

Sidste Nyt fra Albanien, Kosóva og Makedonien

The Latest News from Albania, Kosóva and Macedonia

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Præsident Moisiu har holdt møde med OSCE-formanden, den Belgiske Karel De Gucht



The framework of *The Latest News from Albania, Kosóva and Macedonia* is in Danish - nevertheless, the news are mostly in English. You may send information, comments and questions to: [»The Latest News«](#) [please click].

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Albanien *Albania*

Serbien og Montenegro. Serbien (alene) *Serbia-Montenegro. Serbia*

Montenegro (alene) *Montenegro*

Makedonien *Macedonia [FYRoM]*

Grækenland *Greece*

Tyrkiet *Turkey*

Italien *Italia*

USA *United States (US)*

England *England*

Tyskland *Germany*

Frankrig *France*

Danmark (Norge, Sverige) *Denmark (Norway, Sweden)*

Rusland *Russia*

Kina *China*

UGEOVERSIGT (resumé)

Kosóva: Martti Ahtisaari skal have udtalt at drøftelserne om decentralisering kan afsluttes denne sommer.

OSCE og UNMIK har udsendt: KOSOVO REVIEW OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM 1999-2005 REFORMS AND RESIDUAL CONCERNS. However, despite the above efforts, a number of the OSCE recommendations have not been addressed satisfactorily. For the most part, when the authorities have failed to act upon the recommendations, the relevant concern still remains a problem today. With respect to legal and judicial institutions, despite OSCE recommendation, the authorities have failed to provide courts with adequate office space to hold public hearings, and have resisted calls to increase judicial salaries to attract the brightest lawyers and to dampen corruption. There remains a serious lack of institutional support for dealing with non-custodial sentences, especially for juvenile offenders, so that a number of alternative punishments can not be used. Despite numerous recommendations calling for better facilities for dealing with mentally ill offenders, an adequate secure facility is still wanting. Whilst UNMIK has introduced a vast array of new laws, a number of areas that would have benefited from new or amended legislation, have been left untouched.

Albanien: OSCE Formand - Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht - har været i Albanien og andre Balkan-lande [se billedet forrest i nyhedsbrevet]. »The OSCE Chairman called on Albanian leaders to restart the election reforms and urged them to implement the recommendations of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) following the 2005 Parliamentary elections. He also pledged the OSCE's support in this process«.

Parlamentsflertallet mener ikke der er behov for at inddrage udenlandske jurister i spørgsmålet om Chefstatsanklager Sollaku's arbejde og hans fremtid i jobbet.

Økonomien. Handelsbalancen. Den Albanske Nationalbank skriver: The external sector of the Albanian economy during 2005 is presented with a deep negative balance on current account, caused by a high trade deficit. The trade deficit deepened as a result of the slowdown in the export growing paces and the rapid import increase. Capital inflows have by and large been sufficient in compensating the current deficit, as such allowing an overall positive balance. Foreign reserve at the end of 2005 marked EUR 1.204 billion, fully adequate to meet about 4.7 months of goods and services import.

Albansk emigration til Italien. Tilbagesendelse af penge. Nationalbankdirektøren har holdt tale herom [nedenfor nogle uddrag]: Since the beginning of the transition, the volume of remittances to Albania has grown rapidly. Indeed, remittance flows are increasingly important relative to other foreign exchange-earning activities, representing around 14 percent of GDP, 70 percent of exports, and 33 percent of imports. Italy is the major migration destination country for Albanians. On the other hand, Albania is the number one recipient country in terms of remittance flows from Italy to other countries. Therefore, remittance services from Italy to Albania have become a topic of great interest. The Italian-Albanian remittance corridor is a relevant case to examine the effects of remittances on local communities and to discuss the ways of making these flows more efficient and less costly. A recent survey of the Bank of Albania shows that remittances have had positive impact across all Albanian regions. The influence is slightly higher in less developed regions alleviating to some extent income disparities. Remittances have become a critical source of income for households, reaching 33 percent of disposable income of an average family recipient and almost 40 percent in rural areas. The recipients of remittances are from all social groups, including middle income class (60 percent) as well as the low income class (27 percent). Our estimates show that the level and severity of poverty are significantly reduced among those households receiving remittances, with greater influence on severity rather than the level of poverty. Remittances are mostly used for imported consumer goods, services, and for the purchase or construction of houses. A small share is saved or invested in businesses, mainly in agricultural sector. Therefore, the impact of remittances in creating new jobs has been limited. In this view, I do not want to downplay the importance of remittances, but to draw attention to additional structural reforms needed to enhance their impact in the economy. It is not a coincidence that after reaching the level of 14 percent of GDP, the growth rate of remittances has been as constant as that of foreign direct investments in Albania. This shows that in the mid-term, there is no difference between the decision of foreign investors and remitters to invest in Albania. Of course, emigrants may have a better knowledge of domestic markets. They are more connected to their home-country and react faster than foreign investors. Nevertheless, they

demand guarantees for their investments as much as foreign investors do. Therefore, both the volume of remittances and their effectiveness largely depend on improvements of Albanian business environment.

Den Bulgarske Præsident Parvanov besøger Serbien. Den Serbiske Regering skriver: Belgrade, April 25, 2006 – Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica today informed Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov on the current course of negotiations on Kosovo-Metohija held in Vienna, and stressed that the solution for the future status of Kosovo-Metohija must be based on compromise, in accordance with international law and European standards. Kostunica said that the solution must secure a high degree of autonomy for Kosovo-Metohija within Serbia and the state union of Serbia-Montenegro.

Montenegro: Folkeafstemning 21.05.2006 om Montenegro's forhold til statsforbundet Serbien-Montenegro. Montenegro's regering skriver: Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic today met with head of the European Union's Observation Mission in Podgorica. The discussion focused on the current political and economic developments in Montenegro and the preparation for the referendum on Montenegro's state status, scheduled for May 21 this year.

Makedonien: Drab på to skovbetjente; formentlig er det mafia'ens værk.

Undersøgelse af Makedonsk medvirken til ulovlig tilbageholdelse på anmodning af USA.

Grækenland: Græsk politi har pågrebet en Græker og nogle Albanere der mistænkes for involvering i hashsmugling/-handel.

Kathimerini har et interview med en amerikansk forsker - Donald Quataert, author of *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* - der er interesseret i det civile samfund i Osmannerriget.

USA: CIA World Factbook 2006 Now Available

Danmark: Dansk Flygtningehjælp har udsendt NYHEDSBREV TIL KOSOVARER I DANMARK med mange informationer.

INTERNATIONALE ORGANISATIONER m.v.

Opmærksomheden henledes på *Economic Reconstruction and Development in South East Europe*. Adressen er www.seerecon.org. Her kan man finde materiale om aktuelle møder og konferencer.

FN

VERDENSBANKEN, IMF M.FL.

Se under de enkelte lande / områder.

OSCE, Europarådet

Se under de enkelte lande / områder.

EU

NATO

ICTY - TRIBUNALET I HAAG

Verserende sager vedr. Kosovo: Anklageskrifter og udskrifter af retsmøderne kan findes på:
<http://www.un.org/icty/cases-e/index-e.htm>

ICTY vs Slobodan **Milosevic**, (IT-02-54). Sagen er afsluttet uden dom pga Milosevic' død 11.03.2006

ICTY vs Fatmir **Limaj** et al. (IT-03-66). Der er fældet dom, se nærmere i [# 284](#)

ICTY vs Ramush **Haradinaj** (IT-04-84). Haradinaj er løsladt (på visse betingelser) indtil sagen skal for Retten.

BALKAN LANDE, LANDE VED ØSTLIGE MIDDELHAV

BALKAN GENERELT



Udsnit af EU's Europakort 2004. [Udsnittet kan forstørres ved at klikke på det]. Kortet indgår i en præsentationsbrochure, der kan downloades som pdf fra: http://europa.eu.int/comm/publications/booklets/eu_glance/20/da.pdf.

