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Disinformation Alerts – Russian Media Monitoring is a monthly report of the news containing disinformation and misinformation targeting Kosovo, published by Russian media in English and Serbian Language

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KOSOVO DISINFORMATION ALERTS

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INTRODUCTION

Kosovo Disinformation Alerts: Russian Media Monitoring aim to counter disinformation that targets Kosovo, by monitoring, on a monthly basis, preselected media outlets originating in Russia, in both, English, and Serbian languages. The preselected media in English language are Russia Today, Sputnik, Meduza, Russia Insider, TASS, The Moscow Times, Newsfront, Unz, The Duran, and Pravda Report, whereas in Serbian language is Sputnik Serbia. In addition, the Kosovo Disinformation Alerts monitor news, documents, and statements related to Kosovo, published by Kremlin and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During June 2020, TASS has published 11 news, Russia Today 14, The Duran 3, Sputnik International 3, Newsfront 9, Unz 1, whereas Sputnik Serbia has published 157 news related directly or indirectly to Kosovo. Meanwhile, The Moscow Times, Russia Insider, Meduza, and Pravda Report have not published any news related to Kosovo. On the other hand, during this monitoring period, Kremlin had none, while the Russian Foreign Ministry had 9 postings related to Kosovo on their web-sites.

Due to the large number of articles with disinformation content generated by these media, in this edition are analyzed only the articles with blatant disinformation content. The disinformation provided aims to undermine the legality of Kosovo's statehood and the efforts of NATO and of the West for peace and stability in Kosovo and for advancement of its state-building process, by projecting Kosovo as a failed state that also undertakes discriminatory acts against its Serbian community, to obscure the past by de-facto denying crimes and atrocities of Serbia in Kosovo during the 1990's, and to undermine the role of the US and EU in establishing the Specialized Chambers of Kosovo.

THE DECONSTRUCTION OF THE DETECTED DISINFORMATION

Disinformation Alert 1

Headline: The Kosovo knot: Is a fair solution possible?, Article, co-authored by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Ivica Dačić published in **Rossiyskaya Gazeta** and **Serbian Kurir** on **June 18th 2020**, posted to the web-site of the **Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**¹ and **commented by TASS**.²

Among other things, in their joint article, the Foreign Ministers Lavrov and Dačić falsely claim that: “The unresolved Kosovo problem has for over 20 years been an obstacle to a full-fledged stabilisation in the Western Balkan region and given rise to more outbursts of tension. The time bomb was laid at a time when the Western allies that bombed Yugoslavia in 1999 set the goal of ensuring the region’s independence in circumvention of international law”; “In 2008, when “independence” was announced in Pristina by way of accomplished fact, persistent attempts were made to talk Moscow and Belgrade into believing that the negotiating potential had been exhausted. Russia’s and Serbia’s calls, including at the highest level, to continue the talks and stick to the international law and UNSCR 1244 were ignored. A couple of years later, the developments had the parties resume the dialogue. Brussels acted as a mediator, and the UN General Assembly approved it by Resolution 64/298 in 2010”; “Kosovo is in the grips of political chaos. Local parties are mired in a bitter fight for power, scheming, mutual accusations and clan feuds amid economic downfall and rampant crime. Under these circumstances, the "state building," which the local leaders and their external sponsors love to talk about, turned into a sham”; “The wide presence in Kosovo of criminal elements associated with terrorist groups in the Middle East, primarily Syria, as well as with criminal gangs in the Balkans and other parts of

¹ https://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/maps/us/-/asset_publisher/unVXBbj4Z6e8/content/id/4168272

² <https://tass.com/politics/1168953>

Europe, means that the region with its rich historical and cultural heritage is becoming a den of thieves and criminals of all stripes”; “Should this be any surprise with former Kosovo Liberation Army ringleaders holed up as Pristina’s ruling elite? To investigate the atrocities, including murders and abductions for the purpose of illicit trafficking of human organs committed by some of them, a special court was created at the EU initiative following a report by PACE member Dick Marty. We are still waiting for this judicial body to go live and bring charges against the criminals”; and, “Prior to the new phase in the dialogue, it was necessary to revoke the anti-Serb discriminatory measures introduced by the Pristina authorities in recent years. As a mediator, the EU must ensure that the Kosovars will not resume this vicious practice.”

