

## Key Quotes

Kurdish militants on Sunday described as "historic" a call by their jailed leader to hold a disarmament congress and said Turkey must now take concrete steps to keep the peace process on track. Abdullah Ocalan, who still exerts influence over the armed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) from his prison cell, on Saturday called on followers to meet in the spring and agree to lay down their arms. The European Union, which Turkey is seeking to join, called Ocalan's statement "**a positive step forward**". "**We hope that all parties will seize the opportunity to make decisive progress towards reconciliation and democratisation**," an EU statement said on Saturday. (uk.reuters.com, UK, 1/3)

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/03/01/uk-turkey-kurds-idUKKBN0LX1CM20150301>

## Summary

### United States Secretary of State John Kerry welcomes Serbia's new role.

The Secretary of State applauded the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina before meeting Serbian Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman Ivica Dačić in Washington and welcomed Serbia's European path. "*This is very important. It will require a process of reforms and engagement. We certainly look forward to working with Serbia in that endeavour*". Last Wednesday, Kerry said that Serbia is "*in the line of fire*" together with Kosovo, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and others as regards the West's dispute with Russia over Ukraine. Analysts in Serbia believe that country will face pressures from both sides in order to decide between the West and Russia, in contrast to the current balanced approach of Serbia's foreign policy (balkaneu.com, GR, 27/2). As for the joint military exercises that Serbia is holding with Russia, Mr. Dačić assured the State Department that the traditionally friendly relations with Russia do not affect in any way the strategic orientation of Serbia, which is towards EU membership (athina984.gr. GR, 27/2).

- balkaneu.com, GR, 27/2, <http://www.balkaneu.com/serbia-important-role-osce-kerry/>
- athina984.gr. GR, 27/2, <http://www.athina984.gr/node/329992>

### Turkey Cyprus tension

The European Commission and its President Jean-Claude Juncker expressed their intense opposition to the Turkish government's policy of granting e-visas to citizens of the Cyprus Republic under the category of "*citizens of the Greek Cypriot Administration of the North*". Replying to Cyprus MEP Eleni Theocharous (EPP) who had first raised the issue, Juncker stated that the Commission is undertaking all necessary action (Simerini, CY, 27/2).

- Simerini, CY, 27/2, [http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150226/mi/item\\_237097101.pdf](http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150226/mi/item_237097101.pdf)

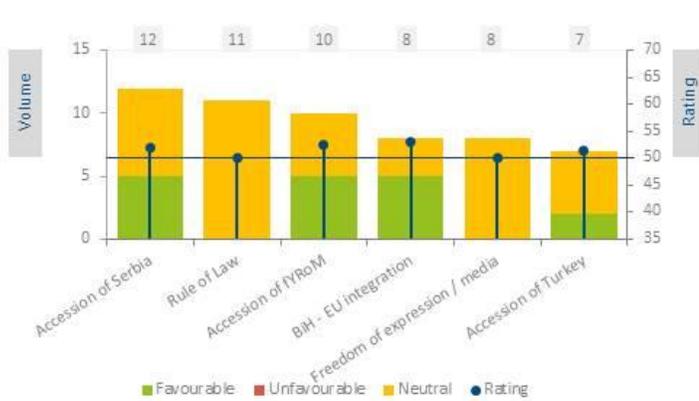
### Visa free travel in Europe

The EU is worried about the exodus from the Balkans, as it has been recently witnessing a large increase in the number of asylum seekers from the region. Although they recognise that that almost no one gets asylum they say it is burden for the administration of the target country. The EC, therefore is not excluding the possibility of introducing a visa regime again for citizens of Serbia, Bosnia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro. Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos, said that the business community's profits are the biggest proof of how beneficial visa liberalisation is, but abuse of the system must be resolved, which is why he is going to travel to Serbia and Kosovo next month. The EC recommends an information campaign be launched in the Balkans which would explain that their citizens have almost no chances of getting asylum (Jutarnji List, HR, 27/2).

- Jutarnji List, HR, 27/2, [http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150227/mi/item\\_237113895.pdf](http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150227/mi/item_237113895.pdf)

# Charts

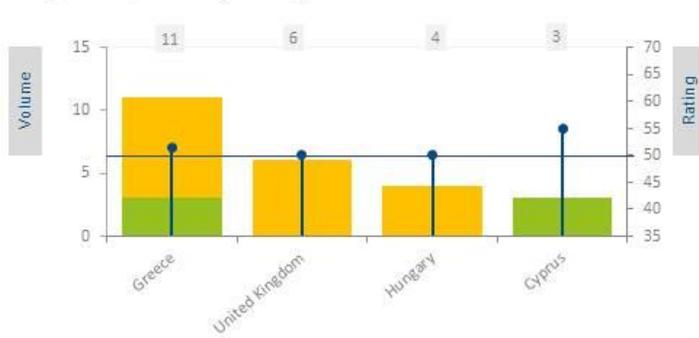
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**  
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Ivica Dačić - Serbian FM	4
John Kerry - U.S. Secretary of State	4
Nikola Gruevski - FYRoM PM	3
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Turkey President	3
Zoran Zaev - Opposition leader former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3

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