KOSÓVA

Bynavne: Angives der to navne på samme lokalitet, er den Albanske nævnt først. Se oversigten på: <http://bjoerna.dk/kosova/byer.htm> • [Rapporter fra FN's Generalsekretær](#) • 040616 SG Kofi Annan udtaler at han agter at udpege Søren Jessen-Petersen som 5' SRSG. [Søren Jessen-Petersen](#) blev senere udpeget og tiltrådte i Kosóva 040816. • 0308 Harri Holkeri tiltrådte som 4' SRSG. Fratrådt 0406 af helbredsmæssige grunde. • 020214 Michael Steiner tiltrådte i Kosova som 3' SRSG og fratrådte i begyndelsen af 0307. • En biografi over 2' SRSG Hans Hækkerup kan læses på [Danske Politikere](#). En anmeldelse af hans bog »Kosovos mange ansigter« indgår i »[Albansk Almanak 2004](#)« • [Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government](#). • [Kosova's Regering](#). • [Webside vedr. 2004-valgene](#)

Parlamentsvalget 2004, se: <http://kosovoelections.org/eng/>. Præsidenten - Ibrahim Rugóva - blev genvalgt efter valget af Parlamentet *the Assembly*; han døde 21.01.2006. Ny præsident er [Fatmir Sejdiu](#)

Kosovo's / Kosóva's fremtid. Forhandlingerne:

Martti Ahtisaari skal have udtalt at drøftelserne om decentralisering kan afsluttes denne sommer:

LONDON, April 25 (Tanjug) - Special envoy Martti Ahtisaari of the United Nations (UN) secretary-general in charge of the Kosovo-Metohija status talks has expressed hope that the current phase of the Vienna negotiations on issues of decentralization and minority protection will be completed by July. Speaking for the BBC, Ahtisaari said he believed the current talks would continue into the summer, and end most probably in June, hopefully in July. Progress in these talks largely depends on the cooperation of Belgrade and Pristina with his Vienna Office, Ahtisaari specified.

Grænserne. Det Serbisk-Montenegrinske UM skriver:

PARIS, April 25 (Beta)-In response to a statement by Kosovo Premier Agim Ceku that he did not recognize the border agreement between Serbia Montenegro and Macedonia, state union and Serbian officials on April 25 declared it was not up to him to decide the borders.

Serbia Montenegro Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic, currently visiting France, told the press in Paris that now was the time "to refrain from heavy words" and pointed out that "Mr Ceku is neither the U.N. Security Council nor the U.N. General Assembly, which decides on the status of borders."

"(Ceku) forgets that states discuss border issues, not national minorities, regardless of their numbers in certain regions," said Sanda Raskovic-Ivic, who chairs the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija, in Belgrade.

"The statement he issued gives one the obvious impression that Ceku already feels himself the premier of an independent and internationally recognized state of Kosovo, which is not the case," Raskovic-Ivic said, adding that Serbia would never accept such a thing, a press release from the Coordinating Center read.

Commenting on Ceku's statement of April 24 that he wished good relations with Serbia, but only after Belgrade apologizes for ethnic Albanian victims, she said she concurred that "this phase" should be entered upon, on condition that the ethnic Albanians apologize for crimes committed against Serbs from 1941 to the present.

OSCE og UNMIK har udsendt: KOSOVO REVIEW OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM 1999-2005 REFORMS AND RESIDUAL CONCERNS (March 2006). Nedenfor executive summary. Hele rapporten kan downloades som PDF fra: <http://www.osce.org/item/18579.html>; albansk udgave fra: <http://www.osce.org/item/18579.html?lc=SQ> og serbisk fra: <http://www.osce.org/item/18579.html?lc=SR>.

To date, the Legal System Monitoring Section (LSMS), in the Department of Human Rights and Rule of Law (the Department) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE Mission in Kosovo) has issued nine public reports and eight semi-public reports, which have analysed the justice system from a human rights perspective and highlighted fair trial and due process concerns. These reports have included almost 200 recommendations addressed to the relevant authorities for specific action to help remedy the shortcomings and help ensure responsible compliance with international standards. The responsible authorities have included the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, KFOR, the UNMIK Department of Justice (DOJ), legal or judicial institutions, the Court Presidents, prosecutors, and defence counsel. This report looks at the extent to which these authorities have addressed the concerns raised in the LSMS reports.

A considerable number of the OSCE recommendations have been fully or partially implemented by the addressed authorities. With respect to institutional developments, the authorities have established the Judicial Inspection Unit and the Kosovo Judicial and Prosecutorial Council to enhance the supervision of the criminal justice system; the Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI) to train judges and prosecutors; the Criminal Defence Resource Centre (CDRC) to ensure a better equality of arms;¹ and Probation Service to foster a more rehabilitative penal system. Improvements have been made in the courts where the authorities have successfully encouraged greater participation by ethnic minorities. In terms of legislative

developments, a number of the OSCE recommendations were fulfilled with the promulgation of the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self- Government in Kosovo and the new procedural and substantive criminal codes, as well as through the issuance of justice circulars.

A number of the OSCE recommendations directed at the courts, prosecutors and defence counsel have also been addressed. There have been notable improvements in the way in which courts deal with crimes involving sexual assaults, as well as with the assignment of defence counsel. The Kosovo Chamber of Advocates (KCA), which represents the defence bar, has played an important role in raising the standard of defence representation by drafting a Code of Conduct and providing training for its members. In some areas, the standard of defence counsel has notably improved. The OSCE recommendation that, in order to deal with judicial bias in ethnically sensitive cases international judges and prosecutors should participate, has been satisfied with a novel in which international judges and prosecutors sit alongside their local counterparts. Lastly, the former practice of extra-judicial detentions by the SRSG and KFOR has now ceased, seemingly for good, thus meeting the long-standing recommendations by the OSCE.

However, despite the above efforts, a number of the OSCE recommendations have not been addressed satisfactorily. For the most part, when the authorities have failed to act upon the recommendations, the relevant concern still remains a problem today. With respect to legal and judicial institutions, despite OSCE recommendation, the authorities have failed to provide courts with adequate office space to hold public hearings, and have resisted calls to increase judicial salaries to attract the brightest lawyers and to dampen corruption. There remains a serious lack of institutional support for dealing with non-custodial sentences, especially for juvenile offenders, so that a number of alternative punishments can not be used. Despite numerous recommendations calling for better facilities for dealing with mentally ill offenders, an adequate secure facility is still wanting. Whilst UNMIK has introduced a vast array of new laws, a number of areas that would have benefited from new or amended legislation, have been left untouched.

The OSCE has directed many of its recommendations to the judges. However, notwithstanding the assistance of detailed OSCE reports and training by the KJI, in many areas the judges have yet to lift the standard of their practice to satisfy international standards. Breaches of due process and fair trial norms occur regularly throughout Kosovo, despite specific recommendations indicating which practices need to change. In particular, the judges at all levels consistently fail to properly and fully reason their decisions on detention and punishment. The courts have failed to introduce recommended practices and procedures designed to ensure that trials are heard without undue delay: there remain problems in ensuring the attendance of witnesses at trial, organising the municipal court prosecutors, and obtaining expert evidence. And, despite consistent reminders, a number of court presidents do not ensure that complete trial schedules are posted in public view. In addition, many recommendations to defence counsel have fallen on deaf ears. The OSCE has continued to observe cases in which defence counsel have failed to represent their clients effectively and/or have breached the domestic code of conduct. In many cases this has led to a violation of the accused's right to an effective defence.

Lastly, the international judge and prosecutor programme, although a necessary component and an overall success in fighting inter-ethnic and organised crime in the post conflict period, has a number of shortcomings. Whilst some of the OSCE recommendations were addressed, others were ignored. Inadequate contractual arrangements for the international judges and prosecutors hampers the system; the procedure for case assignments may breach international standards; and the lack of engagement in terms of mentoring has diminished the long term benefits of the program. These remaining problems, which could have been remedied without a large effort, have left the program open to criticism.

As the remaining legal and judicial responsibilities begin to pass from UNMIK to the PISG, this report can serve as a reminder of what has been achieved and, perhaps more importantly, of what remains to be done.

