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September 27, 2007

Tadic calls on Bush, Solana to guarantee fair talks

KosovoCompromise Staff

Serbian President Boris Tadic held separate meetings in New York with US President George W. Bush and EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and urged them to help guarantee fair talks between Belgrade and Pristina on Kosovo's future status in the upcoming months.

Bush told Tadic at a New York reception that he expected a "constructive and fair approach by Serbia".

"I have confirmed such stance by Serbia, but I also said that I also expected from the US to have a constructive and fair approach", Tadic told journalists after the meeting.

Serbia's president will present at the UN General Assembly Belgrade's views on a compromise solution for Kosovo and the defense of Serbia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Commenting on U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's statement that Europe should join the United States in backing independence for the Serbian province, Tadic said that these words put the Albanian side in a situation where they only had to wait for December 10 to unilaterally declare independence and look forward to its recognition.

In a separate meeting, Tadic urged EU's Solana to "encourage Albanians to take negotiations seriously, rather than just sit and wait for December 10 to declare independence".

Solana said that all options considering the future status of Kosovo remain open, underlining the importance of troika's efforts to bring the stances of two bitterly opposed sides closer together.

Meanwhile, Serbia's Prime minister Vojislav Kostunica and Minister for Kosovo Slobodan Samardzic arrived in New York ahead of the Friday talks with Pristina.

At the Friday meeting, Serbia will make clear that Kosovo will not be independent, Kostunica said Wednesday.

Belgrade's message will also be that a unilateral proclamation of independence would represent "political gangland," the Prime Minister said ahead of his departure for New



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York.

"For Serbia, all the documents referring to unilateral independence are illegal and, therefore, invalid," he said.

"All the member states of the UN, and therefore the United States as well, have an explicit international obligation to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia, which is guaranteed by the UN Charter and which is explicitly confirmed by Resolution 1244," Kostunica stressed.

Kosovo president Fatmir Sejdiu, Prime minister Agim Ceku, and opposition leaders Hashim Thaci and Veton Surroi are scheduled to arrive to New York on Thursday.