



### Sweden is a firm advocate of Kosovo integration

Five Questions for Swedish Ambassador Ingrid Johansson



### Kosovo becomes a new member of EBRD

Selimi: EBRD membership, a joint victory for Kosovo



### Regional integration: Kosovo in RCC

Kosovo becomes full-fledged participant of Regional Cooperation Council

# Kosovo's New Diplomat

## From the Chains of the Past to our Bright Future

After the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia, Kosovo sought to create a strong state governed democratically by the will of its people.

### Enver Hoxhaj

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, KOSOVO

As we commemorate the anniversary of the Balkan Wars, we look back at the past hundred years with great heartache and distress to realize that our region has yet to find a sense of accord and create amiable relations. Today, it is not an invading army, but those who should be our neighbors and allies for democracy who present the greatest hindrance to peace in the Balkans. The Republic of Kosovo has a legitimate, democratic government that meets highest international standards and provides freedom and security for its people.

After the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia, Kosovo sought to create a strong state governed democratically by the will of its people. The Declaration of Independence came only after having exhausted all other avenues for a negotiated settlement with Serbia. The United States and 22 of 27 EU members and many other countries recognized Kosovo quickly and established diplomatic relations.

In the past five years, Kosovo has demonstrated its ability to uphold all international obligations and its desire to contribute to the international community. We clearly hold a European agenda and stand for all the European Union upholds such as free movement of goods, people, ideas, and friendly neighborly relations. 2012 marked a new phase in the EU-Kosovo relationship, with a rich agenda that includes a roadmap for visa liberalization, a positive out-

come on our feasibility study for a Stability and Association Agreement. Kosovo looks to continue to use this process for genuine transformation. All proposed legislation is evaluated against EU requirements before it is passed in Parliament. EU Accession will constitute a win-win outcome for the EU as well as Kosovo.

Kosovo also shows its willingness and desire to be a contributing part of the international community as a member in good standing in many international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and many other regional organizations. This is a testimony of Kosovo's statehood, sovereignty and progress toward becoming fully integrated into the global community of free nations.

Kosovo's efforts to work with the international community stem from Kosovo's great success strengthening community rights, economic development, and rule of law. Many World Reports mark this improvement, such as Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index. The World Bank's "Doing Business" report increases Kosovo's rank by 28 from 126 to 96 in only one year. Kosovo's growth rate was steady even as the world sees major economic turmoil.

Kosovo is also making great social strides within the country as



well. Our nation was built on the principle of citizenship. We have no minorities, only varied communities. Many worry about the integration of Kosovo's Serb population, but Kosovo already has an integration plan that has been successfully implemented for 100,000 Serbs who live peacefully in the south. The northern Kosovo will see the same exemplary results that demonstrate that all people of Kosovo may live in harmony. Kosovo is their homeland and they are its citizens.

Unfortunately, Kosovo's desire to live peacefully is not entirely reciprocated by Serbia. Our two countries have had nine rounds of technical dialogue where seven agreements were reached. Kosovo implemented all its agreements in good faith, but Serbia has yet to fulfill theirs. As the goal of the dialogue is to normalize relations, we expect that Serbia will play a contributing role to find a peaceful way to coexist and that Serbia will join us as we seek a mutually better future.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo has a dedicated staff that has made ad-

mirable progress working with international experts and dignitaries to further our shared goals. Kosovo continues to meet the world where it can with strong public and digital diplomacy, utilizing conferences and technology, such as Instagram, to work with the people who make democracy so successful. This praiseworthy work led to 12 new recognitions in 2012. Kosovo is recognized by over half of UN member states to date. We have 21 embassies and 15 consular missions around the world which seek to further Kosovo's ability to augment the efforts of the international community as a strong contributing member.

The most effective way to mend difficulties is to move forward from past burdens and recognize the bright future ahead. Kosovo is a responsible member of the international community but can only fully bring those benefits to its people and the world once the world recognizes the reality of Kosovo's sovereignty. The Republic of Kosovo continues to seek ways to move away from the bitterness of the past and forward to a better future where all truly find peace.

## Long Road to EU

Kosovo is 5 years old this 17th of February. It's as good a time as any to recapitulate where we are in terms of state-building, institutions-building and trust-building between communities. Our path to statehood was not the easiest one. In the former Yugoslavia, Kosovo was the odd one out, a province of a special history, with majority population not consisting of south Slavs. After the fall of Ottoman Empire, we had the misfortune of replacing one foreign rule, with another – even harsher one. Atrocities and domination were unfortunately used extensively by Serbia and later Yugoslavia to suppress Kosovars for a century. There was a period after 1974 and the extensive decentralization of former Yugoslavia, when Kosovo started building its own identity, when University was finally allowed to be taught in Albanian, when fledgling middle class started to establish itself, but this progress proved to be a mirage, quickly disappearing as soon as nationalist forces got foothold in neighbouring Serbia. Thus started our long road to freedom. Firstly via peaceful resistance which didn't take us very far, but did save Kosovo's population at time when genocide was unfolding in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Later we started our rebellion, which I am proud to have led. Young women and men from Kosovo and around diaspora gathered to resist punishing police campaigns.



**HASHIM THAÇI**  
PRIME MINISTER OF KOSOVO

CONTINUES ON PAGE 5

## Diplomatic Bits &amp; Pieces

## 5 QUICK QUESTIONS

## Sweden is a firm advocate of Kosovo's integration to the European Union

**1 What is the best thing about working and living in Kosovo?**

First and foremost, it is the interaction with all Kosovars. Wherever I go, I am greeted in the warmest, friendliest manner. It is easy to live and work in a place where one can easily contact people, both professionally and privately. I also enjoy the wonderful Kosovo outdoors! I take every opportunity to explore historic sites and trek in the mountains. During my stay, I have noted how people start to take an active interest in the environment and Kosovo's rich cultural heritage and I can see the emergence of a promising eco-tourism sector.

**2 How big is the Swedish presence in Kosovo??**

It varies but lies constantly in the range of 150-200 officials on the ground in different capacities. For Sweden, that makes Kosovo one of the top countries in terms of presence and resources. There are also a number of individuals with dual Swedish-Kosovar citizenship residing in Kosovo, which the Embassy serves in different ways. Sweden has a substantial, long-term development programme in Kosovo. There are some 70-80 Swedes serving in EULEX, another 60-70 in KFOR. Swedes are also serving in other international bodies. There are five Swedish NGOs with permanent presence in Kosovo.

**3 How do you see Swedish-Kosovan relations developing?**

Through my 4 years in Kosovo, the formal relations between our countries have deepened, through intensified contact in a growing number of areas. Sweden has entered into bilateral agreements in many sectors where relations are particularly close, such as development cooperation, police and customs cooperation and migration. In addition, Sweden is a firm advocate of Kosovo integration to the European Union. We direct our capacity-building support to Kosovo to areas of strategic importance to the EU process. And we are active within the EU to promote Kosovo's gradual integration

Swedish  
Ambassador  
Ingrid  
Johansson



based on conditionality and merit. In the coming years, we will make more efforts to intensify our relations within business, trade and investment. They are now much too modest. I believe there are a few sectors, such as the environment, energy, mining and forestry, where Swedish industry could play a role in Kosovo in the future.

**4 What is your favorite part of Kosovo?**

What first comes to mind is a stone to rest on, high up in the mountains on a sunny day with a cup of coffee in one hand, sandwich in the other and a spectacular view. I find more and more gems all around Kosovo, often where locals themselves have jointly renovated their cultural sites with care. It could be the Sharrmountains, Junik with surroundings, Gjakova, Gracanica and many other places.

**5 What is your current reading list?**

I tend to mix fiction with non-fiction and keep several titles going at the same time. I just finished the Swedish Jens Lapidus "Quick Cash" – one of the most famous books coming from Sweden currently and about to become a Hollywood movie. Currently, I am at different stages of reading into a few different titles; Carsten Jensen "We, the drowning", FolkeSchimanski "Berlin – a tale of a city" and Ma Jian "Red Dust - A Journey through China". All this is true for when I am not making yet another hopeless attempt to get thought my pile of interesting reading of reports and papers on Kosovo and the Balkans...

SHORTNEWS  
FROM THE EMBASSIES**President Jahjaga participates at the official opening of the "World Future Energy Summit"**

During the proceedings of the summit, President Jahjaga had a cordial meeting with the President of France, Mr. François Hollande. President of Kosovo also had a separate meeting with Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as well as a meeting with the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Mr. Milo Đukanovic.