Pressemeddelelser fra UNMIK:**SRSG Søren Jessen-Petersen: "It is very important that local elections open up opportunities for all communities."**

PRISTINA – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG), Søren Jessen-Petersen, and the President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, this morning co-chaired a roundtable with Kosovo's political leaders to discuss the timeframe for the next municipal elections in Kosovo. The roundtable was moderated by Jens Modvig, acting Head of Mission of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

The SRSG underlined the importance to hear the views of and consult with political parties in full accordance with democratic procedures before taking a decision on the timing of the municipal elections.

"A broad majority of political leaders were in favour of postponing the elections, but there were also representatives who felt that it was important to hold the elections this autumn. So after considering the reasons why municipal elections should be held and why they should be postponed, and listening to political leaders, the President, the OSCE and myself will now have further consultations. Once this has been done, I will be in a position to take this decision which, of course, will be in the best interests of Kosovo."

According to the SRSG, the timing of future status discussions is a very important reason to consider when to decide to hold municipal elections.

"It is important that we do not take any risks in terms of stability at that crucial moment. Political leaders and the people of Kosovo should not be distracted. It is very important that local elections open up opportunities for all communities, including the minorities, notably the Kosovo Serbs, to participate. The timing is crucial."

Kosovo: UN envoy hails reconstruction in Roma neighbourhood

25 April 2006 – The senior United Nations envoy to Kosovo today hailed a ground-breaking ceremony marking the start of reconstruction at the Roma Mahala neighbourhood that will allow displaced people to return to their homes there.

The event is part of the Return to Roma Mahala Project which will involve building two apartment blocks each housing two dozen families and 57 houses in the first phase.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Special Representative, Søren Jessen-Petersen, called the initiative a lasting solution for the Roma to go back to their homes. "Today we are literally paving the way for the return in freedom, in safety and in dignity of many Roma who have been displaced for far too long," he said.

Stressing that individuals must exercise their right to return, he voiced conviction that a decision on the status of Kosovo "will bring the clarity that every displaced person needs to have."

In 1999, Roma Mahala was home to some 8,000 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, many of whom are living either as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, or abroad. The Return to Roma Mahala Project represents the largest urban return project in Kosovo.

Ugerapport fra Dansk KFOR. Hærens Operative Kommando skriver (på <http://www.hok.dk/>):

SÅ BLEV VI ENDELIG HELT FÆRDIGE

Uge 16 ved KFOR 14 starter med et tilbageblik på den forgangne uge hvor projektet med at få lys i "The BAIR" tunnelen i Mitrovica, endeligt blev afsluttet.

24-04-2006 kl. 13:26

Redigeret af major P. Heien, Presse- & Informationsofficer

Tunnelen, der forbinder vejene Mitrovica - Pristina og Mitrovica - Montenegro benyttes i stor udstrækning af danske og andre KFOR køretøjer. Projektet vil derfor betyde en væsentlig forbedring af trafikikkerheden på denne strækning.

Den sidste del af projektet, der bestod af udfærdigelse af godkendelsesdokumentet, og betalingen blev afsluttet den 5. april.

Projektet er finansieret af Mitrovica Kommune, Multinational Task Force North og Den Danske Bataljon med henholdsvis 7,368 €, 5,000 € og 2,500 €.

Den officielle indvielse fandt sted den 12. april, hvor Chefen for Multinational Taskforce North brigadegeneral Jean-Philippe Margueron og fungerende chef for Den Danske Bataljon oberstløjtnant Palle B. Svendsen i fællesskab afslørede den til lejligheden opsatte mindetavle.

Efter afsløringen af mindetavlen havde Mitrovica's borgmester Mr. Murselj Ibrahimovic inviteret de ca. 30 indbudte gæster til reception på restaurant LUX, der ligger ved den østlige ende af tunnelen.

Feltunderholdning

Så er endnu en travl uge gået og tiden flyver af sted hernede. Lørdagen startede med en tur i den vestlige del af vores ansvarsområde. Sneen er nu forsvundet, og det var på tide at finde ud af hvor gode vejene er.

Det blev en spændende tur oppe i bjergene, og bumpefrit var det ikke. Om aftenen var der påskefrokost i IBAR, som blev en stor succes. Der var masse af mennesker, og maden samt stemningen var høj.

Søndag var det slappe af dag, men vi var et par stykker som tog ud og cykle i bjergene, 56 kilometer, det kunne mærkes i benene.

Rent arbejdsmæssigt er ugen gået godt. Vores kontor i Zubin Potok har haft åbent hver dag i denne uge, og vi håber, at vores hyppige tilstedeværelse i Zubin Potok, vil få en positiv virkning på de lokale.

Vejret hernede er ved at blive meget bedre. Græsset bliver grønnere, træer og blomster springer ud i fuldt flor, og det er på tide at finde sommeruniformen frem, og det medfører, at vi kan besøge landsbyer oppe i bjergene, som ikke har haft besøg siden før sneen.

Ugen har også været der hvor den første feltunderholdning er blevet gennemført. Det danske populære band Tournesol gav 2 gode koncerter. Der kom rigtig mange mennesker, og stemningen var høj. En stor tak til Tournesol.

På tur med ingeniørerne

Formålet var at bortsprænge ueksploderet ammunition. Vi kørte fra lejren ved 0700 tiden i kolonne med en lastbil i spidsen efterfulgt af to geländewagens (i daglig tale kaldet GD), og endelig som rosinen i pølseenden havde vi en SISU fra sanitetsdelingen i tilfælde af, at noget ville gå galt.

Vi kom ud i området, hvor sprængningerne skulle foregå, men vejen var forholdsvis ufremkommelig, og en GD blev sendt ud for at rekognoscere vejene længere fremme.

Navigatøren havde et kort og selvfølgelig den uundværlige GPS. Vi fandt da også flere steder vejen, når den altså ikke var dækket af flere centimeter sne.

Til sidst, ca. 300 meter fra "målet", som jo var stedet, hvor sprængningen skulle finde sted, blev vi nødt til at give op og forsøge at få køretøjet vendt og returnere til de andre, som stod og

ventede på os.

En PMV (pansret mandskabs vogn) fra ingeniørerne havde under turen derop sluttet sig til kolonnen og denne kunne flere steder heller ikke komme igennem sneen, så det blev bestemt at aflyse projektet og returnere til Camp Olaf Rye - med uforrettet sag.

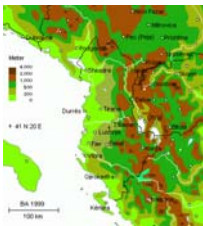
Æv.. det havde da ellers været spændende at se disse ingeniører i aktion, men jeg håber, chancen byder sig en anden gang.

Min kollega og jeg skulle "bare" have siddet på vagt i hver sin GD, mens de andre var oppe og bortsprænge, men det er ikke så meget opgaven, det kommer an på - det er ligeså meget det at få mulighed for at komme ud af lejren og knytte forbindelser på tværs af regimentet.

ØST KOSÓVA / PRESEVO-DALEN / SYD-SERBIEN

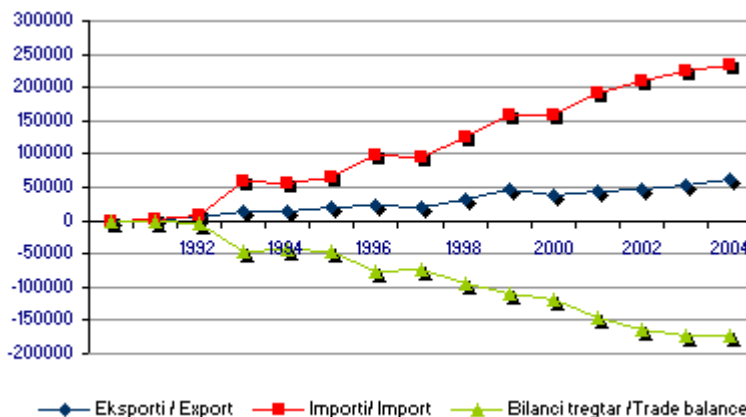
For nemheds skyld bruges betegnelsen Øst Kosóva / Presevo-dalen om det omstridte område med byerne: Presheva, Medvegja og Bujanoci (Albansk stavemåde). Ca. 75 % af befolkningen skønnes at være etniske Albanere - måske omkring 70.000. En modstandsgruppe har tidligere været i funktion, men synes nu at være »lukket ned«. Gruppen kaldtes i forkortet form **UCPMB** (som står for noget i retning af: Ushtria Clirimtare e Presheva, Medvegja dhe Bujanoci; på Engelsk: Liberation Army of Presheva, Medvegja and Bujanoci). Gruppen sagde at den **intet** havde at gøre med Kosova's UCK, og at den var en lokal gruppe.

