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"Tacit plan for the 'Zvecan of Mitrovice' municipality"

The status quo of Mitrovice could be changed as a result of a unilateral declaration of the northern part of the town as a Serb municipality. These warnings came a few days ago from Nebojsa Jovic, leader of the so-called Serb National Council [KNS - SNV in Serbian] for northern Kosova [Kosovo], which represents the most extremist Serb elements.

"New winds are blowing," Milan Jaksic, one of the SNV leaders, said after a meeting with British Ambassador David Grown and Marc Dickinson, head of the British Office in Kosova, in Mitrovice a few days ago. And it seems that the door of communication has been opened to Serb extremist elements of the northern part of Mitrovice, as the international community has called them.

An UNMIK [UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo] official, who wished to remain anonymous, said that the meeting between British officials and these Serb officials could be the beginning of the recognition of the SNV and an attempt to change the status quo of this town, because the Serbs do not accept the Standards for Kosova. "UNMIK itself has tried to change the status quo in this town, but was not successful because it did not have support," the source added. ...

Serbs see unification of Mitrovice as the end of Serb existence in Kosova

This changing wind that Jaksic announced is based on the fact that two leaders of the SNV, Milan Ivanovic and Marko Jaksic, are on US President George Bush's blacklist. At the meeting with the British ambassador, the so-called Serb leaders of the SNV viewed the unification of Mitrovice as the end of the Serb existence in Kosova.

The controversial leader of the northern part of Mitrovice, Milan Ivanovic, told this newspaper via telephone that, although it is not formally recognized, it is known that the

northern part of Mitrovice is a municipality in itself. "An area that has its university, hospital, enterprises, and other mechanisms cannot be a local unit. In a way, we have been a municipality for some time now, but not formally," Ivanovic said.

According to the SNV leaders, unification of the town is a political issue, not essential for the Serbs, and they also mentioned the establishment of two entities, Albanian and Serb, in Kosova, as an option. ...

The Koha Ditore government source said, "The option for the new division of the town of Mitrovice was discussed in London". However, "the government does not have a position on the proposal of the European Stability Institute, ESI." According to our source, the ESI proposed that the northern part of Mitrovice join Zvecan and be named "Zvecan of Mitrovice", but on condition that the Albanians return to their homes in the northern part of the town, and Serbs who have fled return to the southern part of the town if they wish.

The government source explained that the ESI NGO suggested that "unification of the northern part of Mitrovice with Zvecan would create a balance between two entities; a joint economic council would be established and, in this way, the economic development and joint integration process between the Albanians and the Serbs would start." ...

"Povratak" will try to force Assembly to accept "Zvecan of Mitrovice" municipality. Another UNMIK official, who also wished to remain anonymous, said that the preconditions for declaration of the municipality, such as the functioning of a healthcare and education system, including the university, administration, courts, police, and so on, have been created there.

According to this source, this would mean acceptance of the facts, which UNMIK will initially oppose, but tacitly it will accept this municipality declared by the Serbs. After declaring the municipality, Serb deputies in the Kosova Assembly will withdraw to consider the issue and a condition for their return to the Kosova Assembly will be recognition of the Serb municipality.