In January 2013, President of the Republic of Kosovo, Mrs. Atifete Jahjaga, took part at the official opening of the worldwide energy summit, "World Future Energy Summit", which was held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, under the patronage of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, His Excellency, Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. President Jahjaga was accompanied at the opening ceremony by the Environment and Spatial Planning Minister, Mr. Dardan Gashi. The official opening ceremony was attended by leaders of various countries, such as the President of France, Mr. François Hollande, President of Argentina Ms. Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, Icelandic President Mr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, Queen of Jordan- HRH Rania Al Abdullah, Prime Minister of Montenegro Mr. Milo Đukanovic and many other senior world leaders. During the proceedings of the summit, President Jahjaga had a cordial meeting with the President of France, Mr. François Hollande.

**Foreign Minister Hoxhaj in Jeddah and Cairo**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, Enver Hoxhaj, in his first official visit to the headquarters of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on January 12th, met with Secretary General of the organization, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu. During the meeting, minister Hoxhaj informed Secretary Ihsanoglu of the great progress that Kosovo has achieved in 2012 and of the objectives for 2013, stating that this year will be an important chapter of Kosovo's integration into the international system and the pro-

cess of the full recognition of Kosovo. On January 14th, Minister Hoxhaj went for an official visit to Cairo, where we met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Mohamed Kamel Amr dhe the Secretary General of the Arab League, Nabil Al-Araby. Minister Amr, regarding the recognition of Kosovo, said that Egypt is considering it with great seriousness. "We hope that very soon we will take a decision in due time. Let me emphasize that this issue remains high on our agenda of foreign policy," said Mohamed Kamel Amr.

**Çitaku and Çollaku on a working visit in USA**

"Road to the EU will require more reforms. Reforms are not always popular, and often require no easy decisions, but we are convinced that this is the only way forward" stated minister Çitaku.

Minister of European Integration Vlora Çitaku and the prime ministers advisor Mr. Bekim Çollaku are staying on a working visit to the USA. During the day, Minister Çitaku and Mr. Çollaku were welcomed by Mr. Philip Gordon, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, and Mr. Philip Ricker, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Main topic of these meetings was Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic integration and the dialogue for normalizing relations with Serbia. "Kosovo will fulfil all obligations in context of European integration. Short-term requirements will be fulfilled in record time. But, integration process as much as is technical process is political process also. Kosovo counts in USA support in its Integration processes" said minister Çitaku.

NOS SCIMUS,  
NON SOLUM  
SCRIBERE



BRITISH COUNCIL  
Kosovo



Kosovo's  
**NewDiplomat**

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# NEWKOSOVOREADS

EVERY ISSUE OF NEW DIPLOMAT WE WILL RECOMMEND BOOKS, REPORTS OR WEBSITES WITH INTERESTING AND UPDATED CONTENT ON KOSOVO.

**Title:** Liberating Kosovo  
**Authors:** David L. Phillips  
**Publisher:** The MIT Press  
**Publication Date:** July 20, 2012  
**Source:** Amazon

Kosovo, after its incorporation into the Serbian Republic of Yugoslavia, became increasingly restive during the 1990s as Yugoslavia plunged into internal war and Kosovo's ethnic Albanian residents (Kosovars) sought autonomy. In March 1999, NATO

forces began airstrikes against targets in Kosovo and Serbia in an effort to protect Kosovars against persecution. The bombing campaign ended in June 1999, and Kosovo was placed under transitional UN administration while negotiations on its status ensued. Kosovo eventually declared independence in 2008. Despite internal political tension and economic problems, the new nation has been recognized by many other countries and most

of its inhabitants welcome its separation from Serbia.

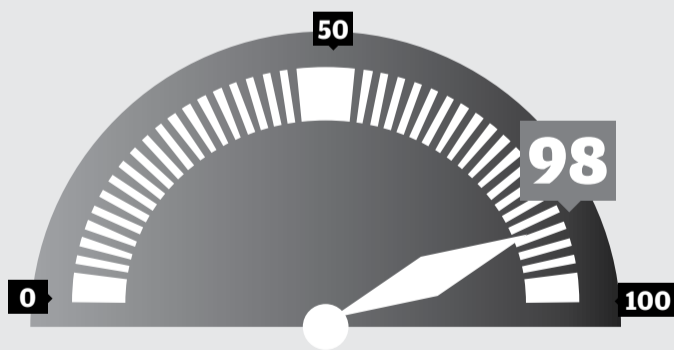
In *Liberating Kosovo*, David Phillips offers a compelling account of the negotiations and military actions that culminated in Kosovo's independence. Drawing on his own participation in the diplomatic process and interviews with leading participants, Phillips chronicles Slobodan Milosevic's rise to power, the sufferings of the Kosovars, and the events that led to the disintegration

of Yugoslavia. He analyzes how NATO, the United Nations, and the United States employed diplomacy, aerial bombing, and peacekeeping forces to set in motion the process that led to independence for Kosovo. He also offers important insights into a critical issue in contemporary international politics: how and when the United States, other nations, and NGOs should act to prevent ethnic cleansing and severe human-rights abuses.



## RECOGNMETER

KOSOVO CONTINUED ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH MANY COUNTRIES SEEKING RECOGNITION. FIVE NEW COUNTRIES HAVE RECOGNIZED THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO.



**Timor-Leste, Fiji, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica and Pakistan** have confirmed the recognition of the Republic of Kosovo. In January 2013, in Tirana, a joint agreement was signed to establish diplomatic relations between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Government of the State of Kuwait.

Every two months, Kosovo's New Diplomat will report on the rate of recognitions of Kosovo's sovereign and

independent status by UN member states, international institutions and sports and cultural organizations.

## Kosovo Digital Diplomacy considered as one of the best in the world

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo has been selected as the author of the best National Strategy for the Digital Diplomacy out of all the Balkan countries, from the prestigious Turkish journal on Public Diplomacy, "Yeni Diplomasi". The Digital Diplomacy Strategy of Kosovo is considered as one of the best after that of USA, the Great Britain and Israel by Turkish experts, evaluating the content of strategies of dozen countries and various actions that Foreign Ministries and world diplomacies have launched for digital affirmation of its own countries.

Halil Ibrahim Izgi, a Turkish expert on public and digital diplomacy, in an authorial writing in Yeni Sahat journal, announces the findings of the analysis of "Yeni Diplomasi", where it is noted that: "Kosovo has become one of the most active states on the digital diplomacy. This is strongly associated with country's attempts for more recognitions. Kosovo diplomats have had also a huge support from the dynamic digital Diaspora representing Kosovo's biggest asset. This survey denotes Kosovo as the fourth country with the best Strategy in the internet, after the super-powers such as USA, the Great Britain and Israel.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Kosovo, Petrit Selimi, responsible for initiating design and implementation of Kosovo Digital Diplomacy



says that "Kosovo this year has scored an extraordinary progress in communicating via digital means". Initially, we have gained support from experts of sisters ministries, then asked for sponsorship and we are pleased for the support extended to our actions in the digital diplomacy by the Norwegian and British government. In accordance with the Strategy, we have invested in creation of mobile phones apps, and are preparing Wikipedia trainings, while having many other portal actions and projects to be implemented even for 2013. Starting in January we will be launching an interesting portal presenting Koso-

vo in five languages. Arjeta Emra, a Director of the British Council says that "British Council is proud of cooperating with MFA of Kosovo and the digital community on establishing the content, trainings and other actions in the field of digital diplomacy with a modest assistance we have received. With more resources, we shall have more results and, in this context, we thank all the activists in the internet that helped Kosovo promote its diverse culture, sports, policy and society via digital means. This appreciation from Turkey reveals that we are on the right path as far as the affirmation of Kosovo agenda is concerned".

## About us

# The winners of #InstaKosova competition announced, from thousands of photos sent

'#InstaKosova', a competition initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo (MFA), in which thousands of Kosovars sent photos for the best photos with the theme of Kosovo, in the fifth year of its existence as a Republic, has come to an end.

The contest called InstaKosova was organized within the digital diplomacy of the MFA, supported by a joint project with the Norwegian Embassy, the British Embassy and the British Council. Over 8000 photos were posted on social networks with InstaKosova hashtag. The purpose was to encourage citizens to take photographs of many beautiful sites of Kosovo and to post them in social networks.

The national competition for best picture was opened in January 2013. The professional jury evaluated the best photos in three categories: "Places in Kosovo", "People of Kosovo" and "Events in Kosovo".

