



Key Quotes

The leaders of former Balkan foes Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina pledged to boost fragile post-war ties shaken earlier this month on the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre. Bosnian Muslim leader Bakir Izetbegovic said after talks that **"we have agreed to do everything to improve relations so that evil will never repeat itself."** Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić added that he has **"forgotten all about"** the incident in Srebrenica. He said that **"what happened was hard, but it is nothing compared to what happened to Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs" during the war.**" (yahoo!, UK, 22/7)

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/serbia-bosnia-leaders-meet-tensions-over-srebrenica-133145680.html>

Summary

Standoff between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Croatia is threatening the cancellation of the construction of bridges over Sava if Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to oppose the construction of the Pelješac Bridge. The Croatian Minister of Transport, Siniša Hajdaš Dončić, allegedly received a letter from his Bosnian counterpart Slavko Matanović which called upon the Croatian authorities to pass a bilateral agreement on the UN Law of the Sea convention before the start of the Pelješac bridge construction but Mr Hajdaš Dončić has denied receiving such a letter and claimed that Bosnia and Herzegovina was blackmailing his country. He reminded Bosnia and Herzegovina that Croatia held the key to the country's connection to Europe and added that if it intended to continue its extortion tactics Croatia would cease to construct the bridges over the Sava River at Stara Gradiška and Svilaj which strategically are not that important for Croatia. He also stressed that Croatia supported Bosnian efforts to join the EU but warned that if Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to act the way it does its citizens will have to travel to the EU crossing the Drina River and Serbia (Jutarnji List, HR, 22/7).

- Jutarnji List, HR, 22/7, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150722/mi/item_258192054.pdf

An overlooked part of Europe

After taking in the *"good Balkans"* – a process culminating with the accession of Croatia – the EU turned its eyes to other issues, like the Euro crisis or North Africa. This leaves the remaining Balkan countries in limbo. Turkey is using this as an opportunity to rebuild its Ottoman Empire of old, especially in Muslim-heavy countries. Ankara here proceeds with much more subtlety and tact than Russia – also rebuilding its old empire (Polityka, PO, 22/7).

- Polityka, PO, 22/7, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150722/mi/item_258195089.pdf

No investors without a constitutional state

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia almost stumbled with its political crisis. *"If those responsible for the country want a positive future they will now have to end the paralysing conflict and implement the urgently needed reforms"* says Commissioner Hahn in an interview with the Wirtschaftsblatt (AT, 22/7). He says, however, that he is optimistic at the end of the day. Meanwhile within the country Balkaneu (GR, 22/7) reports that the two Albanian political parties BDI and PDSH have launched accusations against each other. Leader of PDSH, Menduh Thaçi, declared he was pessimistic about the implementation of the agreement, especially as far as rights of Albanians are concerned and declared the party would not be part of the interim government, but that it will be part of parliamentary committees for the delivery of reforms and amendments to the electoral code.

- Wirtschaftsblatt, AT, 22/7, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150722/mi/item_258193459.pdf
- Balkaneu, GR, 22/7, <http://www.balkaneu.com/albanian-political-parties-fyrom-debate-agreement-solution-crisis/>

Charts

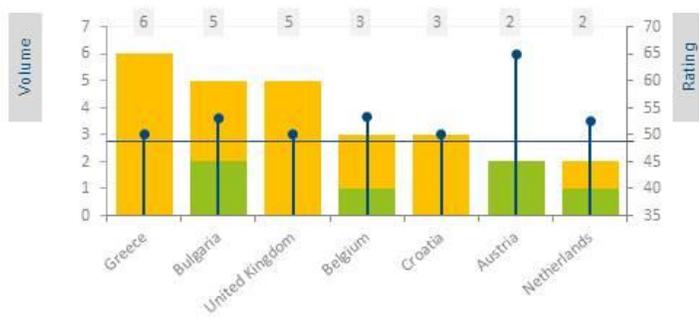
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Johannes Hahn - Neighbourhood Policy & Enlarg	5
Aleksandar Vučić - PM Serbia	3
Federica Mogherini – HR Foreign Affairs	2
Nikola Gruevski - PM former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2
Menduh Thaçi - Albanian Opposition leader former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2
Ali Ahmeti - Albanian Opposition leader former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2

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