
HARADINAJ TO BE KEPT IN CUSTODY UNTIL EXTRADITION REQUEST

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Reuters reported this on Thursday evening.

Speaking earlier in the day, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic commented on the arrest of Haradinaj in France to say it is "good for justice to be above politics."

Vucic said that the Serbian prosecution has numerous pieces of evidence and "incriminating things" against Haradinaj, and that he wished that France, "as a serious country with the rule of law," would not act in line with political positions, but rather in line with justice.

"That would then raise the question of how Serbia would react in a reciprocal situation," he said.

When a B92 reporter asked whether Serbia would officially seek Haradinaj's extradition, the prime minister responded: "You bet it will."

"We have him for so many (criminal) acts that they can't be counted. Nobody has the right to undermine the decisions of an independent prosecution," said Vucic.

Asked whether there was "pressure concerning Haradinaj," Vucic said he "does not know how pressure is exerted" and described himself as being "among a few who respond to every question of reporters, unlike those who say something and then run away."

"You can imagine how they feel, I don't think it's pleasant for them or that it's nice for them to try and pressure. I've grown out of that a long time ago. Nobody is pressuring me any longer, I can't be talked to that way, and Serbia can't be talked to that way. I see what their wishes are, I recognize them, but what do I care what their wishes are. I'm interested in what's just."

"They over in Europe, if they don't like it... super. Let him go once again, then come here to lecture me about (EU accession talks) chapters 23 and 24 and the principles of the rule of law," said Vucic.

Arrest in France

Former Hague indictee and leader of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj was arrested in France on Wednesday on a Serbian war crimes warrant.

Albanian language media reported first that Haradinaj had been detained based on an international warrant issued by Serbia, the N1 broadcaster said.

The 48-year-old former leader of the KLA ("Kosovo Liberation Army") and former Kosovo prime minister traveled with a diplomatic passport when he was stopped at the airport in the eastern French town of Basel-Mulhouse.

The arrest has since been confirmed by his family, as well as his party and the Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Pristina daily Zeri said this ministry was "working on Haradinaj being released soon."

Reuters reported that "a French judiciary source said that investigators would on Thursday begin

looking into whether there were reasons not to execute the extradition request, especially in the case that it had been issued for political reasons."

The same source said that investigators will consider whether Haradinaj, an ethnic Albanian from Kosovo, "had already been tried before the UN court on the same charges as those the arrest warrant had been issued on."

Haradinaj was in 2015 arrested in Slovenia, also on an Interpol notice issued by Serbia, and then released.

Serbia has filed 108 criminal complaints against him, on suspicion that he committed grave crimes, including terrorism and murder of civilians in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999.

Haradinaj was indicted for war crimes and put on trial by the Hague Tribunal but was acquitted of all charges in 2012.

SOURCE: B92, TANJUG, N1

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