Due to the enormous interest, the fund for the awards increased, hence best 15 photos received a 200 euro award, whereas the winners of best 5 photos in each category will receive 600 euro. 100 best photos will be published in a special edition that will be sent to the embassies and diplomatic missions of the Republic of Kosovo.

To ensure the fairness of the competition, the jury has selected the best photos after verifying their authenticity through signed statements by the contestants.

Jury chairman, publisher and editor Adriatic Kelmendi said that "the national competition #InstaKosova has proven in the best way that our Kosovo is beautiful. The contest has proven that will and a little effort is needed, such as the effort to make a picture, to reveal its true beauty".

Arjeta Emra from the British Council who is also a partner of the MFA of Kosovo in the implementation of projects of public diplomacy, said that "the race attracted more interest than we expected which proves that the best way of communication was reached. Photos will remain forever on the internet. I congratulate the MFA for the valuable and the ideas developed in the context of Digital Diplomacy".

Petrit Selimi, deputy foreign minister "thanks the jury for a massive job. MFA has initiated this idea, believing that the random citizens are often more decent diplomats in terms of promoting our country.

The winners of best 5 photos are: Arben Llapashtica, Beni Cu-



fi, Besnik Hasanaj, Fisnik Dobreci, Shkëlzen Rexha. While the winners of best 15 photos are: Abdurahim Abdushi, Besian Durmishi, Bujar Gashi, Dita Sylja, Enis Abdullahu, Gent Gjilkolli, Ilir Llonçari, Linda Dibra, Nëntor Oseku, Petrit Daku, Nita Pallaska, Faredin Agaj, Rejhana Rexhaj, Trim Kabashi, Valon Majanci.

In the InstaKosova book category, the photos of the following contestants have been selected: Abdurahim Abdushi, Agata Cetta, Alban Dragoshi, Albert Hasani, Amir Selmani, Arben Llapashtica, Arber Berisha, Arber Nushi, Arian Selmani, Armend Krasniqi, Art Navakazi, Atdhe Kollçaku, Bekim Kqiku, Beni Cufi, Berat Murina, Berin Hasi, Besnik Hasanaj, Bujar Gashi, Demokrat Dervishaj, Denis Baruti, Dita Sylja, Enis Abdullahu, Erjon Halili, Eroll Bilibani, Fahredin Spahija, Fisnik Dobreci, Fisnik Halilosmani, Florent Marmullaku, Gent Gjilkolli, Hazir Reka, Ilir Llonçari, Kushtrim Krasniqi, Linda Dibra, Liridona Ponosheci, Llukman Ibrahim, Mili Grabovci, Mimoza Miftari, Naim Grabovci, Nedih Limani, Nentor Oseku, Nita Pallaska, Petrit Daku, Ramadan Gagica, Rejhana Rexhaj, Rinor Ajeti, Sharr Reznici, Sherif Ahmetaj, Shkodran Hajdini, Shkumbin Saneja, Trim Kabashi, Valon Balidemaj, Xhemal Shabani dhe Vesa Deva.

InstaKosova is the third project conducted in recent months aimed at enriching content about Kosovo on the internet. The contest was preceded by AppCamp Kosovo and Wiki Kosovo Academy competitions aimed at increasing the presence of mobile application on Kosovo as well as the largest encyclopedia, Wikipedia. The Public Diplomacy project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo with the British Council has recently been mentioned an example of cooperation between Kosovo and Great Britain by Baroness Warsi, the British Foreign Minister, at a session of the British Parliament.



### VALËZA ORUQI

■ **What do you do, where are you based?** I am Consul at the Consulate General of the Republic of Kosovo in New York, USA, since 2010.

■ **What is the most you like about the job you do?** I am honored to be one of the first diplomats to serve for my country in one of the greatest Kosovo's ally as it is United States. My job gives me the opportunity to meet diplomats

from different countries based in New York, serve Kosovo citizens that live in US and represent my country to New York Institutions and its citizens.

■ **What is the best thing about the city you live in?** New York is one of the liveliest places in the world and one of the most diverse where every day I am introduced to different cultures and traditions that enriches my world.



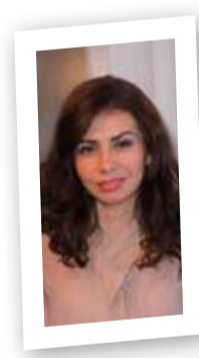
### PËLLUMB KALLABA

■ **What do you do, where are you based?** I am a Foreign Policy Adviser and the newest MFA cabinet member. My primary responsibilities are focusing on EU affairs and security policy, international crisis and speech writing.

■ **What is the most you like about the job you do?** I feel privileged to be a part of an institution and a policy which is consolidating itself, with only 5 years experience, in order to protect and promote the interests of our citizens. Indeed, along with its unpredictable nature the foreign policy is a never-ending process, therefore it is a real challenge but also a rare opportunity to experience it. While the Europe is the cornerstone of our engagement with the

world, at the same time we have to deal with many urgent issues on daily bases in a myriad of various situations, each seemingly—and often in fact—unique. Regardless of geographical location, you have to be 'updated' with all relevant developments.

■ **What is the best thing about the city you live in?** Once discovered, Prishtina exposes its charm and vivid character—especially because of young people and international presence. In my opinion, it is a city which tends to avoid its daily problems due to the former socialist heritage and lack of urban planning after 1999. At the end of the day, it is an unavoidable part of my identity with all its Goods and Bads.



### LENDITA HAXHITASIM

■ **What do you do, where are you based?** I am First Secretary at the Kosovo Embassy in Brussels. My role involves, among others, external relations with European institutions such as the European Council and the European Parliament. My primary responsibility is to represent the interests of my country in Belgium and within the European Union, while at the same time being my country's eyes and ears on developments in Brussels.

■ **What is the most you like about the job you do?** What I enjoy the most is working closely with the representatives of EU Member States in Brussels, exchanging information on daily changes to the EU Integration Process and their evolving po-

sitions. My job is to follow developments related to a set of dossiers on Kosovo's EU agenda, without losing sight of the broader developments within Kosovo and EU.

■ **What is the best thing about the city you live in?** Far from being a European "quarter", Brussels is a hub for numerous international cultural events. Brussels' Art Nouveau and architectural gems further enrich Brussels' creative spirit. The city's vibrancy comes for the many people from all over the world who come to work or visit Brussels, even for a short time in their life. Living in a "human size" city while enjoying the opportunities which only big cities can offer is more than one can wish for!



### DELFIN PLLANA

■ **What do you do, where are you based?** I am Minister-Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Hungary, being tasked with segments of political, commercial and consular affairs. I am based in Budapest since January 2010.

■ **What is the most you like about the job you do?** Beyond everything it is a big pleasure to serve citizens of the Republic of Kosovo and promote national interests in various areas as well as to contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations between the Republic of Kosovo and Hungary. Further, I like the interaction with the officials and people from the receiving country, as well as with diplomats from many countries of the world based in Budapest that generate possibilities of

experiencing multi-polar dimensions in foreign policy.

■ **What is the best thing about the city you live in?** Being one of the most attractive cities in Europe, Budapest is also called 'the Paris of the East'. Budapest is famous for its extraordinary heritage and architecture, the existence of which dates back to the Austro-Hungarian empire period and beyond. It is a charming city with beautiful Danube river and islands (Margaret, Csepel, Hajogyari etc.) that separate Pest and Buda, thermal spas and the expressive and lively downtown areas. Moreover I commend very much the hospitality of the people, giving merits also to the quality of life offered versus the value of time and resources one spends while living in Budapest.



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# PHOTOS *of the* MONTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



SOURCE: WWW.KOSOVOGUIDE.COM

## Vushtrri Castle

The Vushtrri Castle is one of the oldest monuments in the municipality of Vushtrri. Located at heightening geographical coordinates, the castle is classified as an 'old castle' according to historical evidence. This signifies it has been through a string of reconstructions from its initial build.

The castle is a blend of Illyrian and Dardanian architecture as pointed by its construction material, the design type and other clues presented by related scientific research. The construction consists of formless stones which were assembled together by slaked lime. Its entrance is on the southeastern part of the complex.

## Jazhinca's Lake

Jazhinca's Lake is located at the roots of Bistra 1 peak and the Lake's Peak. The lake has a dark green color, reminiscent of sapphire, and is surrounded by big rocks. Approximately the length of the lake reaches 120 m, while the width is somewhere around 80 m. The water seems very deep but there is no accurate data. The lake's water is very cold, which makes it inappropriate for swimming, although there are few audacious people who have the guts to try their luck.

