

Letter concerning the attacks by the Government of Kosovo officials
(DPM and Chief Negotiator Mr. Besnik Bislimi, Deputy Minister of Local
Government and Administration Mr. Arbër Vokrri, and party Lëvizja
Vetëvendosje!)

Regarding systematic and orchestrated attacks by Kosovo Government officials in relation to our visit to Brussels last week, we, the representatives of civil society organizations, declare the following:

Our organizations have been working both individually and jointly for years to build bridges between Albanians and Serbs, and to promote reconciliation and inter-ethnic tolerance in Kosovo. In our activities, we have always advocated for peace, and publicly condemned all forms of violence in Kosovo, whether they come from members of the Kosovo Serb community or Kosovo institutions. The results of our work are widely known to the public, and we are extremely proud of them.

Our organizations actively support the EU-facilitated Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue, which was, among other things, the main reason for our visit to Brussels. During this visit, we presented the results of the analyses and the views that we've been expressing in public daily concerning the worrisome circumstances of the Kosovo Serb community.

We'd like to emphasize that the work of our organizations is in accordance with the Kosovo laws and regulations. In our work, we are independent from any government structures, whether they come from Pristina, Belgrade, or elsewhere. Accusations that we are "Vučić's millionaire propagandists", and that we receive instructions from the Serbian President, or anyone else, are the most heinous lies designed to scare us, expose us to public lynching, and prevent further cooperation with partners from different ethnic communities in Kosovo.

Through targeting of civil society representatives, several officials from the Kosovo Government have been exposing their aversion to constructive criticism and their unwillingness to engage in dialogue, especially with organizations that are active in non-majority communities in Kosovo.

Bearing in mind that Prime Minister Albin Kurti often proudly points out that a high degree of democracy is among the greatest achievements of Kosovo in its modern history, we hereby invite him to publicly disassociate himself from discriminatory and lies-based attacks directed at us by Deputy Prime Minister Besnik Bislimi and Deputy Minister of Local Self-Government Arbër Vokrri, as well as by members of Lëvizja Vetëvendosje!

Sincerely yours,

Jovana Radosavljević, New social initiative
Dragiša Mijačić, InTER
Miodrag Milićević, NGO Aktiv

Report on Attacks by Government of Kosovo Officials

On February 14th, Mr. Besnik Bislimi, the Deputy Prime Minister and Chief Negotiator of Kosovo, [took to the X platform](#) to accuse Mr. Lajčák of bias. This accusation stemmed from Mr. Lajčák's meeting with representatives of the Working Group for Chapter 35 of the National Convention on European Union (NCEU)¹, which also included representatives of civil society organizations from Kosovo participating in the NCEU's work.

The National Convention on the EU is a coalition of organizations aiming to facilitate dialogue among various stakeholders—including state administration, political parties, NGOs, experts, businesses, trade unions, and professional groups—regarding Serbia's accession to the European Union. The convention operates independently and does not represent the perspectives of any state institutions or international bodies. The Working Group for Chapter 35 focuses on monitoring, enhancing, and promoting dialogue for normalization and reconciliation between the Albanian and Serb communities in Kosovo.

The working group for Chapter 35 of the National Convention on the EU (NCEU) conducted a working visit to the institutions of the European Union in Brussels from February 12 to 14, 2024. Originally planned for December 2023, the visit was rescheduled to February 2024 due to various circumstances. The delegation comprised the following individuals: Jovana Radosavljević, New Social Initiative from North Mitrovica; Miloš Pavković, European Policy Center from Belgrade; Nikola Burazer, Center for Contemporary Politics from Belgrade; Sofija Todorović, Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Serbia; Dragiša Mijačić, InTER/Coordinator for Chapter 35 NCEU. In addition to the group, the following participants were invited by the European Parliament to join: Srđan Sentić, Deputy Ombudsperson of Kosovo; Isak Vorgučić, an entrepreneur from Gračanica; and Miodrag Milićević, representing NGO Aktiv from North Mitrovica, also a member of the Working Group 35 of NCEU.

It's crucial to clarify that Srđan Sentić and Isak Vorgučić were not included in the delegation of NCEU nor did they partake in the discussions representing themselves as part of the National Convention on the EU. Srđan Sentić spoke in his capacity as the Deputy Ombudsperson of Kosovo, an independent institution, while Isak Vorgučić spoke as an entrepreneur and a Serb resident of Kosovo.

This reaction by Mr. Bislimi comes as a result of the meeting with Mr. Lajčák and after the event at the European Parliament on February 13, organized by MEPs Viola von Cramon and Andreas Schieder, titled: *"Kosovo Serbs: The Circle of (Dis)Trust and (Un)Equality - How does the EU-led Serbia- Kosovo Dialogue impact everyday lives? Hearing of the Kosovo Serbs' NGO and political representatives on current developments in Kosovo."*

As the title says, only Kosovo Serbs were invited to speak at this event, and those are Jovana Radosavljević, director of NSI Mitrovica, Miodrag Milićević, director of NGO Aktiv, Isak Vorgučić, director of Radio Kim and Pivdžan brewery, Dragiša Mijačić, director of InTER and Srđan Sentić, Deputy Ombudsperson of Kosovo. No participants from Serbia or elsewhere were invited as speakers at this event. Everyone spoke from their point of view about the current situation in Kosovo and the prospects for dialogue and normalization. About 50 representatives participated in the event, among them several members of the European Parliament, advisers, and assistants, as well as representatives of member countries and others.