The Deconstruction of the Disinformation: Facts and Figures

Quite sardonically, one of the co-authors of this article, the Foreign Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, used to be a spokesperson of Milošević during the Kosovo War in 1999, and the other, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, at that same time was the Russian Representative to the United Nations.

Initially the authors falsely claim that NATO bombing “set the goal of ensuring the region’s independence in circumvention of international law,” by neglecting here a fundamental fact that the bombing campaign was a result of Milošević’s atrocities against Kosovo Albanians, and his refusal to sign the Rambouillet Agreement mediated by the U.S. Ambassador Christopher Hill, EU Envoy Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, and Russian Ambassador Boris Mayorski.³ It is important to stress here that prior to NATO intervention, the Yugoslav forces had already killed 2,000, detained over 1,200, and displaced around 300,000 Albanian Kosovars.⁴ All these facts become clear and obvious in the statement of March 24 1999, of the U.S. President Clinton, in which he emphasized that “We and our NATO allies have taken this action after extensive and repeated

³ Rambouillet Accords: Co-Chairmen's Conclusions, February 23rd, 1999, https://web.archive.org/web/20070926234216/http://www.ohr.int/other-doc/contact-g/default.asp?content_id=3560

⁴ Eric Herring, From Rambouillet to the Kosovo accords: NATO'S war against Serbia and its aftermath, The International Journal of Human Rights, Routledge, October 2007

efforts to obtain a peaceful solution to the crisis in Kosovo,” and that the military strikes have had the following objectives: “to demonstrate NATO's resolve, to deter Belgrade from launching more offensives against Kosovo Albanians and to degrade Yugoslavia's military capabilities to carry out future attacks.”⁵ Within weeks after the beginning of NATO intervention, the Serbian armed forces had killed more than 9,000, and expelled to Albania and Macedonia around 860,000 Kosovo Albanians.⁶ The goal of NATO intervention could obviously not have been the independence of Kosovo, due to the very fact that Spain and Greece used to be full-fledged members of Alliance in 1999, and they have not yet recognized Kosovo.

The authors are projecting the UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999) as an impediment to the legality of Kosovo's independence, while ignoring the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo of 22nd July 2010, which had clearly stated that the Declaration of Independence of Kosovo has not violated International Law, including the UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999).⁷ Furthermore, they are also ignoring the fact that the Resolution 64/298 of the UN General Assembly of September 2010 has not mandated the EU to facilitate dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia on the issue of Kosovo's status – instead, it stipulated that the aim of the dialogue “would be to promote cooperation, achieve progress on the path to the European Union and improve the lives of the people.”⁸

Additionally, the authors do not hesitate to project Kosovo as a failed state, and international efforts of its state-building as a “sham.” They even describe the democratic processes in the country as “clan feuds,” with its “economy in downfall” accompanied with “rampant crime.” According to a recent World Bank report “Kosovo was projected to grow at about 4 percent in 2020; however, because of the COVID-19 outbreak, the economy is expected to contract by 4.5

⁵ See: CNN: NATO Attack on Yugoslavia begins, March 24th, 1999, <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9903/24/kosovo.strikes/>

⁶ For deeper inquiry on the effects of Kosovo refugee crisis see for example: Jim Whiteman, The Kosovo Refugee Crisis: NATO's humanitarianism versus human rights, The International Journal of Human Rights, Vol. 4, Issue 3-4, Taylor & Francis, 2000.

⁷ ICJ Advisory Opinion on Kosovo's Unilateral Declaration of Independence, July 22nd 2010, <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/141/141-20100722-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf>

⁸ UNGA Resolution 64/298, October 13th 2010, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/ROL%20A%20RES64%20298.pdf>

percent as service exports, public and private investment plunge,” whereas “Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 the Serbian economy will enter recession ... In the baseline scenario Serbian GDP will drop by 2.5 percent in 2020.”⁹ These figures, published by the World Bank, tell a story which is the opposite of what Lavrov and Dačić are claiming. The reports of the U.S. State Department’s Overseas Security Advisory Council on Kosovo and Serbia of 2019 are also telling the opposite of what Lavrov and Dačić are trying to propagate regarding the crime in Kosovo. According to these reports the risk of crime in Kosovo’s capital Prishtina is considered as moderate,¹⁰ while in the Serbian capital, Belgrade, it is considered as considerable, and they also state that “the considerable risk from crime [in Serbia] is due to the activities of Organized Crime (OC) groups, as Serbia is a main trafficking route from the east to Europe”.¹¹

