



February 20, 2004

Mild reactions to ESI's proposal on Mitrovica - It is suggested that the plan of "Mitrovica of Zvecane" to be discussed

The government and the UNMIK did not take an official stand but they leave the possibility that ESI's document on Mitrovica can be discussed. While minister Jakup Krasniqi said that nothing could be changed partially, this is an issue that needs to be discussed in the government as well as in the assembly

UNMIK or the government did not take an official stand but they leave the possibility that ESI's document on Mitrovica can be discussed in the near future. Although the government and UNMIK attended the conference on Mitrovica held on 1st of February held in London, they did not take an official stand on the proposal but they left the option to be discussed open.

“The government did not take an official stand because the government did not discuss it yet” said the Mimoza Kusari spokesperson of Kosovo's government adding, “ the Prime Minister was invited to this conference not in the position of the Prime Minister but as a Kosovar and as a former head of the municipality of Mitrovica.

The paper “People of Territory” has four essential elements: freedom of movement and the return of residential property, resolving municipal governance; hand-over of UN authority in Northern Mitrovica to a new, multiethnic municipality of Zvecan-North Mitrovica:

Reinforcing UNMIK/Kosovo institutions: completing the transformation of the role of the Republic of Serbia in Mitrovica from parallel government to long-term donor; abolishing all remaining parallel law enforcement and judicial institutions.

Joint economic development strategy for Mitrovica and Zvecan: a commitment by the international community to support a multi-annual development and investment strategy devised and implemented jointly by the two municipalities of Mitrovica and Zvecan.

The prime minister declared to the press “this idea can be discussed as an alternative that fade away the idea of dividing north Kosovo and still the price we have to pay if we accept of refuse needs to be taken into consideration”.

Even though the proposal is in their hands UNMIK has refused to comment on ESI’s proposal whose member is Minna Jarvenppa, the international municipality administrator. “UNMIK has no stand on this proposal” said the spokesperson of UNMIK in Mitrovica, Georgy Kakuk.

“As events are occurring, maybe it is not an accident that Zvecan was declared a municipality on its own after the war” said Lutfi Haziri head of Kosovo Municipality Association. Mitrovica problem should be resolved but partially also he said we should not allow that this issue becomes a “pawn to the negotiations”. On the other side, the minister of public services said on Thursday to Koha Ditore “ the territories of municipalities cannot be changed otherwise that would be a violation of the Constitutional Framework and second this issue needs to be discussed by the government, assembly and from the municipality assembly and than we could take an official stand on the Mitrovica proposal”.

While the municipality officials took no stand either but the executive chief Mustafa Pllana said that “he sees the proposal of unifying north Mitrovica with Zvecan Municipality as a process of twinning”.

ESI’s proposal did not commence any reactions from the Serbian side either, thus from our resources we found out that extremist forces will refuse this proposal because they are aiming to “create a Serbian municipality in the northern Mitrovica and by doing so divide the two ethnicities.