## Conquering of Luboteni Peak

Luboteni peak is the highest peak in Sharri Mountains, at an elevation of 2498 above sea level. When arrived at the top, one may see two countries at the same time; as a result of its location at the Kosovo - Macedonian border.

The glacial Lake of Livadica offers a rare impression, also, being situated at an elevation of 2173 meters.

The arrangement includes a direct departure from Prishtina, to the spot from where the expedition starts. Along the mountainous paths, climbing on the way to the top peak in Luboteni, the group stops beside the Lake of Livadica for a rest and lunch.

This resistance led to evermore brutal attempts at ethnic cleansing. World did not repeat the mistake from Bosnia or Rwanda. Genocide was prevented. Milosevic was stopped and freedom was obtained for Kosovo.

A decade of UN rule followed during which institutions of self-governance were created and peace was cemented. UN was good to establish and keep peace, but not develop self-sufficient economy or indeed a long-term basis for development of a society. Status-quo was the main principle of operation. UN did appoint an envoy to complete the Resolution 1244 which called for UN arbitration in finding Kosovo's final solution.

After extensive rounds of negotiations and almost 10 years of administration which saw a Brazilian, French, German, Finnish, Dane take turns in leading Kosovo's UN and local state apparatus, a plan was drafted by Finnish President Ahtisaari that offered conditional independence. Kosovo was to be fully unsupervised only if it can prove that it can build a democratic system dedicated to democracy and committed to devolve power from the capital to the municipalities.

How did we fare in this process?

Despite the fact that Kosovo was born as a republic in the midst of worse financial and economic crisis that hit the region and the continent in decades, we had a consistent GDP growth of over 5% for 5 consecutive years. Our GDP per capita doubled from 2007, the last year of UNMIK. We have employed a Keynesian stimulus package and increased the salaries of public employees and started a campaign of reconstruction that included building 100 schools and a major highway to Adriatic coast and ports of Albania and Montenegro. Through prudent financial policies, we remain the least indebted country in European continent. We expect to finish this summer our International Airport that will enable over 1.4 million passengers (and growing) to fly to and from Kosovo, making our capital most frequented city per capita in Balkans. We have also some of the safest cities in Europe, with low levels of street-crime. Serbs living

in southern parts of Kosovo as well as other minorities have embraced the Ahtisaarian model of decentralization and are making full use of the newly found political leverage. My Deputy Prime Minister is a Serb as are many ministers and mayors. Constitutional Court is strong and independent and has made decisions that were disliked by political parties, but respected by all, including dismissing 2 Presidents.

Almost 100 countries recognized Kosovo as sovereign and independent including over 2/3 of EU member states, NATO members, Council of Europe, etc. We became members of World Bank, IMF, EBRD as well as regional organizations and initiatives.

Following the positive finding of International Court of Justice that confirmed legality of Kosovo Declaration of Independence and dismissed the claims put forth by Serbian government, EU started negotiations that intend to normalize relations between two former foes and new two countries insisting on their EU path of integrations. I have personally met Prime Minister of Serbia to find solutions to every-day problems of the people, caused by Serbia's less than forthcoming policies in the past. This stance is quickly changing and we agreed to recognize Kosovo diplomas, car plates, to exchange liaison officers in each other capitals. We will soon find a solution to close the illegal "parallel" structures in north.

This enormous societal, economic and political progress was noted by friends of Kosovo and world democracies. They gathered in September 2012 to announce that Kosovo was to End International Supervision. Commissioner Stefan Fule regarded this as the very first step to Kosovo's full EU membership, and words were reciprocated with start of Feasibility Study for SAA for Kosovo and the Roadmap of Visa-Free travel to EU for Kosovo citizens, two important instruments granted only to states willing to engage in reforms.

We, the leaders and people of Kosovo, made a promise 5 years ago. I am happy to report we kept it and we will continue to stay dedicated in our long road to EU membership.

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# Kosovo in 2012



# KOSOVO IN 2012





## How did London see Albanians 100 years ago

National and University Library of Kosovo has opened the exhibition "How did London see Albanians 100 years ago", where photographs, paintings, documents, maps, cartoons and other materials were presented, through which the British press has represented the events that occurred in Albania and in the Balkans.

In many cartoons that were displayed at the National and University Library in Prishtina, Albania was introduced as a bone whereas Serbia as a dog that either kept the bone in the mouth or intended to eat it. Those who aimed to remove the bone from the dog's mouth and who identified themselves with Austro-Hungary, Italy or Great Britain had to be alert because there was a bear in front of the dog (Russia).

With these and other cartoons the British press has filled

its pages a hundred years ago, at a time when Albanians were fighting for independence. Besides cartoons, in the hall of the respective library were exposed writings, photographs, maps, documents and paintings of Albania and Albanians published in the British press. The exhibition "How did London see Albanians 100 years ago", on the occasion of the 100th anniversary or independence of Albania and the 5th anniversary of the declaration of independence of Kosovo, was organized by the Centre for Albanian Studies in London and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, said that during his studies in Vienna and Prishtina he has the chance to see a part of these materials published in various books, but

never had the opportunity to see them in the form that they were offered in this event. "This exhibition offers views, images and content from the 17th century, 18th, 19th and especially 20th century, describing the fate and status of Albanians in the Balkans, but above all, having in focus the establishment of the Albanian state, shaping of the Albanian state, the Balkan wars and it is clear that the opening of this exhibition from me as foreign minister has a political message", said Hoxhaj. He added that "Great Britain, along with Austria-Hungary were the two crucial states that have enabled the creation of the Albanian state in the early 20th century, and I say this with great historic competence".

Great Britain was represented in the event by Myrna MacGregor, First Secretary of the Embassy of Great Britain, whereas

the Republic of Albania was represented by Ambassador Islam Lauka.

The researcher Bejtullah Destani said that in recent years he engaged himself to bring some images which are of historical nature and educational nature, including various cartography and cartoon, which reflect the history of Albania. He singled out three important documents. "I would emphasize three documents which are very interesting, the word of honor document, signed by many tribes of northern Albania, organized by General Philips; 16th century document which indicates that King Herny VII wore Albanian costume, and the Corfu Committee document of 1883, which is quite unknown in Albanian historiography, organized by Francesco Crispi, an abresh from the other side of the Adriatic", said Destani.

## Kosovo congratulates its long time friend, Congressman Eliot Engel

Congressman Eliot Engel, widely known for his significant contribution to the birth of Kosovo's statehood and for the continuous support in its democratic processes and international recognition, was elected Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for the 113th Congress. Congressman Engel represents parts of the Bronx and Westchester Counties, state of New York.

A ranking member is a senior member of the minority party (Democrats) of a congressional committee. The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives, also known as the House Foreign Affairs Committee, is a standing committee of the United States House of Representatives that has jurisdiction over bills and investigations related to the foreign affairs of the United States.

Upon his appointment, Congressman Engel issued a statement saying, "I feel honored and privileged to receive the backing of my colleagues, and I am excited to embark on this new challenge. I look forward to working with members of the committee - from both sides of the aisle - as we address the many international issues facing our country today". He also added that regardless of his work in the past, there is much more to be done and he looks forward to the opportunity to move ahead.

Congressman Engel has been a dedicated advocate of Kosovo since the mid-1990s. In 1996, the Washington Post wrote, "The Kosovo cause has been kept alive in Washington by a small group of congressmen led by Rep. Eliot L. Engel". While in Kosovo, as reported years ago by the New York Times, Congressman Engel is received as a celebrity, and explaining his strong relationship with the people in Kosovo he has said that "I'd been on TV so many times that people on the street in Kosovo recognized me, people know me. They know my face." Today, in appreciation of his work and support, city of Peja in Kosovo has a main boulevard named for Congressman Eliot Engel.

## Kosovo becomes full-fledged participant of Regional Cooperation Council

A meeting of the Board of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was held today in Sarajevo. RCC, the main umbrella organization of regional cooperation in South-eastern Europe, numbering 46 members, welcomed Kosovo, by a unanimous decision, as a new participant with full powers in this body, which is considered as the main instrument of the EU pre-accession and regional cooperation. Kosovo was represented by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Kosovo, Petrit Selimi.

