



KOSOVO

COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

December 15, 2008

Belgrade expects “a great number of states” to send their opinion to ICJ on Kosovo secession

KosovoCompromise Staff

Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic expressed hope that a “great number of states” will send their opinion to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the case of the legality of Kosovo’s unilateral secession.

“I expect that a great number of states will use their sovereign right and send their opinion to the ICJ,” Jeremić said.

He added that he expects the ICJ to rule in a way that will be "in line with preserving Serbia's constitutional order", when it comes to the case examining the legality of the Kosovo Albanians' unilateral declaration of independence.

"Since this is the first time that the court is faced with the issue of secession, he continued, its ruling will set a precedent”, he underlined.

Jeremic also argued that Brussels does not link the issue of Serbia's accession in the European Union with the issue of determining a future status of Kosovo, underscoring that Serbia's diplomatic task will be to make sure the Union's policy remains the same.

“The official policy of both Brussels and Belgrade is that the process of determining a future status of Kosovo and the process of Serbia's accession in the EU are two different processes and I believe that it will be very important to have it stay that way,” Jeremic said.

He underscored that he believes that “if overlapping or conditioning takes place, Serbia will find itself in an extremely complex situation, which will result in serious problems in the integration of the Western Balkans in the EU.”

According to Jeremic, Serbia has to be successful on both paths - “preservation of constitutional order and territorial integrity and the process of integration in the EU, which will, in the end, culminate with its full membership.”

“This is the only way leading to a development of a prosperous European society in the Western Balkans region, and the key to success is to speed up the process of Serbia's European integration.

Serbia is the key, the center of Western Balkans, which is the last part of the non-integrated European geography. The historic process of consolidation of Europe's region has to be completed,” Jeremic said.



KOSOVO

COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

The foreign minister also spoke about NATO, and said that "there is no formally defined condition for membership in any international security organization, on the road toward joining the EU".

"We in Serbia have a very specific relationship with the North Atlantic Alliance, a traumatic experience.

We are the only country in Europe that has been attacked by NATO. We were bombed, it is simply something that's hard to overlook or forget," Jeremić said.

He added that he expects Belgrade will "in the nearest future" open its office at the NATO HQ in Brussels, but that when it comes to possible membership in this alliance, "the last word will be given by the citizens in a referendum".

Jeremić stressed that Serbia will in the future, beside the cooperation with the EU countries, have very close ties with Russia.

"I think that the bilateral relations with the Russian Federation will be the most significant bilateral relationship that this country will have in the next couple of decades. Our strategic goal is EU membership, and our most important bilateral relation is that with the Russian Federation. I don't think these two things cancel out each other in any way," the foreign minister said, and added that Belgrade has Moscow's support for its EU ambition.