ALBANIEN



Klik på kortet, hvis du vil have det forstørret / click <http://bjoerna.dk/kort/Albanien.gif> to enlarge it

Info fra Albanien Statistik: Befolkningstal: 3,1 Mio (1.1.2004). GDP (Gross Domestic Product): 630 Mia Lek (2002, current prices); GDP-structure: Agriculture: 26 %, Industry 10-11 %, Construction: 7-8 %, Services: 55-56 %. Export: 54 mia lek (2003) [heraf til Danmark: 23 mio lek; størrelsesorden 1,2 mio kr], Import: 226 mia lek (2003) [Heraf fra Danmark: 855 mio lek; størrelsesorden: 45-50 mio kr], Tradedeficit: 171 mia lek (2003). Største import fra Italien (75 mia lek) og Grækenland (45 mia lek), største eksport til Italien (40 mia lek). Unemployment: 14-15 % (2004-III)



Det Engelske Udenrigsministeriums 'Country Advice' til rejsende kan findes på adressen: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=101361838522>. Det Danske UM har pt ingen rejsevejledning, men henviser til det Engelske UM. Den Norske Ambassade kan findes på: <http://www.norvegji.org/>. Det

Amerikanske UM har Juni 2004 offentliggjort en 'Background Note' om Albanien: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3235.htm>

Mother Teresa: <http://bjoerna.dk/albanien/Teresa.htm>.

Parlamentsvalget i 2005 [Præsidenten vælges af Parlamentet for 5 år, næste gang i 2007]: Se nærmere i: <http://bjoerna.net/sidste-nyt/265.htm>

Præsident Moisiu's aktiviteter [Billederne i denne sektion kan som regel forstørres ved at klikke på dem (mens man er på nettet)] [NB Forbindelsen til serveren er for tiden ikke altid helt god]:

Præsident Moisiu har tildelt Ærkebiskop Rrok Mirdita Mother Teresa-ordenen:



Billedet th: En udsending fra Vatikanet's Udenrigsafdeling, Giovanni Lajolo,, derefter Rrok Mirdita og helt th Præsident Moisiu

April 24, 2006

The President of the Republic, Alfred Moisiu handed today to the Archbishop of Tirana, Durres and entire Albania, Monsignor Rrok Mirdita the Mother Theresa Order, whose motivation appreciated the help given to re-establish the institutions of the Catholic Church in Albania; the special assiduity about the inter-religious dialogue and understanding and his commitment in establishing the social assistance institutions for the needy people.

On his part, Monsignor Mirdita thanked President Moisiu about this high praise and expressed the gratitude for the attention paid by the Head of state to the activity of the Catholic Church in Albania in the interest of our society.

At the official decoration ceremony took part the Holy See Secretary for State Relations, Monsignor Giovanni Lajolo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj, our Ambassador to the Vatican, Zef Bushati, etc.

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April 24, 2006

The President of the Republic, Alfred Moisiu received today in a meeting the Holy See Secretary for State Relations, Monsignor Giovanni Lajolo who is visiting our country.

While highly praising the relations between Albania and Vatican, President Moisiu pointed out the role of the Pope, Benedict XVI and Holy See in supporting the Albanian people and preserving peace and understanding all over the world. At the mean time, Mr. Moisiu emphasized the activity of the Albanian Catholic community for the resurrection of religious values in the Catholic believers of the country.

Then the Head of state underlined that recognizing the known weight of the Holy See in the world politics, its support for the integration of Albania in the European Union would be a great assistance for our country in achieving its serious aims and objectives in this direction.

On his part, Monsignor Lajolo thanked President Moisiu for the reception and conveyed the

greetings of the Holy Father, Benedict XVII. While praising the open and friendly relation between our country and the Vatican and while also pointing out the ancient and positive values and traditions of the Albanian people, Monsignor Giovanni Lajolo expressed the Holy See support for the integration of Albania in the European Union.

Højtideligheder i anledning af den ortodokse Påske



OSCE Formand - Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht - har været i Albanien [se billedet forrest i nyhedsbrevet]. »The OSCE Chairman called on Albanian leaders to re-start the election reforms and urged them to implement the recommendations of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) following the 2005 Parliamentary elections. He also pledged the OSCE's support in this process«. OSCE har udsendt flg.:

OSCE Chairman raises rule of law, democratic institutions and economic development with Albanian authorities; urges resumed work on electoral reform

TIRANA, 26 April 2006 - The OSCE Chairman-in Office, Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht, held talks in Tirana with President Alfred Moisiu, Prime Minister Sali Berisha and Foreign Minister Besnik Mustafaj.

The OSCE Chairman called on Albanian leaders to re-start the election reforms and urged them to implement the recommendations of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) following the 2005 Parliamentary elections. He also pledged the OSCE's support in this process.

"We would like to emphasize the need to continue the electoral reform before the upcoming elections. The implementation requires a strong commitment by the Albanian authorities at all levels and an active participation of Albanian citizens," Minister De Gucht said during his visit yesterday.

ODIHR has emphasized the need for a centralized and reliable civil registration system. Important issues are the voters' addresses and ID cards.

The Chairman-in-Office also encourages the Albanian authorities to strengthen the functioning of democratic institutions. "Separation of executive, legislative and judicial powers, as well as independence of Parliament, are fundamental principles of democracy," he said.

"Encouraging a constructive opposition is also a duty of the majority."

He stressed that free and independent media are cornerstones of OSCE policy and urged the Albanian government to develop a legal framework consistent with international practice in this field.

The Chairman-in Office commended the Albanian Government on its efforts in the fight against organized crime and corruption, and urged it to intensify these efforts. "An accountable and transparent judiciary and an efficient prosecution are crucial," the Minister said.

"Rule of law and security are also crucial to economic development," he added.

Minister De Gucht also congratulated Albania on the imminent signature of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, saying it would provide further impetus for reform.

"The OSCE also welcomes Albania's constructive role in the region, including its support for the resolution of Kosovo's status through a negotiated process," the Chairman-in-Office concluded.

ViceUM Edith Harxhi har deltaget i 'Sortehavskonference'. UM skriver:

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs Edith Harxhi attended the 14th Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

On 26 April 2006, the 14th Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation held its proceedings in Bucharest. Albania was represented in this event by a delegation of the MoFA led by Mrs. Edith Harxhi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In her address to this Meeting, Mrs. Harxhi underscored the importance which our country attaches to the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, in which we are members and co-chairs from the year 1992 onwards. Further on and in the context of deepening the reforms that bring our country closer to EU, she highlighted the priorities of the governmental program. She added that "Albania will continue to be an active partner in the framework of the OBSEC, by increasing its participation at the activities of the Organization's working groups"

Mrs. Harxhi expressed the request for the reform of the Black Sea Organization, emphasizing that our countries face new challenges, as the EU and NATO integration. Likewise, she added that the liberalization of visas among the member countries should occur as soon as possible, joint projects in the field of energy, gas, oil and transport should be promoted, and the expansion of this organization and the inclusion thereto of new countries from the region should initiate, so that the initiatives within this Organization and its member countries could be the most fruitful.

Mrs. Harxhi did also hold bilateral talks with her Greek and Russian counterparts and with the Turkish Minister of State as well.

At the conclusion of this Meeting, the Chair of this Organization passed on to the Russian Federation.

Parlamentsflertallet mener ikke der er behov for at inddrage udenlandske jurister i spørgsmålet om Chefstatsanklager Sollaku's arbejde og hans fremtid i jobbet. »Gazeta Sot« skriver:

The head of the Democratic Party Parliamentary Group, Bamir Topi declared yesterday the opposition's request for international expertise in relation to the investigation of chief prosecutor Sollaku are groundless. During a media communication, Topi stressed the democrats will not support the idea for a group of international experts to investigate General Prosecutor's activities. "Request for international expertise is unmotivated. This is an unprecedented case, as we have not faced such request in other parliamentary situations. We think it is a groundless request, as there are questioned parliamentary capability and mechanisms exercised in other circumstances," said the democrat deputy.