As it was announced yesterday by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, Enver Hoxhaj, today's decision is historic because

it opens doors to membership of Kosovo into several dozens of initiatives and funds, while the participation of Kosovo is equal and without discrimination vis-à-vis all participating countries.

Kosovo's participation was previously limited by the UN-MIK, while even after the agreement on Regional Representation Agreement last year between Kosovo and Serbia, there were attempts of resistance to Kosovo's full participation in the RCC by claims of technical obstacles.

With today's decision of the Board, which changed the statute of the organization and its founding declaration, to withdraw UN-

MIK's reference and Kosovo to enter as a participant in this process, a completely new situation was created, where Kosovo now will have the vote and will be an independent participant. Today's decision was welcomed by countries like the United States, Turkey, Albania, Sweden, representatives of the EU, and so forth.

Deputy Minister Petrit Selimi thanked RCC's new director, Goran Svilanovic, and all the countries which unanimously supported today's decision stating that Kosovo's regional cooperation and inter-neighbourly relations are a priority for the people and government of Kosovo on the

path towards European integration. Participation in RCC opens up new opportunities of membership and cooperation in various fields. Deputy Minister during his official visit to Sarajevo met with Stefano Sannino, the Director-General for Enlargement at the European Commission, Goran Svilanovic, director of the RCC and diplomats from Albania, Turkey, etc.

RCC was founded after the Thessaloniki Summit, and, along with the IPA Fund of the EU, it is considered as a means of pre-accession and the umbrella organization of many regional initiatives.

## International affairs

# Many challenges for Kosovo—but not religion

Albanians are of three religions and many Catholics were in the forefront of battles for Kosovo's independence from fellow Christians from Serbia. Except that Christianity had nothing to do with it.

Anders Breivik, the infamous Norwegian mass murderer, claimed in his manifesto to be working for the benefit of Europe against the so-called "Islamic danger". He mentioned Kosovo in his Manifesto many times. He was not the only one, though he is the most extreme and dangerous one ever to have made a propagandistic claim that Kosovo's Islamic heritage is of danger for rest of Europe. Rick Santorum, who almost became a Republican candidate at US elections, earlier wrote a letter to the former Orthodox Bishop Artemije stating that he always "warned about the dangers of radical Islamic violence in Kosovo. Jihad terror in Kosovo is a mortal danger not only to the Christian Serb community there, but to the rest of Europe and to America". These are rather strong words coming from someone who almost came to the mainstream of US politics. Even Bishop Artemije himself became so radical and extremist that his own Orthodox Church of Serbia decided to let him go and subsequently excommunicated him from the Church, declaring him a heretic.

Some of these statements do come from the fringes of political and faith discourse. From evangelists in US who are not as well-versed on global events, to the mainstream politicians in Serbia, to the pockets of religiously-inspired journalists in Europe, there has been a consistent stream of news and items for many years that try to paint the Kosovo picture and conflict in religious terms.



**PETRIT SELIMI**

Deputy Foreign Minister,  
Kosovo

Mind you, Serbian official propaganda does this deliberately. Even some of the more progressive politicians in Serbia are fond of falsely comparing Kosovo with Jerusalem. Former President Tadic once stated that "Serbia is the last barrier to Islam in Europe" – a statement that is blatantly false and depicts in a rather disingenuous terms the situation in Balkans.

Truth is that Kosovo conflict is not religious and has never been so. Prishtina is a capital with a majority Muslim population, but as you drive from Prishtina International Airport to the city, you must pass through Bill Clinton Avenue, cross Bob Dole street, arrive at Mother Theresa Boulevard, only to see the great new Catholic cathedral built with money fundraised by American-Jewish Senator from New York Chuck Schumer. Albanians are of three religions and many Catholics were in the forefront of battles for Kosovo's independence from fellow Christians from Serbia. Except

that Christianity had nothing to do with it.

Kosovo is very rich and diverse area as it was in epicentre of many moving armies and Empires. Illyrians and Romans, Dardans and Celts, Byzantines and Serbs, Albanians of first ever Balkan Sufi orders, medieval Hungarians and Croats, Romas and Spanish Jews, Vlachs and Turks, many diverse people came to Kosovo settled of waged wars in the plains of this beautiful and rich Balkan corner. In the modern times, most of population did accept Islam as faith, as population censuses show during the late Ottoman period. My own grandma was a Muslim, a daughter of Grand Imam of the Grand Mosque of Prishtina, but she also painted eggs every Easter. She used to say it was an "old family habit". The truth is that it was a ritual stemming from days when her forefathers were Catholic.

When Serbian dictator Milosevic occupied Kosovo and stripped the province from its' extensive autonomy, his initial impulses were based on communism, but he soon shifted discourse to nationalism and religious fanaticism as he found allies in Serbian landscape to wage wars against Croats, Bosniaks and Kosovars. Religion became a tool in gathering support and explaining wars. Over 300 Kosovo mosques were burned and destroyed by the Serbian forces during 1998-1999 war, some of them being the oldest in Balkans. Islamic Library in Prishtina was razed

to the ground and oldest Qurans and manuscripts vanished forever. Some subsequent and unfortunate revenge attacks by Albanians also were focused on the churches, but only because Churches were seen as representatives of the Serbian political system rather than due to religious hatred. Church was never hated among Kosovars (how could it be, when Mother Theresa's own father was born in the beautiful Prizren). Nor was mosque ever the place of the political mainstream. Our societies are very secular. We produce wine for millennia (primitive sort of grapes, so beloved in Kosovo, origins from the Roman times) and today the modern urban bars produce best mojitos in Balkans.

Hence it's important that the Kosovars don't fall into trap of the recent spread of political interpretation of religion and the attempts for faith to be the basis of political considerations. The state is strictly separated from the faith; one belongs to the public, the other one to the personal domain. I am happy to see that the tolerance that was cherished for centuries is not threatened in Kosovo so much by the war and I do hope that projects such as [www.interfaithkosovo.org](http://www.interfaithkosovo.org) can help highlight some of the enormous wealth we have inherited from past generations, from UNESCO-protected Serbian Orthodox monasteries, to the beautiful and rare urban mosques in Prishtina, Prizren, Gjakova, to the other vernacular and religious buildings that dot Kosovo's beautiful landscape.



## MFA launches Interfaith Kosovo portal

The portal Interfaith Kosovo is established as a follow up of the Milvian Bridge Conference organized by the American University of Kosovo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo with participation of many ecumenical organizations from around the world. In this multi-language portal you will be able to read content related to tolerance and dialogue between the religions of Kosovo and the region. We hope that this is a small contribution to promoting peace in our societies.

The Milvian Conference will continue in 2013 with another session of global gathering of inter-faith leaders, the continuous work on this portal and workshops on inter-faith diplomacy.

The team behind the portal consists of a group of students and researchers led by editors: Geneva Garland and Astrit Zatriqi. The site is sponsored by British Council Kosovo, Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norwegian Embassy Prishtina, British Embassy Prishtina.

## Foreign Ministry's competition enriches Wikipedia with information on Kosovo

Wiki Academy Kosovo 2013 has ended, a youth training project for the use of the world's largest encyclopedia, Wikipedia, which was aimed at increasing the information about Kosovo in this valuable information resource.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, in cooperation with the IPKO Foundation, the Free Libre Open Source Software Kosova (FLOSSK) and the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kosovo have completed the national competition and the Wiki Academy Kosovo 2013 training cycle.

This contest was organized in the framework of the Strategy for Digital Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has enabled the participation of over 200 contestants who have been awarded with a total fund of 10,000 euro prize.

Fifty-seven (57) new articles on Kosovo and its features were submitted. The three main winners include article on the Kosovo Information Technology by Dardan Ahmeti, the Classical Music in Kosovo by Liburn Jupolli, Edona Vatoci and Mic Sokoli, while the winner is the

new article on Kosovo archaeology by Atdhe Prelvukaj. In addition, best photos on Kosovo on Wikipedia were selected, where 23 winners were announced: Bujar Gashi, Arben Llapashtica and Arben Islami.

Petrit Selimi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and the initiator of the project, said that one of the main problems facing Kosovo diplomacy is the lack of information from Kosovo and not only political, but also information on the culture, arts, economy and everyday life of Kosovars to break prejudices but also to pro-

mote Kosovo positively with accurate encyclopedic information.

Norwegian Ambassador Jan Braathu said that this is among the most welcomed projects that the embassy has co-financed, encouraging the participants to stay in Wikipedia for a long time to counter propagandists who do not wish well for Kosovo.