In addition to all these, the two foreign ministers are ignoring the fact that the Special Chambers have been established by the decision of the Kosovo Assembly of July 3rd 2015,¹² and that by this act Kosovo has shown its responsibility towards justice for alleged war crimes, which is not exactly what can be said for Serbia. The “Kosovo Memory Book” (February 2nd, 2015), published by the Humanitarian Law Center based in Belgrade, confirms the deaths or disappearances of 13,535 individuals during the war in Kosovo and its immediate aftermath (January 1st 1998 – December 31st 2000). 10,812 of these individuals were Albanians, 2,197 were Serbs, while 526 victims were Roma, Bosniaks, Montenegrins, and other non-Albanians.¹³ Moreover, from 1999 – 2018, the justice institutions of Kosovo for war crimes have accused 111 people, out of which 61 were Albanians, 44 Serbs, 5 Montenegrins and 1 was Roma. Out of 61 accused Albanians, 34 were

⁹ World Bank Group, Western Balkans Regular Economic Report, The Economic and Social Impact of COVID-19, Spring 2020, <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/457181588085856454/pdf/The-Economic-and-Social-Impact-of-COVID-19-The-Country-Notes.pdf>

¹⁰ OSAC, Kosovo 2019 Crime & Safety Report, November 23rd, 2019 [https://www.osac.gov/Country/Kosovo/Content/Detail/Report/d0ff62ac-1d7b-45dd-84a4-15f4aeb9e219#:~:text=There%20is%20moderate%20risk%20from,influences%20crime%20rates%20in%20Kosovo.&text=According%20to%20Kosovo%20Police%20\(KP,of%20grievous%20thefts%20was%205%2C222.](https://www.osac.gov/Country/Kosovo/Content/Detail/Report/d0ff62ac-1d7b-45dd-84a4-15f4aeb9e219#:~:text=There%20is%20moderate%20risk%20from,influences%20crime%20rates%20in%20Kosovo.&text=According%20to%20Kosovo%20Police%20(KP,of%20grievous%20thefts%20was%205%2C222.)

¹¹ OSAC, Serbia 2019 Crime & Safety Report, November 3rd, 2019, <https://www.osac.gov/Country/Serbia/Content/Detail/Report/452bd4dc-9d15-491b-b271-15f4aeb34077>

¹² Law on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office, Official Gazette of Kosovo, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=11036>

¹³ Humanitarian Law Center: 31,600 documents undoubtedly confirm death or disappearance of 13,535 individuals during war in Kosovo, Belgrade, January 6th, 2015, http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?page_id=14390&lang=de. The Data Base of the Kosovo Memory Book is available online at www.kosovomemorybook.org

convicted, 23 released, 2 are on the run, and 2 are still in the judicial proceedings. Out of 44 accused Serbs, 4 were convicted, 13 released and 24 are on the run.¹⁴ On the other hand, the Serbian justice institutions for the crimes committed in Kosovo have convicted until now 17 Serbs, who were soldiers or police officers during the war, but almost none of them belonged to the commanding hierarchy, while the International Tribunal for War Crimes in Yugoslavia has convicted six Serbian high ranking representatives.¹⁵

While there is no evidence of the linkage between criminals and foreign terrorist fighters from Kosovo, it is true that since 2012, an estimated number of 255 foreign fighters have gone from Kosovo to join terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq. On the other hand, since 2014, the Kosovo Police, as well as its prosecuting and judicial institutions have acted, and in August 2014, 40 Kosovar citizens suspected to have participated in terrorism in Iraq and Syria were arrested. Until January 2015 some additional 80 people were arrested under similar charges, including a number of influential radical imams. As a result, since 2016 until today, there was not even a single foreign fighter from Kosovo who has gone to Syria and Iraq during this period.

Finally, the authors falsely claim that in recent years Kosovar authorities have undertaken discriminatory measures against the Serbian community in Kosovo, and there is not even a single evidence that can be found to prove such a claim.