Tirana Times skriver:

TIRANA, April 20 – A group of members of parliament have filed a motion aiming to sack the country's general prosecutor, Theodhori Sollaku, charging him with failing to do his duties in the war against organized crime and corruption. The 22 MPs from the ruling Democratic Party said they hope the motion to dismiss Sollaku would come for a vote before parliament in early May, pending the conclusions of a newly-formed investigative commission in parliament. The move came after Prime Minister Sali Berisha made direct accusation linking Sollaku to organized crime.

060330 Økonomien. Bank of Albania skriver:

Balance of Payments						
in millions of EUR						
	2004	Q1-2005	Q2-2005	Q3-2005	Q4-2005	2005
Current Account	(286.2)	(53.0)	(106.1)	(63.7)	(230.9)	(453.7)
Export of Goods	485.6	121.5	143.3	133.7	131.7	530.2
Import of Goods	(1,762.3)	(398.1)	(507.1)	(516.1)	(585.7)	(2,006.9)
Trade Balance	(1,276.7)	(276.6)	(363.8)	(382.3)	(454.0)	(1,476.7)
Services: Credit	807.5	196.5	237.4	262.0	234.5	930.4
Services: Debit	(848.0)	(225.9)	(261.0)	(306.2)	(304.4)	(1,097.5)
Income: Credit	164.0	40.1	41.9	54.9	46.4	183.3
Income: Debit	(23.3)	(9.1)	(14.0)	(8.0)	(8.0)	(39.1)
Private Unrequired Transfers	829.7	210.2	243.3	295.0	235.9	984.5
Official Unrequired Transfers	60.7	11.8	10.1	20.8	18.6	61.4
Capital Account	106.2	35.5	14.6	25.0	24.1	99.2
Financial Account	297.4	25.1	116.8	(20.3)	192.4	313.9
Direct Investment	267.4	43.33	50.3	53.0	62.59	209.26
Portfolio Investment	4.6	(42.8)	(5.4)	40.9	5.4	(2.0)
Other Capital*	25.4	24.55	71.9	(114.3)	124.44	106.65
Net Errors and Omissions	106.5	(2.5)	(23.9)	87.9	94.5	156.0
Overall Balance	233.7	9.7	1.4	33.7	80.1	124.8
Reserve and Related Items						
Reserve Assets	(233.7)	(9.7)	(1.4)	(33.7)	(80.1)	(124.8)
Use of Fund Credit and Loans	9.6	4.6	-	4.8	-	9.4
Memorandum Items						
Total Change in Reserves	(276.1)	15.7	35.3	(30.1)	(68.3)	(47.4)
of which: Change due to Exchange Rate	42.4	(25.4)	(36.7)	(3.6)	(11.8)	(77.4)
*/ Use of Fund Credit and Loans is not included						
Source of data: Bank of Albania						

[Klik på tabellen for at forstørre den]

The external sector of the Albanian economy during 2005 is presented with a deep negative balance on current account, caused by a high trade deficit.

The trade deficit deepened as a result of the slowdown in the export growing paces and the rapid import increase.

Capital inflows have by and large been sufficient in compensating the current deficit, as such allowing an overall positive balance.

Foreign reserve at the end of 2005 marked EUR 1.204 billion, fully adequate to meet about 4.7 months of goods and services import.

I. CURRENT ACCOUNT

The volume of current transactions increased by 21 per cent compared to the previous year, marking a level of EUR 6.2 billion. More than 93 per cent of current expenditures were used for the purchase of goods and services by non-residents. About 43 per cent of current income was in the form of current transfers, while the export of goods and services has provided 32 per cent and 18 per cent of income, respectively.

Trade deficit, a permanent feature of foreign trade developments, has affected the high levels of current account deficit during this year, as well. Compared to the previous year, current

deficit increased by about EUR 168 million, recording EUR 454 million. The increase of trade deficit in goods and services was in part balanced by the increase of net income in the transfer and income accounts. Service trade, a significant item in the current account marked growth both in income and expenditure during 2005. Compared to 2004, expenditures increased more rapidly than income. Net result of service transactions led to the increase of this account deficit by about EUR 127 million.

I. 1. FOREIGN TRADE

The volume of foreign trade, imports plus exports, was estimated at about EUR 2.5 billion, contributing to total current transactions by about 41 per cent. Expenditures for the import of goods marked about EUR 2 billion or EUR 245 million more, compared to the 2004.

Trade deficit for 2005 reached to EUR 1.5 billion, which is 16 per cent higher than the previous year. Export slowed the growing paces down. The annual increase in exports was estimated at about 9 per cent, compared to 23 per cent during the previous year. Despite the lack of competitive abilities (developments in the exchange rate), the exports slowdown is deemed to have been due to the enhancement of competition in the textiles sector with the opening of European markets towards China and India. Thus, the degree of import coverage by exports resulted in 25 per cent, marking a slight decrease compared to the level of 27 per cent during the previous year, as such contributing to the further deepening of the trade deficit. At the same time, the high oil prices in the international markets and the increase of the lending activity (new credit to the economy marked an annual growth of about 74 per cent) led to the increase of imports by about 16 per cent.

Export of goods is mostly represented by the export of textiles, footwear and base metal. Exports for active manufacturing realized 70 per cent of annual income in the export of goods. During 2005, it was observed a significant increase of domestic production exports, contributing to the total by 30 per cent, compared to 25 per cent in the previous year.

Import demand remains high. It is positive that the annual increase in imports has considerably been due to the increase of imports in machinery, equipment and vehicles. Their weight to the total is about 24 per cent, as such maintaining the same levels as in the previous year. The high demand of the private sector for capital goods is a positive indicator for the level of investment, renovation of the technological basis and its productivity. Imports of raw materials for the active manufacturing industry in the country, mainly concentrated in textiles, footwear and metal, increased contributing to the total by 15 per cent, compared to 17 per cent in the previous year.

Based on the foreign trade structure by trade partners, Albania continues to carry out most of its transactions with the European Union. However, worth mentioning is the fact the Albania is inclining towards trade (in particular exports) with the regional countries, pushed by the free trade agreements with the neighbouring countries. Exports and imports with the European Union share 88 and 60 per cent, respectively, of the total exports. Italy and Greece remain Albania's main trade partners.

Meanwhile, trade with the regional countries of South Eastern Europe, which are under the free trade agreement with Albania, increased both in exports and imports by 19 and 31.5 per cent, respectively, compared to the previous year. Currently, Kosovo and Macedonia represent the biggest market for Albanian products' exports.

I. 2. DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER ITEMS OF CURRENT ACCOUNT

Service trade balance ended with a negative balance of EUR 167 million, increasing considerably compared to the EUR 40 million deficit recorded in 2004. This deficit was mainly due to a negative balance in other cultural and business services item.

Income from tourism services reinforces the fact that this sector is providing concrete trade opportunities to the Albanian economy, regardless of the level of developments in this sector. According to the Bank of Albania estimations for 2005, tourism services export generated EUR 692 million of income, which is about 30 per cent higher than the export of goods. Such an increase was mainly caused by the increase in the flow of foreign citizens and emigrants visiting the country and the slight increase of estimating coefficients of daily expenses. During 2005, the number of foreign citizens visiting Albania increased by about 21 per cent, compared to 2004, wherein the main weight of this increase was observed in seasonal periods of holiday

and end year. An increase with high annual rates was also observed in the import of tourism services. 2005 recorded a figure of about EUR 635 million, which is 68 per cent of workers' remittances.