Theresa Crawford from IPKO Foundation said that Wiki Academy Kosovo is a project that is organized in a series of innovative projects such as ApCamp Kosovo and InstaKosova designed to meet the identified

gaps in online portals for Kosovo. IPKO Foundation will continue to support such projects that encourage the development of online content and for Kosovo in general.

Wiki Academy project aims to become an annual commitment to increase as much as possible information from Kosovo, while the Digital Diplomacy Strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, drafted in cooperation with the British Foreign Office (FCO), was recently selected as the 4th best by the magazine "Yeni Diplomasi".

## Xavier Bout de Marnhac: Religious Sites in Kosovo Must be Protected by the Population

Xavier Bout de Marnhac spent four years in Kosovo, he served as Deputy Commander and Commander in KFOR, and in 2010 became Head of the European Mission for the Rule of Law (EULEX). Prior to his departure from Kosovo in January 2013, we asked him about his favorite religious places and his insights on religious tolerance in Kosovo.

«Kosovo is rich in religious monuments testifying to its multicultural past. However, one of my favourite places is Monastery Visoki Decani: The setting of this extraordinary heritage site in the valley of the Bistrica river surrounded by the Prokletije mountains is astonishing. The frescoes adorning its interior dating from the 14th century are of inestimable artistic, historical and cultural value.»

The former head of EULEX used to take walks in nature and often spent his Sundays away from Pristina. He would go to Janjevo admire the church Saint Nicolas, or to Novo Brdo walk near the ruins of the medieval city, where he would always stop to admire the small mosque located underneath.

«Several times, I attended the Letnica pilgrimage near Vitina, it takes place every year on 15th August, the date of assumption of the Virgin Mary. This is a major gathering for the Catholic Albanians and the Catholics in the region, and during these couple of days the quiet village of Letnica becomes a vibrant

community with pilgrims pouring into it. They come for the religious journey, but also they want to see the Black Madonna, the place where Mother Teresa famously had a vision which led her to the religious life.»

De Marnhac is a retired army general from the French army who, during his military career, was deployed in the Balkans, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. His assignments have allowed him to live and work in many post conflict countries. According to him, the specificity of interfaith relations in Kosovo is that they are influenced by an ethnic dimension:

«The Serbian Orthodox Church and is almost exclusively linked to the Serbian community, hence it is necessary to build confidence in order to have a successful interfaith dialogue.»

Xavier Bout de Marnhac notes that religious fundamentalism, which grows throughout the world, threatens the development of multicultural societies «In recent years, there are trends in Kosovo which are not part of its tradition. This radicalization may jeopardize the dialogue and Kosovo has to resist to it and preserve its pluralism. Multicultural society can be developed through reliance on the determination of communities to live together and on their desire to have a life equal to that of the other, in all areas, whether it is freedom of belief or economic opportunities.»

According to Marnhac, in-



terfaith dialogue is being developed also through individual initiatives:

«I noticed the willingness of some Serbian religious leaders to open to the local communities. In the Orthodox monastery of Sokolica, mother Makarija receives without distinction all communities, Serbs, Albanians and others, and welcomes children of Albanian villages during traditional Orthodox holidays. Similarly, the monks of the monastery in Decani are engaged in Albanian language courses in order to enable interaction and dialogue with local population.

These initiatives are a means of easing tension and give me hope that the relations between different communities are improving.»

As for the Kosovo legal frame, the Constitution stipulates that Kosovo is a secular state and is therefore neutral in regard to religion. It guarantees the freedom of belief to all, while providing special protections to minorities; the state is also required to protect all the sites and monuments of cultural and religious significance:

«The protection of religious sites, which was initially entrusted

to international forces, must naturally be transferred in its entirety to the local police. Regardless of the physical safety or the constitutional or legal protection, these sites should in the future benefit from the protection of the population. The desire to live together and respect the common heritage remains the best defense to extremism on all sides. This is a strategic issue for Kosovo, which must continue and intensify its efforts towards a pluralist society free of ethnic tensions. Interreligious dialogue is crucial to achieving this goal.»

## Facing the truth aids the process of reconciliation

Youth from the region meet in Belgrade to break prejudices about each other

Young people from the Republic of Kosovo, including myself, participated in the Youth Reconciliation Ambassadors Program, organized by the Youth Education Committee, which aims to provide the young people from the Republic of Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Serbia with an opportunity to discuss and compare the experiences of their societies with the processes of reconciliation and transition in the region by using the European integration as a tool. The program, funded by the British

Astrit Zatriqi

Embassy in Belgrade, included lectures by speakers from different spheres of society as well as visits to various institutions. Accordingly, I found the program very beneficial.

There were lectures by political scientists, historians, human rights experts, to politicians. Among topics discussed were human rights,

war crimes, multi-perspective approach to the teaching of history, conflict prevention. The participants also visited the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Officer of the War Crimes Prosecutor, the Humanitarian Law Center, the Anti-Corruption Agency, and so forth. In most cases, sufficient space was provided for the inclusion of the participants in the lectures through questions, comments and debate in general.

I was accompanied by the following compatriots: Allem Isanoviq, Endrit Kadriu, Hadis Karatashi, Rejhan Kurbashe-

viq, Sanella Sadikoviq and Violeta Hamza.

Presentations by participants from Kosovo, in a private capacity, were of a particular importance given that the public in Serbia, as it is well known, did not have the adequate opportunities to objective, impartial and well-intentioned information on the developments in Kosovo.

Although the normalization of relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia, as a complex process, should be initially preceded by an apology to the

people of Kosovo from the Serbian state, and finally by the mutual recognition between the two states, such programs provide young people in both countries the opportunity to exchange knowledge about their countries and to shatter prejudices.

All participants from the Republic of Kosovo, but also young people from other regional countries cited the massacres and the large number of missing persons in Kosovo, but also emphasizing that Serbs are the most privileged minority in Europe.

## International affairs

## Finding New Ways to Connect in Kosovo

In June, Kosovo will make its pavilion debut at the Venice Biennale.

Petrit Halilaj, a 26-year-old artist whose artistic talent of drawing simultaneously with both hands was first spotted at a refugee camp in Albania, will be representing Kosovo in a solo exhibition. He creates large-scale installations that combine piles of earth and rubble, live chickens and his intricate drawings.

It's a major coup for both Mr. Halilaj and the Kosovo contemporary art scene, but it doesn't come without controversy. Everything to do with Kosovo boils down to politics, and the contemporary art scene is no exception.

Countries like Russia, China and Spain do not recognize Kosovo, which declared independence from Serbia five years ago. Kosovo's participation as a country pavilion at one of the world's premier art events is certain to ruffle some feathers.

Representing Kosovo "is a beautiful challenge, which has lots of layers," said Mr. Halilaj, who splits his time among Berlin, Pristina and Mantova, Italy. Despite the tricky political aspects of his participation, however, many involved in the art scene here see Venice as an important step.

"When you think of Venice you think of it as a dream," said Erzen Shkololli, an artist who is also the director of the National Gallery of Kosovo in Pristina. "So it's amazing that we have the chance, for the first time, to really be a part of this event."

The problems that artists in Kosovo face go beyond international politics, however; first and foremost, the schism between Kosovar Serbs and Kosovar Albanians remains a formidable barrier.

Since the war ended in 1999 there have been almost no collaborative projects between Kosovar Serb and Kosovar Albanian artists.

After the war, most Kosovar Serbs fled the city and Kosovar Albanians began running the art institutions — including the art academy at the University of Pristina and the National Gallery — that they had been kicked out of during the regime of the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic. That meant not only starting over with those institutions but also trying to create a new arts infrastructure.

Only this year, the art academy introduced a conceptual art module, yet it offers no courses in art history or curatorial studies. "The scene functions without any properly trained art his-



Petrit Halilaj (2010), Installation view, 6 Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art

torians or curators," said Dren Maliqi, an artist who now works in arts management.

One of the positive things happening in the artistic community of Kosovo is the re-emergence of the National Gallery of Kosovo, formerly known as the Kosova Art Gallery, which was established as the main state gallery in 1979.

The shows it produced in the past decade mostly focused on Kosovar Albanian artists. Mr. Shkololli, the gallery's director — whose work will be featured in a small solo show at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, Netherlands, beginning April 6 — was appointed by the culture minister to take over the gallery in late 2011.

During his short tenure, he has set about modernizing the gallery, inviting international curators to organize shows, and holding exhibitions that highlight local and international contemporary artists.

