

Sign-on letter

Citizens and Friends of the Balkans against Partition/ Land Swap

Just weeks ago a large assembly of civic organizations from Kosovo and Serbia wrote an open letter (<https://www.gradjanske.org/en/civil-society-organizations-from-serbia-and-kosovo-against-the-division-of-kosovo/>) to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, calling on her to reject an effort launched by Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, and since embraced by Kosovo President Hashim Thaçi, to resolve their inter-state dispute through a border "correction." In the intervening weeks, only German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated clearly that border changes in the Balkans should be off limits (link: <https://www.politico.eu/article/angela-merkel-no-balkan-border-changes-kosovo-serbia-vucic-thaci/>). The rest of the EU, as well as the US, has supported the Vučić-Thaçi effort either affirmatively, or indicated their consent through silence.

We agree with our colleagues from Serbia and Kosovo, as well as Chancellor Merkel: the effect of border changes in the direction of ethnic homogeneity will have a damaging impact within Kosovo, its immediate neighborhood, and the wider region. Furthermore, it will be seen as giving international license to a brand of "big man" politics that should have long since been banished from the region. The citizens of the entire region will suffer the impact of such a deal, whatever its modalities.

Therefore, we the undersigned wish to express our solidarity with our civil society colleagues in Kosovo and Serbia, some of whom have already suffered severe public criticism for opposing an arrangement made over their heads and without their input or consent. We implore the EU, its member states, and the United States to reconsider - including through their legislative bodies – their position on such a return to ethnification of politics and frontiers.

Sincerely,

Stephen Albert, English language editor BosNet 1996-2000

Agron Bajrami, journalist

Kurt Bassuener, Senior Associate, DPC, Dundee, UK

Florian Bieber, Professor of Southeast European Studies, University of Graz

BIRN Kosovo

Goran Bubalo, activist, Sarajevo

Adnan Ćerimagić, analyst, European Stability Initiative (ESI)

Nerzuk Čurak, professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo

Dr. Johanna Deimel, Balkan Expert, Deputy Director Southeast Europe Association (SOG), Munich
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Nedžma Džananović, professor, University of Sarajevo

Vedran Džihčić, senior researcher, Austrian Institute for International Affairs, director, Center for
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Foreign Policy Initiative BH

Erwan Fouéré, former EU Special Representative in Macedonia

GONG, Zagreb

Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)

Dr. Michael Haltzel, Washington DC

Berta Herrero Estalayo, journalist, Brussels

R. Bruce Hitchner, Professor of Classics and International Relations, Tufts University, Former Chair, The Dayton Peace Accords Project

Marko Attila Hoare, Associate Professor, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banjaluka

Dr. John W. Hulse, Associate Professor of Political Science, James Madison University

Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo

Prof. Dr.h.c. Wolfgang Ischinger, Senior Professor for International Security and Diplomatic Practice, Chairman, Munich Security Conference

Ivana Jordanovska, Fulbright IR student at NYU

Ambassador (ret) Richard D. Kauzlarich, Distinguished Visiting Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Former US Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina 1997-99

Adriatik Kelmendi, journalist

Dr. Soeren Keil, Reader in Politics and International Relations, Canterbury Christ Church University

Oliver Knabe, Executive Board (Chair), forumZFD

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Eric Manton, Senior Associate, DPC, Skopje

Petar Miletić, former deputy speaker of the Kosovo Assembly

Dr. Nicolas Moll, Independent Researcher, Sarajevo

Jasmin Mujanovic, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Political Science, Elon University

Asim Mujkić, professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo

Besnik Mustafaj, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, President of the Albanian Forum for the Alliance of Civilisations

Christian Axboe Nielsen, Associate Professor, Aarhus University

Ljupcho Petkovski, Executive Director, EUROTHINK, Skopje

Nenad Rašić, former member of Kosovo Assembly and former minister in the Kosovo government

András Riedlmayer, Harvard University, Editor, International Justice Watch

Dr. Majda Ruge, Non-Resident Fellow, Foreign Policy Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University Washington, DC

Senada Šelo Šabić, Senior Research Associate, IRMO, Zagreb

Prof. Dr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling, former federal minister, former High Representative for BiH

Daniel Serwer, professor, John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

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Additional names – September 7:

Dr Ana Bojinović Fenko, Associate Professor, University of Ljubljana

Dr. Robert Donia, Department of History, University of Michigan

European Movement of the Serbs of Kosova and Metohija, Prof. Dr. Rada Trajković

Daniel Hamilton, professor, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies

Aleksandar Hemon, Writer, Professor of Creative Writing, Princeton University

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Gerard Toal

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Dr. Mark Wheeler

Dr. Tim Wilson, Director, Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, University of St. Andrews