It is now recognized that transportation and insurance services follow the developments in the trade activity of goods. The increase of import volume caused the increase of services import of these categories. At the end of the year, services imports of these categories were estimated at about 12 and 38 per cent, respectively, higher than those in 2004. Each year, the Albanian economy benefits currency sources from the work of seasonal workers and investments of foreign currency reserves of the banking system in non-resident financial institutions, paying at the same time interests for the foreign debt. The positive income balance at the end of 2005 was estimated at about 144 million, which is 4 million higher than in 2004. Income from labour represents about 70 per cent of the positive income balance. Net income flow of this category decreased by about 3 per cent compared to the previous year when the Olympic Games kept the demand for labour force in the neighbouring country high, and as a consequence generated high income flows from labour. Meanwhile, net income in the form of interest from investment increased (by about 19 per cent or EUR 7 million). During 2005 Albania paid EUR 22 million to settle the interests on its foreign debt or 19 per cent more than during the previous year.

Like in the previous years, workers' remittances made the most considerable contribution to the current transfers. Workers' remittances represent a significant supporting source to the Albanian economy, providing a continuous flow of financing to the current deficit. Their total for 2005 was estimated at about EUR 939 million or 14 per cent of the GDP. Their contribution to the decrease of trade deficit was estimated at about 64 per cent.

II. CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNT

Capital flows during 2005 resulted in a net flow of about EUR 423 million, making the financing of the current deficit possible by 93 per cent. Capital transfers were estimated at EUR 99 million or 7 million less than the end 2004, while the financial account ended with a positive balance of EUR 323 million.

Albania's financial liabilities with the rest of the world increased by about EUR 346 million and were estimated to be 22 per cent less than the previous year. This increase was mainly due to the foreign direct investment inflows and the foreign debt.

Foreign direct investment flow reached EUR 213 million in 2005, compared to EUR 278 million in the previous year. It is worth mentioning that capital inflows in the form of privatisation were a determining factor in 2004 with regard to the volume and character of foreign investment in the country. The stock of financial assets in the form of portfolio investment reached to EUR 120 million, marking an annual increase of about EUR 2 million.

The borrowing of long-term and soft loans from abroad still remains another crucial factor in the increase of Albania's financial liabilities with the rest of the world. In 2005 it was estimated at EUR 208 million, out of which 66 per cent was channelled in the government sector. This increase was mainly used to finance investment and consumption, reflected also in the increase of consumer imports and the needs of companies for capital and/or capital goods.

Financial liabilities in the form of non-residents' deposits held with the Albanian banking system decreased by about EUR 30 million. Liabilities in the form of commercial credit increased by about EUR 8 million, which was also reflected in the increase of imports for this period. Other foreign liabilities in the form of short-term loans by non-resident entities had a considerable increase by EUR 47 million.

Albania's financial claims with the rest of the world increased by EUR 22 million. The increase of other foreign assets in the form of short-term and medium-term loans extended by resident entities abroad holds the largest share in this increase by about EUR 69 million or about 44 million higher than the end 2004.

Foreign assets inflows in the form of financial capital were reflected in the increase of foreign reserve of the monetary authority by about EUR 197 million. Foreign reserve at the end 2005 marked the level of EUR 1.204 billion, fully sufficient to cover about 4.6 months of import of goods and services.

060303 Udvandringen til Italien. Tale i Bari af Nationalbankdirektør Ardian Fullani

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to speak to you today on the occasion of the Conference on Remittances. I would like to congratulate the World Bank and the Puglia Region for co-organizing this esteemed international event. I greatly appreciate your partnership and this opportunity to explore with you the possible ways for a sustainable growth, formalization and higher effectiveness of remittances.

I would like to open my remarks by asking a simple question. Why are remittances our main topic today?

Remittances represent the most direct and immediate benefit to emigrants families and to the economy. Remittance flows to developing countries are now estimated to be twice as much as the development aid these countries receive. In some countries like Albania, they noticeably exceed foreign direct investment. Therefore, governments nowadays are paying more and more attention in their development strategies to remittance flows as an important financial source to boost economic development, especially in depressed areas where economic conditions force people to migrate. A key input for these policies is the economic and the logistic framework behind migration and remittance. This conference and its underlying case-study make a great contribution to these developing efforts.

Since the beginning of the transition, the volume of remittances to Albania has grown rapidly. Indeed, remittance flows are increasingly important relative to other foreign exchange-earning activities, representing around 14 percent of GDP, 70 percent of exports, and 33 percent of imports. Italy is the major migration destination country for Albanians. On the other hand, Albania is the number one recipient country in terms of remittance flows from Italy to other countries. Therefore, remittance services from Italy to Albania have become a topic of great interest. The Italian-Albanian remittance corridor is a relevant case to examine the effects of remittances on local communities and to discuss the ways of making these flows more efficient and less costly.

A recent survey of the Bank of Albania shows that remittances have had positive impact across all Albanian regions. The influence is slightly higher in less developed regions alleviating to some extent income disparities. Remittances have become a critical source of income for households, reaching 33 percent of disposable income of an average family recipient and almost 40 percent in rural areas. The recipients of remittances are from all social groups, including middle income class (60 percent) as well as the low income class (27 percent). Our estimates show that the level and severity of poverty are significantly reduced among those households receiving remittances, with greater influence on severity rather than the level of poverty.

Remittances are mostly used for imported consumer goods, services, and for the purchase or construction of houses. A small share is saved or invested in businesses, mainly in agricultural sector. Therefore, the impact of remittances in creating new jobs has been limited. In this view, I do not want to downplay the importance of remittances, but to draw attention to additional structural reforms needed to enhance their impact in the economy. It is not a coincidence that after reaching the level of 14 percent of GDP, the growth rate of remittances has been as constant as that of foreign direct investments in Albania. This shows that in the mid-term, there is no difference between the decision of foreign investors and remitters to invest in Albania. Of course, emigrants may have a better knowledge of domestic markets. They are more connected to their home-country and react faster than foreign investors. Nevertheless, they demand guarantees for their investments as much as foreign investors do. Therefore, both the volume of remittances and their effectiveness largely depend on improvements of Albanian business environment.

While efforts to speed up reforms aiming to improve business environment are underway, especially now with the most recent signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, a question still remains: is there any other measure that may enhance the contribution of remittances in the development? The Bank of Albania in cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental institutions has been considering some concrete measures, which I have already highlighted in a conference organized by EBRD on these issues last September. I

would like to briefly mention some of them here again, with some new insights.

First, improving our knowledge about remittances remains critical for the assessment of policies, which directly impact the developing role of remittances in the economy. The improved information is needed not simply to assist policies on remittances but also financial infrastructure (e.g. by reducing transaction costs) and to understand the impact on poverty. The Bank of Albania has continuously emphasized the importance of accurate estimation of capital inflows in the form of emigrants' remittances. For better statistics we have been assisted by IMF missions to bring the methodology in defining remittances closer to the international standards. Also, there is a close cooperation with our main economic partners, Italy and Greece, as the main destinations of the Albanian emigrants, to harmonize our methodologies in order to improve the estimation accuracy of remittances. The report of the World Bank on the Italian-Albanian corridor is also a great contribution to improve our understanding of remittances, and on behalf of the Albanian authorities I express our gratitude for this support.

Second, formalizing the inflow of remittances is a very important moment. More than half of remittances enter the country through informal channels. Our surveys show that the bulk of remittances to Albania are channeled through unofficial sources; physically brought by the emigrants (59 percent), friends and relatives (23 percent). This is partially a reflection of the short geographical distance between the two countries. However, this high flow of remittances through unofficial channels also asks for actions to make official channels more attractive in terms of efficiency, safety, cost and anonymity. As the study team has found out, emigrants in Italy have a high banking utilization rate – more than 50 percent have bank accounts. On the Albanian side, this figure drops to less than 20 percent. Emigrant families' access to banks is suboptimal despite the considerable geographical expansion of commercial banks in recent years. In contrast with other remittance-receiving countries, banks in Albania still have only a small market share in remittance services. However, there are encouraging signs of demand for new technologies, innovative partnerships and entry points to reach disadvantaged groups.

The high fees of the money transfer applied by the banks are often brought up as a motive why individuals do not prefer this service. Nevertheless, there is already an Albanian commercial bank, which offers transfers from Italy to Albania without charging any fee for amounts up to 250 euros a day, when the average monthly delivery of emigrants usually ranges from 100 to 150 euros. In the meantime, there are several other banks that provide the same service for transfers from Greece. Actually, we are examining the possibilities to lower the transfer costs through broader bilateral agreements between the two countries.