¹⁴ For further details see: An Overview of the War Crimes Trials in Kosovo: 1999 – 2018, Humanitarian Law Center, October 2018, <http://www.hlc-kosovo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HLC-Kosovo-An-overview-of-war-crime-trials-in-Kosovo-1999-2018.pdf>

¹⁵ Blakaj: Në Kosovë për krime lufte janë dënuar gjashtë serbë, në Serbi për krime të kryera në Kosovë janë dënuar 15 serbë [Blakaj [Bekim Blakaj, Director of the Kosovo Office of the Fund for Humanitarian Law): In Kosovo for war crimes are convicted six serbs, in Serbia for war crimes committed in Kosovo were convicted 15 Serbs], Telegraf, March 15th, 2019. <https://telegrafi.com/blakaj-ne-kosove-per-krime-lufte-jane-denuar-gjashte-serbe-ne-serbi-per-krime-te-kryera-ne-kosove-jane-denuar-15-serbe-video/>

Disinformation Alert 2

Headline: Too little, too late: Kosovo President Thaçi's indictment for war crimes 20 years on isn't justice for Serbia – it's a travesty, **Russia Today, June 28 2020.**¹⁶

The author of this article is John Laughland, a controversial British scholar who, until recently, was Director of Studies at the Institute of Democracy and Cooperation in Paris, headed by Natalia Narochitskaya, a Russian historian and former State Duma member. Laughland has published, among others, the book *Travesty: The Trial of Slobodan Milošević and the Corruption of International Justice* (Pluto Press, London, 2007), in which he argues “that international justice is an impossible dream and that such show trials are little more than a propaganda exercise designed to distract attention from the war crimes committed by Western states.”¹⁷

Among other things, in this article Laughland argues that: “as someone who strongly and vocally opposed the NATO attack on Yugoslavia in 1999, which was justified in the name of ‘human rights,’ and as the last Western journalist to have met and interviewed the former Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milošević, in his cell in The Hague, before writing a book about his trial after he died in custody, it could be expected that I would welcome this announcement [publishing of the indictment against Hashim Thaçi];” “During and after the bombing of Yugoslavia, I drew attention to NATO’s war propaganda, which wildly exaggerated and misrepresented atrocities committed by Serb forces against Albanians in Kosovo. I also drew attention to atrocities committed by the KLA, which NATO propaganda never mentioned. In December 1999, for instance, I wrote that the KLA was “a brutal drugs-running terrorist force which is even now carrying out ethnic cleansing by attacking and killing Serbs, Gypsies, Jews, Muslims and ‘disloyal’ Albanians” and that Personally, I believe Thaci is guilty, and that Serbia has been the victim of a terrible injustice.”

¹⁶ Russia Today, <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/493063-thaci-indictment-kosovo-serbia/>

¹⁷ Pluto Books, Independent Radical Publishing, *Travesty: The Trial of Slobodan Milošević and the Corruption of International Justice*, (2007), <https://www.plutobooks.com/9781783715770/travesty/>

The Deconstruction of the Disinformation: Facts and Figures

The author ignores the fact of the death or disappearance of 13,535 individuals during the war in Kosovo and its immediate aftermath (January 1st 1998 – December 31st 2000). He also ignores the already mentioned fact that 10,812 of this number were Albanians, 2,197 were Serbs, while 526 victims were Roma, Bosniaks, Montenegrins, and other non-Albanians,¹⁸ as well as the one that within weeks after the beginning of NATO intervention, the Serbian armed forces had killed more than 9,000, and expelled to Albania and Macedonia around 860,000 Kosovo Albanians.¹⁹ These human sufferings he labels as NATO propaganda, thus making clear that for him, the lives of Albanian victims and the humanitarian dimension of the NATO intervention that were consequences of the Milošević's atrocities, as well as Belgrade's responsibility for these deeds, have no importance, by considering Serbia as a victim of terrible injustice.