The gallery has also benefited from the fact that Kosovo went against the current trend in Europe and increased its funding for cultural institutions last year. As a result, the gallery's budget increased by 20 percent for 2013. There are also plans for a Museum of Contemporary Art; the money is earmarked but the ministry is still in negotiations with the city government for a space.

But the Pristina art scene still faces the fact that there are very few art collectors and no auction houses, meaning the market for art is limited. Travel is also an issue for artists: People in Kosovo need visas to travel almost anywhere, making it challenging for artists to take part in international shows.

"I was taking part in a show in Russia but I could not go," said the artist Alban Muja. "But it was not even about getting a visa, they didn't recognize my passport." Surviving as an artist in Pristina is a difficult proposition, with many

having to take jobs in art management or teaching to pay the bills.

"It's Darwinian because it throws out the people who do not want to do it for real," said Brilant Pireva, 19, an award-winning artist who spent a large chunk of his childhood as a refugee in New Zealand. "You live poorly and you cannot afford anything, so the only reason you are doing it is because you either love it or you need to. I wish I was born loving economics or computer programming but art is my thing."

Despite these issues and the lack of exhibition spaces, artists have "a lot of energy and enthusiasm," said Shkelzen Maliqi, a philosopher who sits on the board of the Kosova Art Gallery. One successful example of this was, "Pristine — Mon Amour," an evening of performance art held last September in the burned out Boro Ramiz exhibition hall in the center of town. More than 2,500 people watched 33 performances — some by artists and others by members of the public.

"We wanted to do something different, beyond anything that was done before," said Astrit Ismaili, one of the young artists who organized the event and the 2011 winner of the Kosova Art Gallery's Artist of Tomorrow Award. "If you want to do something here, you have to invent your own path. So maybe that is what makes this city interesting," he said, adding that "it's always shifting."

One of those shifts has been some tentative steps by Kosovar Serb and Kosovar Albanian artists to learn more about each other. While in recent years some Kosovar Albanian artists have worked with their counterparts who live in Serbia, it's been more rare to find collaborations involving Kosovar Serbs, who complain that they have not been incorporated into the Pristina contemporary art scene.

But there are hints that things are starting to change. In December, a three-day contemporary art training project brought together artists from Gracanica — a Serb-dominated suburb of the capital — and Pristina.

The project was organized by the Alternative Culture Center Gracanica and the noncommercial Stacion Center of Contemporary Art. Lately, when the center in Gracanica opens a new exhibition or program — it holds 30 to 40 a year — more and more Kosovar Albanians are coming to have a look.

"We had a vision for this place to not just be for the Serb artistic community but as a drop-in place for all different people," said Nenad Maksimovic, who co-founded the culture center in 2011. "It is not just an artistic space but it has an important societal component too. So we are pushing people to see what we are doing, that we are an effective part of society that contributes to the entire art and cultural scene."

The center has also recently wrapped filming the "Kosovo Reality Show" — a four part series focused on artistic projects, including street art, and conversations between Albanian and Serb artists in and around Pristina, Prizren and Gracanica. There were some problems when it came to filming the show. Some of the artists did not have cellphones, making it hard to track them down, and a few of the Albanian and Roma participants dropped out when photos of them being involved in the project appeared on Facebook.

But, over all, the series reflects a positive step. "I do not know a lot about the scene there," the artist Astrit Ismaili said of Gracanica. "But I will go there and visit. I think they have to get involved in the art scene here. It is such a small scene so it should be presented together."

**The New York Times**

## NY Senate, resolution on Kosovo's Independence

Senator Jeff Klein (D-Westchester/Bronx) and Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj (D-80) joined together yesterday in passing a Joint resolution in both the Senate and the Assembly commemorating the Fifth Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of Kosovo on February 17, 2013. Following American and NATO-led military intervention in Kosovo to end ethnic cleansing under Slobodan Milosevic, Kosovo is now functioning under a democratic Constitution and has established diplomatic relations with the United States. Many Kosovar Nationals and Kosovar-Americans and Albanian-Americans from Kosova have made their home in New York and the resolution passed yesterday recognizes the cultural, political and historical independence of Kosova and the importance of the ongoing contributions to New York from members of this community.

Senator Klein called the resolution important and meaningful. "The Senate and the Assembly recognized the importance of February 17th to Kosovar Nationals, Kosovar-Americans and Albanian-Americans across New York. I am proud to be part of this effort to recognize Kosova's independence on behalf of members of the Kosova and Albanian communities in my district." [nysenate.gov](http://nysenate.gov)

## Majlinda Kelmendi takes gold in Dusseldorf

Majlinda Kelmendi's medal showcase is enriched as the Kosovar judoka won the gold medal in Dusseldorf Grand Prix in Germany. The world media described her performance as excellent, insisting that she is a high class judoka with a bright future. The official website of the International Judo Federation (IJF) has devoted a text to the winners of the Grand Prix, praising Kelmendi, who excelled in the category up to 52 kilograms. "The final of the day in the women's -52kg opposed Andreea Chitu from Roumania and Majlinda Kelmendi from Kosovo. After more than two minutes of fight, Kelmendi found the first big opportunity to put her opponent out of balance and she scored wazari with an almost perfect o-uchigari. With such an advantage on the scoreboard, Kelmendi could control the rest of the final and win one more major IJF event to be added in her already long prize list," was stated in the website.

## Personal integrity proves vital in diplomacy and communication

The end of this year is usually a time of combined emotions; everyone is in a rush to perform as much work as it is left in order to leave room for enjoying the holidays and at the same time to recap as it happens whenever a process ends.

Writing for the Macedonian Diplomatic Bulletin means to share these thoughts and feelings with your colleagues. Indeed, my diary is dedicated to them, or it is better to say, some of them, who will not be anymore with us here in Skopje.

December 12, 2012, with all its symbolism carefully chosen by the dean of our diplomatic corps, Albanian Ambassador Arben Çejku, was the day of bidding farewell to two honored colleagues: Alexandra Papadopoulou and Tomislav Djurin.

Both of our colleagues are distinguished by outstanding careers. Mrs. Papadopoulou has served at many important positions, from the United Nations to the Balkans, and is now preparing to take up a position of interest to Athens at the European department important for the European integration policy, especially for the countries of our region that aspire to be part of the great family of European values. I have no doubt that our former colleague, Mrs. Papadopoulou, with all her knowledge about this region will be a great asset when Greece takes over the EU Presidency in early 2014.

Mrs. Papadopoulou is the first diplomat who opened a Greek office in Prishtina, for which I once again publicly express my gratitude. Mr. Djurin is a very valuable colleague liked by the entire diplomatic corps. His sense of professionalism, collegiality and sincerity made him loved and accepted by all. His departure to Belgrade

will surely contribute to the very momentum of understanding and cooperation in the region.

I must say that neither of these countries (Greece and Serbia) has yet recognized my country Kosovo, the younger country in Europe, which has already been recognized by almost 100 countries, 22 of which are in the European Union, of which Greece has been a long-time member and which Serbia and Kosovo seek to join.



**YLBER  
HYSA**

Ambassador  
of the Republic  
of Kosovo to  
the Republic of  
Macedonia

Both our colleagues have shown how, despite the political difficulties and diplomatic relations, with the personal role and integrity, the most necessary and fundamental in diplomacy – personal communication – can be achieved!

This human value is very important in diplomacy and its mission which entails understanding and peace.

Moreover, we are about to begin a highly expected dialogue that must produce a solution with which we must live by addressing in this way not only bilateral issues but the awareness of stability in the region in the light of the aspirations of being part of the European values.

All of this is always easier when represented with dignity and professionalism as both our former colleagues, Papadopoulou and Djurin, did.

To them, and to all of us, I wish happy holidays, and an even greater year, 2013.



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## Kosovo is significant trade partner to Macedonia

One more year filled with the usual dynamics typical for the situation in Kosovo is behind us. The race against time is something one has to become accustomed to in order to stay present in the political life in which situation often change at an incomprehensible rate.

Some of them leave a longer trail as others only occasionally upset the spirits of another time before being conceded to oblivion. The diary of the Embassy says:

We commenced the year that passed with the first official visit of Trajko Veljanoski, Speaker of the Macedonian Parliament, to Kosovo – the first of its kind since the establishment of diplomatic relations – as nine others at ministerial level immediately followed. Each of them had its own objective and contributed to the strengthening of the relations between the two neighbors.

However, in the past year, a priority was given to the economic cooperation, which, even in aggravated conditions for doing business, yielded some positive results.