Despite not being officially invited, the Kosovo Government delegation was also present at the event, consisting of Mr. Arbër Vokrri, Deputy Minister of Local Self-Government, Mr. Radojica Radomirović, Deputy Minister for Communities and Return, Ms. Katarina Ađančić, Deputy Mayor of North Mitrovica, and Ms. Kati Schneeberger, President of Vienna goes Europe. It was only Mr. Vokrri out of the entire delegation that held a speech that was more related to attacks on our organizations and personalities than to challenging our claims.

On the same day, Mr. Vokrri published a video of his speech, recorded without the knowledge or consent of the organizers and participants, rife with baseless accusations against us.

The event at the European Parliament was followed by the meeting with [Mr. Miroslav Lajčák](#), which he posted on the X platform, which prompted the reaction of DPM Bislimi.

Later the same day, the allegations made by DPM Bislimi were [echoed](#) by Kosovo's ruling party, the Self-Determination Movement (Lëvizja Vetëvendosje!).

In a [media statement](#) Jovana Radosavljević, NSI executive director reacted to Bislimi's accusations.

In reaction to Mr. Bislimi's accusations, the NCEU Working Group for Chapter 35 issued a [statement](#). On February 15, MEP Viola Von Crammon issued a [statement](#) expressing support.

The attack by Mr. Bislimi received a reaction from several civil society actors from Kosovo. Namely, a group of civil society actors gathered around the [Kosovo Civic Alternative](#) issued a statement. Also, [Human Rights Network](#) has reacted in support of their colleagues from civil society.

As a sign of support and protection from further attacks by the Government of Kosovo and the Self-Determination Movement, representatives of Kosovo Serbs who were in Brussels were received by the [Quint Ambassadors and the Head of Mission of the EU Office in Kosovo](#) on February 16 in Pristina. After that meeting, a joint photo was published with the message that the representatives of the Serbs are "trusted partners" in the joint effort to improve human rights and inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo.

Nevertheless, these actions did not deter attacks from Kosovo government official; instead, they seemed to amplify them further.

On February 16, Deputy Minister of Local Self-Government, Arbër Vokrri, addressed the media ([Klan Kosova](#), [Gazeta Blic](#), [Bota Sot](#), [Balkani Info](#)) regarding Bislimi's reactions, asserting that Bislimi's statements were appropriate. He raised concerns that we "Serbian NGOs" in Kosovo are acting as mouthpieces for the Belgrade regime and are propagating Vučić's propaganda in the highest EU institutions, thus launching an offensive against the state of Kosovo.

On February 18, Mr. Arbër Vokrri, persisted with his false accusations on his [Facebook profile](#). For example, one of the accusations leveled against us is the dissemination of alleged propaganda regarding the expropriations of the land for the construction of bases of Special Police Units in the North of Kosovo. However, it is worth noting that there exist two verdicts by the Supreme Court which found that the expropriations carried out for the construction of certain police bases were indeed conducted unlawfully.

In this post, he uses slander in labeling us as “Vučić’s millionaire propagandists”, stating that we use the funding to threaten violence in Kosovo, spread lies in Brussels, incite reprisal against the integrated Serbs in the Kosovo system, while we live in Serbia. Moreover, he stated that some of us have contacted “Vučić regime” to shut down the business of North Mitrovica Deputy Mayor Ms. Katarina Ađančić’s ex-husband in Kraljevo, Serbia.

This was insufficient for Mr. Vokri; he proceeded further the next day, February 19, by giving an interview on the [“60 minutes” show on KTV](#).

He again accused us of “advancing the agenda of the Serbian regime”. He claimed that during a recent visit to the European Parliament, “representatives of these NGOs, along with Serbian state officials posing as Kosovo residents, promoted a narrative harmful to the Republic of Kosovo” claiming we are acting as Vučić’s mouthpiece.

He continued with the accusation on [TV Show FIVE on RTV Dukagjini](#). We were again accused of spreading Vučić’s regime narrative. Mr. Vokri also claimed that the rapporteur for Kosovo in the European Parliament, Viola von Cramon, had changed her stance, facilitating the activities of certain Serbian NGOs registered in Kosovo, which periodically visit Brussels to present their perspective on Kosovo’s developments, detrimental to Kosovo’s image.

These statements were also published in [Bota Sot](#), [Gazeta Blic](#).

In conclusion, It is important to note that, a group of organizations (New Social Initiative, Aktiv, ACDC and InTER) issued a [public reaction](#) on February 11, expressing deep concern about Kosovo Prime Minister [Albin Kurti's](#) and [ruling party's](#) public praise for Self-Determination Movement! protest to key provisions of the Martti Ahtisaari plan, particularly decentralization, Special Protective Zones around Serbian Orthodox heritage sites, and the double majority requirement, accusing him of endangering multi-ethnic governance principles and violating constitutionally guaranteed rights, especially those of the Kosovo Serb community, leading to a breakdown of agreements and undermining the Rule of Law, and calls for international condemnation and reaction to protect non-majority communities.

These civil society organizations have been trusted partners of the international community and an important focal point regarding Kosovo Serb community needs and concerns. Over the past three years, we have held hundreds of meetings, issued dozens of public statements, and several letters addressed to Brussels and Washington, DC. Also, we are initiators and signatories of the [Appeal for Peace](#), a public plea signed by 160+ Kosovo Serbs in June 2023.

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Should you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Jovana Radosavljević jradosavljevic@newsocialinitiative.org
Dragiša Mijačić dmijacic@regionalnirazvoj.org
Miodrag Milićević miodrag.milicevic@ngoaktiv.org