

BOSNIA INITIALED SAA

- ☒ After months-long political crisis, last week Bosnia finally initialed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union. Bosnian Prime Minister, Nikola Spiric, and EU Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn, initialed the document that will take Bosnia one step closer to the European Union. Yet, the signing of the SAA will depend on implementing further reforms that the EU required from Bosnia. Bosnia is the last among the Western Balkans states to initial the SAA. Due to a standstill with police reforms the SA process was frozen for the last several months. The initialing of the SAA is expected to serve as an additional incentive for continuing with reforms in Bosnia. [*Bosnia News 5.12*]

END OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR KOSOVO STATUS

- ☒ The four-month period of negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina for the status of Kosovo, as set by the United Nations, ended on Friday December 7. The international troika responsible for

facilitating the negotiations presented a report to UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, stating that no progress has been achieved in the bilateral negotiations. Many believed that December 10 is a key date for the status, when according to some media and political statements Kosovo would unilaterally declare independence. The UN Security Council will discuss the future of Kosovo on December 19, until when no major changes are expected. Serbian politicians expect the UN to extend the deadline for negotiations while Kosovo officials engage in diplomatic efforts for gaining support for independence by EU and US leaders. [*BBC 10.12; B92 10.12*]

ENLARGEMENT ON NATO'S AGENDA

- ☒ Enlargement was on the agenda of NATO ministerial meeting that took place in Brussels last week. Delegations from the Adriatic Charter states attended the meeting and presented the progress of reforms and the level of preparedness for NATO membership. The next NATO summit will take place in Bucharest, at the beginning of 2008. The states in the Western Balkans region expect that

the A3 states – Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, will receive invitations to join NATO. The conclusions of the meeting, however, state that the open political questions among the Western Balkans states need to be resolved before joining NATO – and this relates to the name dispute between Macedonia and Greece which flared up recently and threatens the success of Macedonian efforts to join NATO. [*Makfax 7.12, 10.12; Utrinski 10.12*]

BOSNIAN SERBS ELECTED A PRESIDENT

Social Democrate candidate, Rajko Kuzmanovic, is the new president of Republika Srpska, the Serb entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Kuzmanovic is the successor of late president Milan Jelic, who died in September. In a statement for the media, Rajko Kuzmanovic thanked everybody who voted for him and promised to represent and be the president of all citizens of Republika Srpska. The second best candidate was Ognjen Tadic from the Serb Democrat Party – founded by Radovan Karadzic who is indicted to the ICTY. [*BBC 10.12; Dnevni Avaz 10.12*]