



KOSOVO

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Kostunica: “Neutral status” is equivalent to independence for Kosovo

KosovoCompromise Staff

Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica said on Sunday that the neutral status proposal for Kosovo hinted by EU envoy in the mediating troika Wolfgang Ischinger was only another name for the province’s independence, which was why Serbia would not accept it.

“The answer to the question whether Serbia will agree to the making of a new Albanian state under any name on its territory must have been very well known to everyone for a while now. It is quite certain that the road to an agreement cannot lead through the creating of new names for the province’s independence,” Kostunica said.

He went on to say that it was time for the international mediators to propose a solution that would take Serbia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity into account, and that one could not constantly propose solutions envisaging the independence of Kosovo.

“First it was supervised independence, then limited independence, then a confederation, then variations of the model of the two Germanies, and finally neutral status. It is now time for the international mediators to show their impartialness and propose a form of essential autonomy. We will assist them in that in Brussels, by showing how essential autonomies successfully function worldwide,” the prime minister said.

Kostunica added that if the result of the talks had been determined in advance and if Kosovo would be independent “one way or another,” Serbia’s answer could also be known in advance.

”This is a tough policy of force that will bring no one any good, but which will also never make Serbia give up on 15 percent of its territory,” the prime minister said.

According to media reports, EU envoy in the troika Wolfgang Ischinger has recently suggested a neutral status proposal for Kosovo, based on the 1972 agreement between East and West Germany. Russian representative Alexander Botsan-Kharchenko said this was not the troika’s joint proposal.