Even though, money transfer companies provide transfer services at reasonable rates with a good geographical coverage, we still observe a lot of cash entering the country in bags. I retain, this is more a regulatory problem rather than the preference of emigrants to go informal. The disparity between our two countries in terms of bank accounts accessibility is largely a reflection of the fact that in Italy you cannot get your salary if you do not provide with your bank account number. The anti-cash program initiated by the Bank of Albania clearly indicates that in order to lower the cash economy, we have to abolish the option of cash payments, including here salaries of the private sector, payments of utilities, etc. Our bank is fully committed to support this process at all levels, being these regulatory or technical.

Of course, this comes at some cost, which in case of remittances is going from zero rates that informal or cash channels offer to some positive commissions required by formal channels. I understand the concerns raised by some analysts that legislation on exchange rate control or anti-money laundering could increase transfer rates further and push people to go underground. This calls for a revision of regulation that does not penalize the volume of remittances. As I mentioned earlier, the formalization of the economy is a major component of improving business environment in Albania. Therefore, "forcing" individuals to get into formal channels while comes at a short term cost of some positive rates most probably will have the long term benefit of signaling the serious intentions that we are moving on the right directions to both emigrants and foreign investors.

For recipient families, accessibility to financial institutions plays a more important role due to large percentage of receipts delivered straight to the recipient's door. In fact, the disconnection between the physical receipt of funds and the location of the financial institution may have a great impact on disintermediation among recipients. Assuming that receivers can exercise some control over the mode and location of receipt, the geographic proximity of a branch or the ability to pick up a remittance in an office (as required by Western Union) can determine an institution's ability to compete in the remittance market of the Albania, not to mention the

possibility of mobilizing savings from these new potential clients.

Remittances can be a point entry for many remitters and their families to the formal financial system. Many emigrant families are either not familiarized with banks or have limited access with financial institutions. The Bank of Albania through its public communication strategy is aiming to bring the public closer to banking products and services, including transfers. No matter the small size of remittance amounts. Even those small shares left by recipient families in bank accounts could assist economic development as more funds will be available in banks to provide loan products to private sector. The same concern was initially expressed about public administration salaries. Now, this service is provided by the banking system, and we see the power of pooling small amounts. For commercial banks, their ability to market additional value-added services, such as savings products, loans or other types of credit to remittance recipients, will require the achievement of a critical mass of customer acquisition, as well as a higher technology delivery mechanism, to bring down the average cost of the investment required to serve that client.

Micro credit programs and qualitative improvements of banking infrastructure, concerted with introduction of new financial instruments will also help to attract more remittances. Promoting microfinance organizations as participants in remittances market, could offer certain advantages to the microfinance sector, to the government and to remittance recipients. The costs of this expansion would primarily fall to the regulatory and supervisory authorities. We already took an important step in bringing these institutions under the Bank of Albania supervision which we expect to improve their status in the market by enhancing the confidence of operating with them. Microfinance institutions are already providing small amount loans to the low income class. Their existing programs allow them to leverage their network and geographic reach to assist remittance senders and receivers in gaining access to low cost financial services, as well as access micro-saving and investment products.

The third area of our efforts is to channel the workers' remittances toward country's development needs. The formalization is a necessary step but does not ensure the role of remittances as a developing instrument. It is often claimed that emigrants are not the most preferred clients of banks, since this category is considered to have more unstable jobs and low level of income. First of all, this perception is not entirely correct and the results of the Italian team support the fact that the pool of emigrant savings is becoming significant enough to be a profitable business. The latest Italian bank entering the market in Albania (Banca Italiana di Sviluppo) is another witness of this reality. However, I would like to see the other banks operating in Albania to be as aggressive as their Italian counterparts in competing for this pool of savings sooner rather than later. There are also other financial services that could be offered to the remittance recipients. For instance, linking workers' remittances with investments by channeling remittance flows toward micro-credit loans or projects; or supporting migrants' contribution and emigrants' communities in the development of the country.

A concerning signal comes out from our survey showing emigrants low intention to invest in either private ventures and/or public developing projects. It tells us that the issue of remittances goes beyond the financial framework. Therefore we should think of new ways to improve incentives of emigrants to invest back in Albania, like the recent government initiative to offer to emigrants the opportunity to return and invest in their country by enjoying a three year exemption from the profit and personal income taxes.

In conclusion, I would add that a distinctive feature that makes remittances particularly important instruments for the economic development is their relative stability compared to private capital and financial flows. In contrast to financial flows that showed a high volatility during 1990s, remittances continued to flow much more steadily. In terms of the "life cycle" duration of individual remittances, theory holds that the longer the duration of migrant status, the lower the probability of large flows of remittances. This urges us to speed up our efforts to exploit the potential of remittances sooner rather than later. Their immense role calls for new ways of achieving a sustainable growth, a full formalization and higher effectiveness of remittances. Obviously, this is not a battle we can win today. It requires a lot of attention, good will, but also a complete enforcement strategy.

Thank you.

Bespising af militært personel. Forsvarsministeriet skriver:

April 12 2006. Responding to news published in some medias, referring to the manner of the food treatment of military, Director of Logistics in Ministry of Defence, Col. Bardhyl Hoxha in a press conference, held this declaration:

- There is no decision approved in the last two years for changes in the legal basis on politics of food in the Structure of the Armed Forces. Food service in AF is based on legal acts approved with this purpose, where the last Decision for this issue is Decision of the Council of Ministers nr. 524 date July 30 2004, for the measure and the way of the Compensation of the value and the way of the compensation of food for Armed Forces military of the Republic of Albania.

The essence of this decision is change from provision inside nature of food articles [practise followed since 1997] to the compensation in money value. This decision doesn't touch treatment with food of soldiers of the obligatory service, as well as the effective military that participate in the training, services and completion of duties of readiness. This decision defines compensation in money value for active military [officers, NCO-s and professional military]. Food policies in AAF like in the other NATO countries, is based on the benefited calories and not on the circumstances of the trade prices. Therefore, according to the above DCM [Decision of Council of Ministers], calculations are done on the basis of calories and furthermore using Bulletin of Prices of the Ministry of Agriculture, defining the quantity of compensation in money value. One of the priorities of Ministry of Defence is reconsideration in continuity of the food norms tending towards calories increase. Realisation of a study is in the process aiming at:

- Improvement of the food structure tending towards calories increase with animal origin and decrease of carbohydrates.
- Increase of the caloric quantities according to the standards of the armies of countries that are NATO members.
- Improvement of food variety and increase of the cooking quality and food service.

Amerikansk støtte til energiprojekt i Albanien. Den Amerikanske Ambassade skriver:

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador Marcie B. Ries

Ceremony on Submission to the Government of Albania of ASG Power SA \$1.9 Billion Project in the Energy Field

I'd like to welcome everyone here today.

First of all, I'd like to thank the Prime Minister very much for being with us today. He is very, very busy, so we would like to get right down to the facts. I want to say that I am extremely excited about this project. It is a really great project all around. It's an international project with an American interest, Swiss interest, and I want to welcome the Swiss Ambassador, Italian as well, and I think just generally, it's good for Albania. This project will be the largest foreign direct investment project ever in Albania -- \$1.9 billion. Let me give you some facts beyond that one, which is in itself startling. This project has the capacity to provide within the next 18 months access to low-cost night power from Western Europe. During construction it will provide four thousand jobs and permanently 400. And, maybe this is the most important: upon completion, it will provide enough energy to address all of Albania's power and gas needs. But in the larger scheme of things, it will help establish Albania as a good place for foreign direct investment, it will have a major positive impact on the overall environment, it will give a boost to the economy and the balance of payments, and will make Albania a major player in the European energy field.

I think what we are doing here today reinforces the support of the U.S. Government for Albania's economic growth. It's good for us, for U.S. business. We're anticipating that it'll include about \$600 million in U.S. equipment and services. And, finally, the participation of the U.S. Ex-Im Bank opens up additional foreign direct investment opportunities for U.S. companies. So, with that, I would like to turn it over to the Prime Minister to say a few words.

