

NEW DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN SERBIA

- ☒ More than four months after the general elections in January, the Serbian Parliament last week elected a government. After pronounced EU and international pressure, the democratic political parties in Serbia finally reached an agreement about the coalition government. The new Serbian Prime Minister is Mr. Vojislav Kostunica, the head of the previous Serbian government. He presented the program of his government and emphasized the status of Kosovo and European integration as the main strategic priorities of the new government. EU Enlargement Commissioner, Mr. Olli Rehn, saluted the creation of the new Serbian government and expressed firm hope that the negotiations concerning the Stabilization and Association Agreement will soon be resumed. [*B92 16.5, 17.5; Seeurope.Net 16.5; Dnevnik 17.5*]

TURKEY'S DOMESTIC POLITICS VERSUS EU INTEGRATION

- ☒ A senior-level meeting between Turkey and EU has been postponed indefinitely on both sides' demand. The meeting,

which would have tackled details regarding customs union, is likely to be held during the next, Portuguese, presidency of the EU. Although officially both sides needed more time to prepare for the meeting, some observe how Turkish foreign policy is suffering due to the political developments in the domestic arena. The Turkish Constitution was recently amended to allow public vote for presidential elections and early general elections have been scheduled for July 22. In addition, many in Turkey fear that relations with the EU could suffer further with new French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, getting in office. Mr. Sarkozy is known for his opposition to EU membership for Turkey. [*Today's Zaman 17.5*]

CROATIAN NEGOTIATIONS TO ACCELERATE DURING PORTUGUESE PRESIDENCY

- ☒ The Portuguese Foreign Minister, Mr. Luis Filipe Marques Amado, whose country will take over the EU presidency on July 1, met Croatian Prime Minister, Mr. Ivo Sanader and Foreign Affairs Minister Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic. Mr. Amado states that one of the priorities of the upcoming Portuguese presidency will be to speed up the negotiations with Croatia and thus send a positive signal and

contribute to the stabilization of the whole region. Croatia, which started negotiations with the EU in late 2005, has only opened six out of thirty-three chapters, so additional impetus for speeding things up is more than welcome. [*Jutarnji 17.5; Seeurope.Net 17.5*]

MACEDONIAN NAME DISPUTE TO AFFECT EU INTEGRATION EFFORTS

- ☒ The Greek President, Mr. Karolos Papoulias, during a recent official visit by the Austrian President Mr. Heinz Fischer, stated that the name dispute will have an impact on EU and NATO integration aspirations of Macedonia, accusing the Macedonian side of a non-constructive position on the issue. Regarding the name dispute, Greek and Macedonian delegations met in New York, under the auspices of the UN Special Mediator Mr. Matthew Nimetz, to discuss possible solutions of this unusual but very sensitive political problem between the two countries. In 1995, Macedonia was admitted to the UN under the reference FYROM but the decade-long bilateral negotiations that followed did not amount to much. A solution acceptable to both sides has still not been found. [*Makfax 16.5; Seeurope.Net 16.5, 17.5*]