Instead of a summary, we are going to underline that in the year that has remained behind us the export of Macedonian products to Kosovo exceeded 300 million euros, which confirms that Kosovo is an impor-

tant trade partner to the Republic of Macedonia. The upward trend in trade is a result of the long-standing traditional relations clearly marked by mutual trust and the legal framework closely defining all aspects of the bilateral relations.

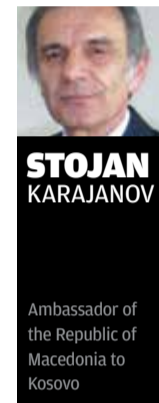
In this context, I would like to single out the meeting of the Mixed Committee for Economic Cooperation held in Skopje, at which,

with a very serious approach, the shared interests in the field of energy and infrastructure, particularly the construction of the Skopje-Prishtina highway, the repairs of the 400 KV power line

and the possibility of connecting Kosovo to the South Stream gas pipeline through the Republic of Macedonia, were agreed upon.

The possibilities for cooperation are immense. The priorities, to the realization of which there are no barriers, have been differentiated.

The new page of our diary has already been turned.



**STOJAN  
KARAJANOV**

Ambassador of  
the Republic of  
Macedonia to  
Kosovo

## “Graphics” art exhibition marks the 5th anniversary of Kosovo’s statehood

National Gallery of Kosovo, to mark the fifth anniversary of the statehood of Kosovo, has presented to the public 93 from 897 artworks of its collection, brought in graphics, including names like Shyqri Nimani, Franco Gentilini, Andy Warhol, Fatmir Krypa, Jim Cave and 15 other artists. This was the first exhibition for this year that was organized by this gallery, entitled “Graphics” and curated by its director, Erzen Shkololli. The latter has revealed that the Art Gallery, now National Gallery, has a rich fund of works and a good part of it consists of work in graphics.

The exhibition included works from the 70’s and 80’s and was focused on the graphic collection of the National Gallery, which is quite rich.

The inclusion of international artists, including those from the region, has put the exhibition in a global context and has provided the public with an opportunity to see the influence of foreign artist in Kosovo scene and how the latter has been developed during the 70s-80s. While Shkëlzen Maliqi, a member of the Board of the National Gallery, who also wrote a text for the exhibition which was published in the publication of the exhibition of the collection, spoke about the importance of maintaining a collection of the Gallery.

“From the day that we were appointed to our positions, the Board of the National Gallery has been engaged to better protect the collection and one of the ways is to draw collection works



The exhibition included works from the 70’s and 80’s

for exhibition and put them in frames. With this exhibition we have sensitized the public that the something should be done in

relation to the collection, to improve the conditions, to create tools to enrich it and to invest in heritage conservation in the field

of contemporary visual arts”, said Maliqi.

The director of the National Art Gallery of Kosovo, Shkololli, talked about plans for the preservation of the collection. He said he will engage this year to make a selection about the fund of the gallery for the preservation of works. “We will create the conditions for the preservation of the collection and then start to think about increasing the number of artworks. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports has plans to build the Museum of Contemporary Art where the collection will be transferred”, said Shkololli.

In the end, Shkololli announced that he intends to present the “Graphis” exhibition in other cities in Kosovo, starting with Prizren and Peje.

Photo Collage

# CELEBRATION OF 5<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF STATEHOOD IN KOSOVO EMBASSIES



# CELEBRATION OF 5<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF STATEHOOD IN KOSOVO EMBASSIES



# Photo Collage



# CELEBRATION OF 5<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF STATEHOOD IN KOSOVO EMBASSIES



**CELEBRATION OF 5<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY OF  
STATEHOOD IN  
KOSOVO EMBASSIES**



Promo

Grafika

Koleksioni

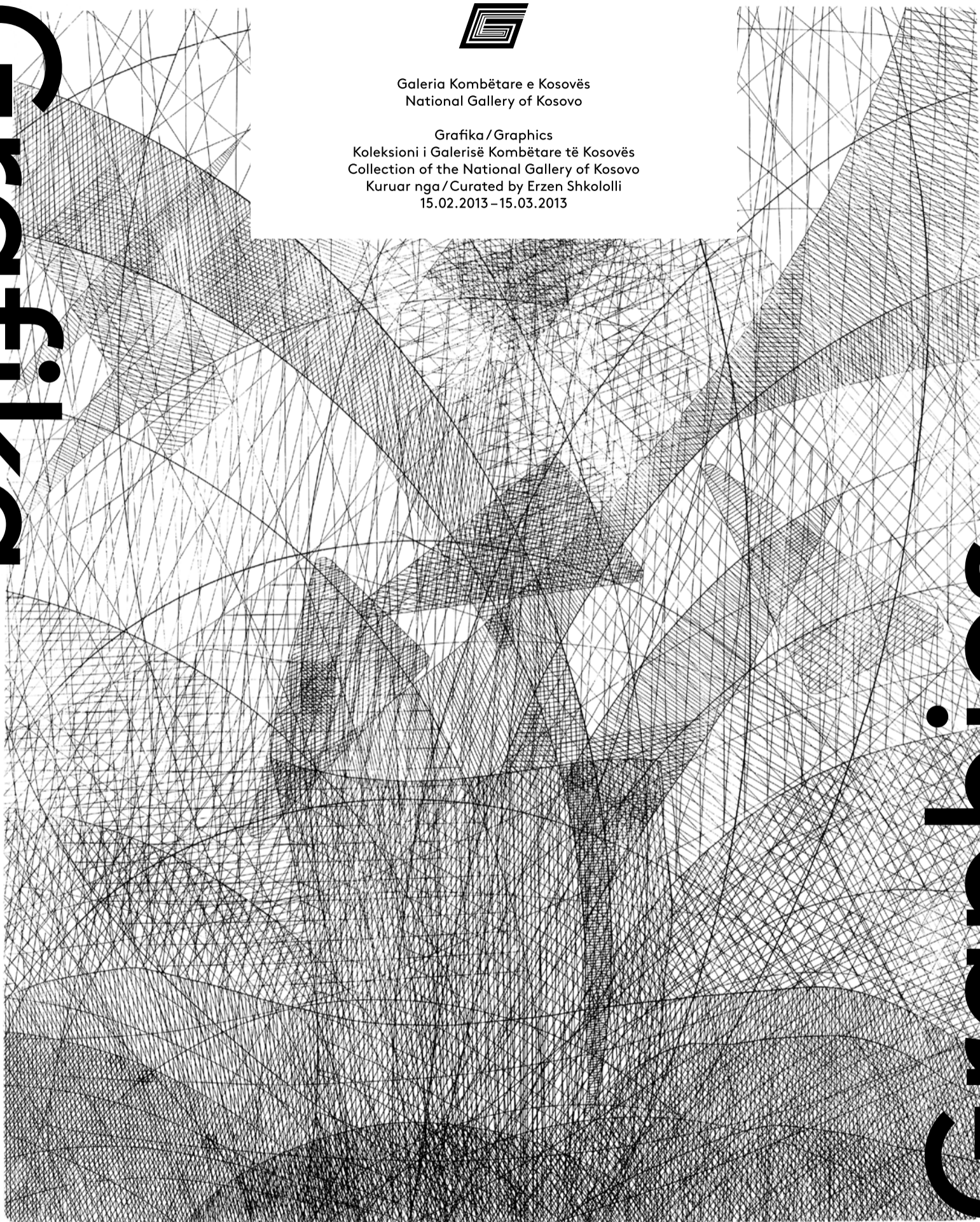


Galeria Kombëtare e Kosovës  
National Gallery of Kosovo

Grafika / Graphics  
Koleksioni i Galerisë Kombëtare të Kosovës  
Collection of the National Gallery of Kosovo  
Kuar nga / Curated by Erzen Shkolli  
15.02.2013 - 15.03.2013

Collection

Graphics



*Et "Vosë me lule"  
- Shqipëri -  
Shqipëri  
1980*

**Artistët / Artists:**

Andy Warhol, Edo Murtić, Fatmir Krypa, Fatmir Zajmi, Franco Gentilini,  
Gabrijel Stupica, Gjelosh Gjokaj, Haward Hodkin, Henry Moore, Hyrije Krypa,  
Hysni Krasniqi, Jim Cave, Karmon Fan Ferri, Mimo Paladino, Rexhep Ferri,  
Shqipëri, Shqipëri Nimani, Ymer Shqipëri, Zoran Jovanović-Dobrotin