While the justice for war crimes in Kosovo is implemented through three international justice mechanisms, namely UNMIK, EULEX and Specialized Chambers, in addition to national courts, none of the leaders or members of KLA has escaped from their duties to be responsive to international justice and gone fugitive, which does not fit with the description of Laughland about KLA as "brutal drug-running terrorist force." On the other hand, Serbia was hiding the notorious war criminals, Radovan Karadžić (2008),²⁰ and Ratko Mladić (2011),²¹ responsible for the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is not taking any serious steps to judge those responsible for the crimes in Kosovo, regardless of the fact that the data on the command

¹⁸ Humanitarian Law Center: 31,600 documents undoubtedly confirm death or disappearance of 13,535 individuals during war in Kosovo, Belgrade, January 6th, 2015, http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?page_id=14390&lang=de. The Data Base of the Kosovo Memory Book is online available at: www.kosovomemorybook.org

¹⁹ For deeper inquiry on the effects of Kosovo refugee crisis see for example: Jim Whiteman, The Kosovo Refugee Crisis: NATO's humanitarianism versus human rights, The International Journal of Human Rights, Vol. 4, Issue 3-4, Taylor & Francis, 2000.

²⁰ Karadzic arrested in Serbia: worked as a doctor, Reuters, July 22nd, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-warcrimes-karadzic/karadzic-arrested-in-serbia-worked-as-doctor-idUSL2196241820080722>

²¹ Ratko Mladić arrested: Bosnia war crimes suspect held, BBC, Ma 26th, 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13561407#:~:text=Fugitive%20Bosnian%20Serb%20war%20crimes,16%20years%20on%20the%20run.&text=Serbian%20President%20Boris%20Tadic%20said,The%20Hague%20was%20under%20way>.

structure of the police and military units operating in Kosovo during the war do exist – so far only 17 low ranking soldiers and police officers have been sentenced by the Serbian justice.²²

Disinformation Alert 3

Headline: Yugoslavia bombings to remain disgraceful page for NATO states — Russian security chief, TASS June 17th 2020.²³

In this article TASS has published extracts of the article of the Secretary of Russia's Security Council, Nikolai Patrushev, published for the Rossiyskaya Gazeta. According to TASS, Patrushev stated that, "The barbaric bombings of Yugoslavia were a separate disgraceful page in the history of all the NATO countries and will remain so."

According to TASS, "NATO launched its Allied Force air operation against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia over the situation in Kosovo on March 24, 1999. During the operation that lasted 78 days, the aircrafts of NATO countries made 38,000 sorties. As a result of NATO's bombings, from 3,500 to 4,000 people died and about 10,000 were wounded. Two thirds of them were civilians, according to Serbia's data."

The Deconstruction of the Disinformation: Facts and Figures

Based on the available evidence, the Human Rights Watch Report "Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign" has concluded that as few as 488, and as many as 527, Yugoslav civilians were killed as a result of NATO bombing. This Report further clarifies that between 278 and 317 of the dead were in Kosovo, 201 civilians were killed in Serbia, and eight in Montenegro.²⁴ On the other hand, the detailed data gathered based on 31,600 documents, presented in the publication

²² Blakaj: Në Kosovë për krime lufte janë dënuar gjashtës erbë, në Serbi për krime të kryera në Kosovë janë dënuar 15 serbë[Blakaj [BekimBlakaj, Director of the Kosovo Office of the Fund for Humanitarian Law): In Kosovo for war crimes are convicted six serbs, in Serbia for war crimes committed in Kosovo were convicted 15 Serbs], Telegraf, March 15, 2019. <https://telegrafi.com/blakaj-ne-kosove-per-krime-lufte-jane-denuar-gjashte-serbe-ne-serbi-per-krime-te-kryera-ne-kosove-jane-denuar-15-serbe-video/>

²³ Yugoslavia bombings to remain disgraceful page for NATO states — Russian security chief, TASS June 17th, 2020.

²⁴ "Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign," Human Rights Watch Report, Volume 12, Number 1 (D), 2000, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/nato/>

“Kosovo Memory Book” (February 2nd 2015), which was prepared by the Humanitarian Law Center based in Belgrade, confirm that NATO attacks killed a total of 754 people: 454 civilians and 300 members of the armed forces. 207 civilians were of Serbian and Montenegrin ethnicity, 219 were Albanian, 14 were Roma, and 14 were of other nationalities. Thus, the figures on human casualties as a result of NATO air campaign provided by TASS are pure disinformation that aims to undermine the role of the Alliance in ending the human suffering in Kosovo and providing peace and stability to the troubled Balkans during the 1990’s.

