

### PROGRESS WITH POLITICAL DIALOGUE IN MACEDONIA

- ☒ After several weeks spent outside Parliament and increasing pressure from international officials to return, the largest Albanian political party in Macedonia, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), on May 30 returned to the Macedonian Parliament. The decision was preceded by negotiations between Prime Minister, Mr. Nikola Gruevski and the leader of DUI, Mr. Ali Ahmeti, where they supposedly reached an agreement regarding 46 bills and legal acts which would be subject to the Badtinger Principle – each bill passed by the Parliament needs to also have a majority support from the ethnic minorities MPs. The agreement and DUI's return to Parliament was also welcomed by the EU and US, since successful political dialogue is held as a condition for further NATO and EU integration. [*Dnevnik 30.5; 31.5; Seeurope.Net 31.5*]

### REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND EU

- ☒ Budva, Montenegro hosted a regional conference which brought together the heads of states from

most countries in the SEE region. The presidents from Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Croatia and Bulgaria discussed the prospects for EU integration of the region and agreed that the EU is the only viable option for the SEE region. In another regional initiative, the first Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was elected. Mr. Hido Biscevic, current Deputy Foreign Minister of Croatia, will take the new post in February 2008. The RCC is based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and is funded by the European Commission. The main aim of the RCC is to assist initiatives and projects for regional cooperation between the SEE countries. [*Seeurope.Net 28.5*]

### SERBIAN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE COOPERATION WITH THE ICTY

- ☒ The Interior Ministry of Serbia announced that seven people were arrested on May 29 suspected of committing war crimes during the war in Croatia. These recent events confirm the new democratic Serbian government's commitment to cooperation with the ICTY and arresting war criminals. Also, during a recent visit to Bosnia, Serbian Foreign Minister, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, stated that the Serbian government is putting

extra efforts in cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, which should allow opening a new page in the bilateral relations between the two neighbouring countries. These Serbian efforts are also welcomed by the EU, as EU Enlargement Commissioner, Mr. Olli Rehn, stated that negotiations with Serbia could be re-launched soon and finished in two-three months. [*B92 28.5; 31.5; Balkan Times 30.5*]

### AGREEMENT ON KOSOVO STATUS STILL PENDING

- ☒ Although many hoped that the G8 meeting in Potsdam, Germany would result with an agreement about the status of Kosovo, no progress has been made in reconciling the Russian and EU and US positions on the issue. In the days preceding the G8 meeting, some regional media said that Russia was ready to compromise and an agreement was imminent, yet the final document from Potsdam confirmed that the differences remain and talks will continue. The EU and the US support the draft resolution of US Special Envoy, Mr. Marri Ahtisaari, while Russia supports further negotiations between Serbian and Kosovo representatives. [*Balkan Times 29.5; 31.5*]