



10 MAY 2015

ON THE OCCASION OF THE RECENT INCIDENT IN PASJANE

On 4 May, a Kosovo Serbian inhabitant of the village Pasjane/Pasjan in the municipality of Parteš/Partesh, was reported to have been stabbed by two Kosovo Albanian inhabitants of the neighbouring village of Vllashticë/Vlaštica in what appears to be a case of road rage. Luckily, the victim is not in danger and is recovering from his wounds. The Kosovo Police has reacted swiftly and identified and arrested the two suspected attackers. Upon investigation, the police issued a statement reporting that the incident happened following a car accident during an overtaking manoeuvre, which resulted in verbal aggression and a subsequent fight. The case is now at the Municipal Court of Gjilan/Gnjilane where the perpetrators are accused of attempted murder.¹

The fact that the incident involved people from Serbian and Albanian ethnicity immediately raised the question of the motives behind the aggression. In reactions spread through Serbian-language media, the Mayor of Parteš/Partesh, Dragan Nikolić, and a representative of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija at the Serbian Government stated that the attack was ethnically motivated and had the intent to scare and chase away the Serbs remaining in southern Kosovo.² The incident was also connected to a series of other incidents involving Serbs in Kosovo, including the stabbing of the young Serb man at the main bridge over the Ibar/Ibër River in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North and the attempted kidnapping of a Serbian girl in Babimoc/Babin most near Obiliq/Obilić. These incidents are still under investigation, for more please read ECMI Kosovo reports on these events.³

A more balanced statement was made by Branimir Stojanović, Deputy Prime Minister in the Kosovo Government. Stojanović warned that incidents involving Serbs in Kosovo have become more prevalent since Srpska lista is in the Kosovo Government and argued that the incident has an undoubted ethnic motive. He also called on the strengthening of the rule of law to resolve such incidents and prevent them from happening in the future, while he praised the Kosovo Police for its relatively swift reaction.⁴

¹http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=05&dd=04&nav_category=640&nav_id=988039;
http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/uhapsen_napadac_na_srbina_iz_pasjana_za_drugim_se_traga/4786;
[http://koha.net/?id=27&l=56367.](http://koha.net/?id=27&l=56367)

² http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/izboden_srb_in_u_pasjanu/4773;
[http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=05&dd=05&nav_category=640&nav_id=988497.](http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=05&dd=05&nav_category=640&nav_id=988497)

³ For the Mitrovica case, see ECMI Kosovo. 'Incidents and Tensions in Mitrovica: The Need for Unbiased Reporting and the Strengthening of the Rule of Law' (21 April 2014). For the Babin Most case, see http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=05&dd=02&nav_category=640&nav_id=987394;
http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/izboden_srb_in_u_pasjanu/4773. The Office for Kosovo and Metohija did not mention that the attempt at kidnapping was avoided by an Albanian neighbour of the girl.

⁴ http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=05&dd=05&nav_category=640&nav_id=988497;
[http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/video_dan_posle_napada_na_srbina_u_pasjanu_i_novog_napada_na_srpsku_gimnazijalku/4795.](http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/video_dan_posle_napada_na_srbina_u_pasjanu_i_novog_napada_na_srpsku_gimnazijalku/4795)

Relevant institutions and mechanisms denounced such statements about the prevalent ethnic motives behind the incident. Representatives of the Kosovo Police quickly communicated that the direct occasion for the incident was road rage and that there were no ethnic motives behind it. These statements were taken over in Serbian-language media.⁵ The Municipal Communities Safety Council of Parteš/Partesh, which has been established precisely to address security concerns among communities at the municipal level, held an extraordinary session to discuss the incident. After the meeting, the Council issued a statement based on the police investigation arguing that the incident does not have any ethnic background and denounced all attempts to interpret it as such and to destabilise ethnic and religious relation in the area.⁶

The perceived or real threat to security remains concerning among minority communities in Kosovo and needs to be taken seriously by the relevant institutions. In that regard, the swift reaction and communication by the Kosovo Police and the Municipal Communities Safety Council are good steps in the right direction, demonstrating that Kosovo institutions and mechanisms that have been established to protect the rights of communities and to remedy infringements upon such rights are leading to practical results, when acting and communicating resolutely.

⁵ http://kossev.info/strana/arhiva/uhapsen_napadac_na_srbina_iz_pasjana_za_drugim_se_traga/4786.

⁶ <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=56367>.

Further reports and political analysis:

[Municipal Budgets in Northern Kosovo: Agreement at Last](#)

May 7, 2015

[Incidents and Tensions in Mitrovica: The Need for Unbiased Reporting and the Strengthening of the Rule of Law](#)

April 21, 2015

[The Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities: What is \(Im\)Possible Within the Legal Framework?](#)

April 16, 2015

[The Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities: An Ethnic Club Based on Ethnicity?](#)

March 31, 2015

[The Neglecting of Non-Serb Minority Communities in the Kosovo–Serbia Technical Agreements](#)

March 10, 2015

[Minister Murati’s Controversial Statement and the Reactions that Followed](#)

March 5, 2015

[The Association/Community of Serb majority Municipalities: A Lot of Speculation, Little Factual Agreement and No Implementation](#)

February 22, 2015

[A Unified Court and Legal System in Kosovo?](#)

February 15, 2015

[What Should Be Remembered From the Jablanović Case?](#)

February 8, 2015

[Calls for Reason and Action in Light of Protests in Prishtinë/Priština](#)

January 25, 2015

[Forging a Working Environment Within the Government of Kosovo](#)

January 19, 2015

[ECMI Kosovo Condemns the Violent Blockage of Entrance to the Serb Orthodox Church in Gjakovë/Đakovica](#)

January 7, 2015

[The Formation of the New Government of Kosovo, Minority Community Representation and Challenges Ahead](#)

December 10, 2014

About ECMI Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is the principal non-governmental organisation engaged with minority issues in Kosovo, with the overarching aim to develop inclusive, representative, community-sensitive institutions that support a stable multi-ethnic Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo contributes to the developing, strengthening and implementation of relevant legislation, supports the institutionalisation of communities-related governmental bodies, and enhances the capacity of civil society actors and the government to engage with one another in a constructive and sustainable way.