
KOSOVO WON'T RECOGNISE CATALONIA, HARADINAJ SAYS

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The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, has told the Spanish daily newspaper El Pais that his country will never recognise the independence of Catalonia from Spain, adding that Kosovo and Catalonia do not have anything in common and establishing any analogy is senseless.

Kosovo was born from the disintegration of the Yugoslavia Federation, in a bloody process of everyone against everyone. This is not the case of Spain, where civil and political rights are respected, Haradinaj told El Pais.

Haradinaj added that insisting on the similarity between the two cases would mean not acknowledging history or misinterpreting it.

Spain is an advanced democracy. Our case comes from the dissolution, through tragic wars, of the old Yugoslavia, in the 1990s. There is a huge difference: we were fighting for democracy but, above all, for human rights. This is not Catalonias case, he said.

The former province of Serbia declared its independence in 2008 and Serbia has vowed never to recognize it.

Spain is one of five EU states that also do not recognise Kosovos independence, alongside Slovakia, Cyprus, Romania, and Greece.

The newspaper quoted Haradinaj as saying Spain that is an admirable country and Kosovo respects it as a nation for its history to its worldwide civilisation.

Spain, meanwhile, has its own separatist issues with both the Basque Country and Catalonia, whose leader, Carles Puigdemont, declared the region's independence last October before fleeing into exile. Spain has since arrested a number of Catalan leaders but the standoff over Catalonia's future continues.

The Kosovo leader said his country was committed to regional stability. This is our destiny, for our and everybodys benefit, because the bigger the stability of the western Balkans, the bigger the peace and stability in Europe is, and the smallest the chance for our enemies to act and destabilize the region or use it to diminish or erode Europes progress, Haradinaj stated.

Haradinaj also commented on the dismissal of the interior minister and the head of the intelligence agency following the controversial recent deportation of six Turkish citizens to Turkey.

Turkey accused them of being supporters of the exiled cleric Fetullah Gulen. Haradinaj added that

legal procedures [in the deportations] were not respected, which is why I intervened.

Talking about Russia, Haradinaj stated that Kosovo had chosen its side in the dispute between Moscow and the West, which was the side of the European Union and the Atlantic alliance, NATO.

Our democracy is young but our objective is to be part of the Euro-Atlantic family, just as it is to keep good relationships with the EU, he said.

Noting that Kosovo is not under the influence of Russia, Haradinaj added that in addition to that, Moscow acts carefully; it doesn't try to destabilize the region openly but we are worried about a certain type of activities of their agenda here ... everywhere around us

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