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Belgrade's Kosovo offer: maximum autonomy, minimum integration into Serbia

KosovoCompromise Staff

The Belgrade negotiating team has proposed a concept of "loose or minimum integration of Kosovo into Serbia," Serbian Minister for Kosovo Slobodan Samardzic said on Monday.

He said that "the proposal of the Serbian side is new and specific, and provides a maximum level of autonomy, which is not known in a comparable framework anywhere in the world."

"We have started from a realistic situation, which is that the majority population in Kosovo is not keen to develop relations with Serbia. On the other hand, we have this external and internal imperative to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our state," the minister said.

Samardzic said that Belgrade had proposed that all jurisdiction that relates to everyday life - in the economy, welfare issues, culture and education - be transferred to Kosovo, as well as that the province exercise this jurisdiction independently.

In his words, the Serbian Parliament will not be deciding about the jurisdiction that is fully transferred to Kosovo. Asked about whether the Kosovo Albanians would have the right to vote in Serbia, Samardzic said that if they were to show interest in taking part in Serbia's political life, the concept would be completely different.

"In that case, this jurisdiction would have to be partly in Serbia's hands, and partly mixed. Then, legal grounds would exist for Kosovo to be represented in Serbia's institutions," Samardzic explained, adding that this would be "a lower form of autonomy than that offered by the Serbian side."

"Kosovo would not have the need to integrate in [Serbian] institutions, because the Serbian parliament would not interfere in the competences [of Pristina]," Samardzic said.