the job of the Pristina delegation was to do everything “to make Kosovo independent very shortly after December 10”.

The province’s president Fatmir Sejdiu said Pristina had “good relations with all those who are supporting Kosovo’s independence (...) after December 10, this process will speed up”.

Javier Solana briefly joined the Sunday meeting and said afterwards he had seen “maximum engagement” by the sides to reach an agreement, as well as “smiling faces” he had not seen “in a long time”.

Solana is reporting to the EU foreign ministers’ meeting in Luxembourg on Monday, who are due to call for a negotiated solution for the status of Kosovo in the spirit of “creativity and compromise”.

Members of the Serbian delegation will, on the other side, continue explaining their proposals in Brussels.

Samardzic and the advisor to Serbia’s Prime Minister Aleksandar Simic are participating at the Brussels promotion of the “Kosovo Compromise” project in the presence of EU and NATO officials, diplomats, analysts and journalists.