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## **SERBIA ACCUSED OF WAGING CAMPAIGN TO STOP OVERTURN KOSOVO BEING INDEPENDENT STATE**

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Express (24 September 2019)

Kosovo foreign minister Behgjet Pacolli claims bribes, arms sales and "other dirty means" have been used to buy the support of some of Africa's poorest countries, as well as others in South America. The latest example allegedly involves a six-figure payment to ministers of the Central African Republic (CAR), which was exposed by its own media. At a Paris meeting between the republic's foreign minister and a Serbian intermediary, £310,000 was reportedly handed over on condition the CAR sent back a letter "withdrawing recognition of Kosovo".

Last night Mr Pacolli told the Sunday Express: "The worldwide recognition of Kosovo is irreversible and has strengthened stability in the Western Balkans. The Serbian campaign to use bribes, corruption, arms sales and other dirty means with the aim of making individuals issue fake diplomatic notes with so-called derecognition of Kosovo is shameful for a European country that has the status of a candidate member state for the European Union."

The shadowy representative linked to powerful figures in Serbia, is also reported to have lobbied several of Africa's poorest countries, including Comoros, Lesotho, Burundi, Liberia and Togo.

Kosovo says some derecognition letters are identical, including the same spelling mistakes.

Its status is recognised by the US, UK, and most of Europe, but rejected by Serbia, Russia, China, Slovakia, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Romania.

Serbia's alleged campaign has increased tensions, with Kosovo imposing tariffs on its goods.

The US, UK, France, Italy and Germany has asked Serbia to "suspend the derecognition campaign against Kosovo".

The Serbian Embassy in London was unavailable for comment when contacted by this newspaper.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1181127/serbia-campaign-kosovo-independent-state-behgjet-pacolli>