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**ASSOCIATION OF SERB MUNICIPALITIES 'WHEN KOSOVO JOINS UN' - DPM HOXHAJ**

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Hoxhaj says the establishment of the Association of Serb-run Municipalities should take place in parallel with Kosovo's membership in the UN. As far as the establishment of the Association and membership into the UN is concerned, my stance is that we need to integrate the Agreement on establishment of the Association within a bigger agreement on normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. The action to establish the Association goes in parallel with the UN seat, Hoxhaj said.

The government of Kosovo has announced that the draft statute of the Association will be submitted to the Constitutional Court of Kosovo, which should assess its compliance with applicable laws of Kosovo. Serbian side and officials in Belgrade say that the Association will have executive powers, but authorities in Pristina say that the Association will not be a third level of government in Kosovo and it has to be in full compliance with applicable laws of Kosovo. The principles of the deal on Association were agreed during EU-facilitated Kosovo-Serbia dialogue in Brussels in August 2015, and stipulate that Kosovo Serbs should have full oversight over economic development, education, healthcare, urban and rural planning, with budgetary contributions coming directly from Serbia. In exchange, the municipalities would agree to full integration into Kosovo.

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