

NEW EU REPRESENTATIVE FOR BOSNIA

- ☒ Miroslav Lajcak, a Slovak diplomat, will be the new EU Representative for Bosnia, starting July 1, 2007. Mr. Lajcak will take over the position from Mr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling, a German diplomat who only held the post for eighteen months. Mr. Lajcek was previously Ambassador of Slovakia to Serbia and Montenegro and OSCE Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro. He has solid knowledge of the languages in the region. Mr. Lajcek's appointment comes at a time when reforms in Bosnia are slowing down and further efforts are needed. Last week EU Chief Negotiator for BiH and Albania, Mr. Dirck Lange, criticized the Bosnian government for lack of progress with the implementation of reforms required by the EU. Bosnia has not yet signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU, mostly due to slow police reform. [*Avaz 7.5*]

CONTROVERSIES OVER NEW SERBIAN GOVERNMENT

- ☒ The EU expressed concern over the political developments in Serbia regarding the formation of the new Serbian government. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Mr.

Xavier Solana, stated that the situation in Serbia was not good since there are open questions regarding the status of Kosovo and cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, while President Tadic and prospective Prime Minister Kostunica are not cooperating well. EU Enlargement Commissioner, Mr. Olli Rehn, also expressed disappointment over the inability of the democratic political parties in Serbia to create a coalition government. Mr. Rehn said that he doubted that the Radicals-led government would achieve much progress in reopening the negotiations for signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU. [*B92 8.5*]

EU INTEGRATION CAUSES A RIFT BETWEEN MACEDONIAN POLITICIANS

- ☒ Macedonian President, Mr. Branko Crvenkovski, accused the government and the Prime Minister for paying insufficient attention to EU integration. EU integration is a strategic objective shared by the President, the government, and the majority of the population, yet according to Mr. Crvenkovski, the government lost precious time dealing with politically marginal issues instead of focusing on EU and NATO integration. The government rejects the accusations and claims that all EU-related activities are proceeding as planned. According to the government Spokesman, Mr. Ivica Bocevski,

approximation with the EU legislation is proceeding at a satisfactory pace and political dialogue is improving. Macedonia became an EU candidate country in December 2005; however, no date for starting formal negotiations with the EU has been set. [*Utrinski Vesnik 9.5*]

MONTENEGRO JOINS THE COE AND RCC

- ☒ On May 11th Montenegro became the 47th member state of the Council of Europe, the oldest European institution. One year after the proclamation of independence, Montenegro was invited to join the Council of Europe. This week, at the Zagreb Summit, Montenegro will also join the Regional Cooperation Council, the organization which will replace the Stability Pact for SEE. In Montenegro, joining the RCC is perceived as making another step towards EU membership, as the Zagreb Summit will host the EU Commission President, Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, German Chancellor, Ms. Angela Merkel, European Parliament President, Mr. Hans Gert Pottering, and many other European officials, who, along with SEE political leaders, will discuss EU assistance for the Western Balkans, the status of Kosovo and other political issues relevant to the countries of the SEE region. [*Vijesti 9.5; Seeurope.Net 9.5*]