Disinformation Alert 4

Headline: Албански премијер дојурио у Приштину да заштити НАТО играче из деведесетих [Albanian Prime Minister runs to Pristina for protecting the NATO players from the nineties], **Sputnik Serbia, June 30th 2020.**²⁵

The article is an interview with the lawyer Goran Petronijević, who claims that the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, gave a fiery speech to the Assembly of Kosovo in support of the former leaders of the so called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), Hashim Thaçi and Kadri Veseli, after the proposal for indictment for war crimes against both of them was published. That is ,Rama, indirectly, stood in protecting NATO, because the Alliance acted together with KLA. NATO and KLA were partners during the 1990s, and it is clear that any indictment will bring into question NATO acts. Moreover, Petronijević states that he is confident that those who have ruled at that time in the US have helped KLA, and they are the main initiators of Rama’s words.

The Deconstruction of the Disinformation: Facts and Figures

First of all, the Albanian Prime Minister Rama has not given any speech whatsoever at the Assembly of Kosovo on this issue. During his visit to Kosovo he met with the leaders of Kosovo

²⁵ Албански премијер дојурио у Приштину да заштити НАТО играче из деведесетих, Sputnik Serbia, June 30th, 2020, <https://rs.sputniknews.com/analyze/202006301122902686-albanski-premijer-dojurio-u-pristinu-da-zastiti-nato-igrace-iz-devedesetih/>

institutions (President, Speaker of the Parliament) and with Kadri Veseli, Albin Kurti and Fatmir Limaj, in their capacities as leaders of Kosovo political parties. Secondly, the claim that Rama is protecting NATO from the Special Chambers and that any indictment will bring into question the Alliance's acts is a non-sense manipulation, given that the US and EU were the strongest supporters of the creation of the Specialized Chambers, and the US Judge, John Clint Williamson, was appointed as the EU's Lead Prosecutor of the Special Investigative Task Force for examining allegations for war crimes committed by former KLA, in response to the Report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe presented by Senator Dick Marty.²⁶ Based on the results of his inquiry presented on July 29th 2014,²⁷ the Specialized Chambers were created in July 2015.²⁸

Disinformation Alert 5

Headline: Једини папир који чува Косово у Србији све док га Београд поштује [The only paper that keeps Kosovo in Serbia, as long as Belgrade respects it], **Sputnik Serbia, June 11th 2020.**²⁹

This article is an interview with a professor of Constitutional Law, Vladan Kustević, who among others claims that until the UNSC Resolution 1244 exists, it will prevent Kosovo from becoming an internationally recognized state, and that according to that document, Kosovo is a protectorate, which is an equally important provision for us [Serbia], which is of equal importance with the provision that it is an integral part of Serbia.

²⁶ EU External Action, Press Release, John Clint Williamson appointed as Lead Prosecutor for the Special Investigative Task Force, August 29th, 2011.

²⁷ Special Investigative Task Force, Press Release, July 29th, 2014, http://www.hlc-rdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Press_release_EN.pdf

²⁸ Law on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office, Official Gazette of Kosovo, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=11036>

²⁹ Једини папир који чува Косово у Србији све док га Београд поштује, Sputnik Serbia, June 11th, 2020, <https://rs.sputniknews.com/analize/202006111122753156-jedini-papir-cuva-kosovo-srbija-beograd-postuje/>

The Deconstruction of the Disinformation: Facts and Figures

First and foremost, Kustević falsely claims that the UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999) is an impediment to Kosovo's international recognition, by ignoring the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo of 22nd July 2010. This Advisory Opinion clearly stated that the Declaration of Independence of Kosovo has not violated International Law, including the UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999),³⁰ and, consequently, Kosovo can be internationally recognized, regardless of the fact that the Resolution 1244 is still in effect. In addition, Kosovo's independence can co-exist with the nominal and non-executive protectorate of the United Nations that has transferred its executive authority to Kosovo's institutions and the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, and right now has a very limited monitoring capacity.

³⁰ ICJ Advisory Opinion on Kosovo's Unilateral Declaration of Independence, 22nd July, 2010, <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/141/141-20100722-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf>