

Declaration on independence in Kosovo

Almost after ten year, the Kosovo independence became reality on February 17.

The independence was approved at first by the Kosovo parliament's declaration on independence, which included also new state symbols.

Belgrade said that the declaration was illegal and the same day huge riots and rallies against Kosovo's independence took place in the Serbia's capital. After many years, demonstrations and clashes between police and protesters returned to the streets of Belgrade. The biggest rally took place on February 21¹

However, for Serbia this is just the begging and not the end as many would expect. Belgrade ponders steps against countries which have recognized independent Kosovo such as the USA, Albania, Turkey, Germany, Austria or France.

For example, as a protest, Serbia has recalled its ambassador from Washington.

Slovakia has not recognized Kosovo immediately but took four months period to decide.

The Kosovo issue impacts not only future regional stability but also Serbia's EU integration process. Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica said at the end of 2007 that Serbia cannot join the EU without Kosovo. However, newly re-elected Serbian president Boris Tadic declared that Serbia cannot isolate its-self from Europe now.

Ulrike Guérot, senior fellow of the European Council on Foreign Relations an head of its Berlin office, published recently article that creation of new countries in Europe among ethnic lines is in contradiction to the core project of the EU².

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¹ http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=02&dd=21&nav_id=47869

² http://www.ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_state_building_in_the_eu_and_kosovo/