SERBIEN og MONTENEGRO. SERBIEN (alene)

Det Amerikanske UM har offentliggjort en 'Background Note' om Serbien - Montenegro: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5388.htm> • Det Engelske Udenrigsministeriums 'Country Advice' til rejsende kan findes på adressen: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=1013618386622> • En biografi over tidligere Formandspræsident Kostunica kan læses på [Serbiske Politikere](#).

Præsidentvalg i Serbien. Boris Tadic blev i Juni 2004 valgt som Præsident. Seneste Parlamentsvalg: 031228.

Kosovo / Kosóva: Martti Ahtisaari skal have udtalt at drøftelserne om decentralisering kan afsluttes denne sommer:

LONDON, April 25 (Tanjug) - Special envoy Martti Ahtisaari of the United Nations (UN) secretary-general in charge of the Kosovo-Metohija status talks has expressed hope that the current phase of the Vienna negotiations on issues of decentralization and minority protection will be completed by July. Speaking for the BBC, Ahtisaari said he believed the current talks would continue into the summer, and end most probably in June, hopefully in July. Progress in these talks largely depends on the cooperation of Belgrade and Pristina with his Vienna Office, Ahtisaari specified.

Grænserne. Det Serbisk-Montenegrinske UM skriver:

PARIS, April 25 (Beta)-In response to a statement by Kosovo Premier Agim Ceku that he did not recognize the border agreement between Serbia Montenegro and Macedonia, state union and Serbian officials on April 25 declared it was not up to him to decide the borders.

Serbia Montenegro Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic, currently visiting France, told the press in Paris that now was the time "to refrain from heavy words" and pointed out that "Mr Ceku is neither the U.N. Security Council nor the U.N. General Assembly, which decides on the status of borders."

"(Ceku) forgets that states discuss border issues, not national minorities, regardless of their numbers in certain regions," said Sanda Raskovic-Ivic, who chairs the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija, in Belgrade.

"The statement he issued gives one the obvious impression that Ceku already feels himself the premier of an independent and internationally recognized state of Kosovo, which is not the case," Raskovic-Ivic said, adding that Serbia would never accept such a thing, a press release from the Coordinating Center read.

Commenting on Ceku's statement of April 24 that he wished good relations with Serbia, but only after Belgrade apologizes for ethnic Albanian victims, she said she concurred that "this phase" should be entered upon, on condition that the ethnic Albanians apologize for crimes committed against Serbs from 1941 to the present.

Den Bulgarske Præsident Parvanov besøger Serbien. Den Serbiske Regering skriver:

Belgrade, April 25, 2006 – Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica today informed Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov on the current course of negotiations on Kosovo-Metohija held in Vienna, and stressed that the solution for the future status of Kosovo-Metohija must be based on compromise, in accordance with international law and European standards.

Kostunica said that the solution must secure a high degree of autonomy for Kosovo-Metohija within Serbia and the state union of Serbia-Montenegro.

Parvanov voiced hope that the solution for the future status of Kosovo-Metohija would be acceptable to both sides, and stressed that it should be reached while respecting European standards and human rights. He added that it is important that the future status of Kosovo-

Metohija does not destabilise the Balkans.

Kostunica and Parvanov agreed that relations between the two countries are extremely good and concluded that it is possible to further improve economic cooperation through the realisation of infrastructure projects and by increasing mutual investment.

It was remarked in the talks that the Bulgarian minority in Serbia functions as a bridge for establishing improved cooperation and mutual understanding.

Kostunica particularly stressed the importance of the upcoming Bulgarian accession to the European Union and said that this is significant for the region.

MONTENEGRO (alene)

Præsidentvalg 030511: Filip Vujanovic blev valgt. Seneste Parlamentsvalg 021020.

Folkeafstemning 21.05.2006 om Montenegro's forhold til statsforbundet Serbien-Montenegro.
Montenegro's regering skriver:

Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic today met with head of the European Union's Observation Mission in Podgorica.

The discussion focused on the current political and economic developments in Montenegro and the preparation for the referendum on Montenegro's state status, scheduled for May 21 this year.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of maintaining continuous communication with representatives of international organizations, above the European Union, which was of particular importance at the present time. He emphasized that the executive, acting to the benefit of all citizens, was now focused on making preparations for the referendum, as well as on the activities associated with Atlantic and Euro-Atlantic integration. With regard to the preparatory work for the referendum, the Prime Minister expressed the expectation that relevant authorities would take prompt action in order to secure a fair and democratic atmosphere for the referendum.

At the request of his interlocutor, the Prime Minister presented his view of the post-referendum process and the activities planned in that respect, expressing confidence that a definite referendum result would enable quick international verification of democratically expressed will of the people. This would be of critical importance for the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and the engagement of important international partners in major investment projects in Montenegro, which are currently under preparation.

MAKEDONIEN

Det Engelske Udenrigsministeriums 'Country Advice' til rejsende kan findes på adressen: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=1013618386163> • Det Amerikanske UM har offentliggjort en 'Background Note' om Makedonien: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26759.htm>

Der er omkring 25 % etniske Albanere i Makedonien. Folketælling afholdtes 021101-021105.

Folkeafstemningen 041107 om decentralisering (= imødekommelse af Makedonien-Albanske interesser): Folkeafstemningen "faldt". Stemmedeltagelsen var kun omkring 26 %. Hvis afstemningen skulle have kunnet udvirke en ændring af decentraliseringslovgivningen, skulle deltagelsen have været mindst 50%, og desuden skulle der have været flertal mod lovgivningen. Det var ventet at stemmedeltagelsen ville have været noget større, selv om både Regeringspartierne og den Albanske minoritet anbefalede at man blev hjemme. Man kan nu gå videre i overensstemmelse med Ohrid-aftalerne.

Præsidentvalg i Maj 2004: Branko Crvenkovski - hidtidig PM - blev valgt (efter Boris Trajkovski som omkom ved en flyulykke). **Seneste**

Parlamentsvalg fandt sted 020915. Der kan henvises til flg. OSCE/ODIHR-oversigtsside: http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field_activities/skopje2002/.

Makedonien forhandler med EU om optagelse. Aktuel status, se: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/fyrom/key_documents.htm. Se også den generelle side: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/index_en.html

OSCE Formanden mener at grænsen mellem Makedonien og Kosova skal ligge fast:. Makfax skriver:

The inviolability of borders in Kosovo is one of the leading principles in the Kosovo status talks led by the United Nations and this principle must be upheld, the visiting OSCE Chairman-in-Office Karel De Gucht said.

After the talks with Macedonian Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva, OSCE Chairman called for self-restraint of the countries in the region in terms of all disputable issues, as long the negotiation process is underway.

OSCE Chairman stressed that implementation of standards is a main prerequisite for defining the final status of Kosovo.

Macedonian Foreign Minister, on the other hand, reiterated that border demarcation, as technical issue, should be wrapped up before the resolution of Kosovo's status. In this context, Mitreva referred to a report from the UN envoy Kai Aide.

Asked whether OSCE will take part in the ongoing investigation into CIA's alleged abductions of terror suspects on the European soil, De Gucht said OSCE has no intention to interfere in the probe.

"Investigations have been carried out in certain member-states of OSCE, however, OSCE has no intention of getting involved in the investigation process," De Gucht said.

As regards the ongoing reforms in police and judiciary in Macedonia, OSCE Chairman said the country has made a progress. He underlined the need to conduct fair and democratic elections, which will be closely monitored.

OSCE Chairman stressed that the public should be well aware that the upcoming elections will be monitored, particularly in the context of country's aspirations for timely launch of EU accession negotiations.

The highlights of Mitreva-De Gucht meeting included visa liberalization, the signing of readmission agreement slated for next month, and the piecemeal reduction of OSCE presence in Macedonia.

Drab på to skovbetjente. Makfax skriver:

Two rangers of Macedonian Forests killed by wood poaching mafia

Bajram Bajrami and Gania Rabbit, the employees of Kumanovo branch of Macedonian Forests who lost their lives in the vicinity of Matejce village were shot by wood poaching mafia, Makfax Agency learns.

According to the information of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, as well as of sources from Kumanovo who spoke under condition of anonymity, Bajrami and Rabbit were trying to prevent transportation of a large quantity of poached woods.

Bajrami was employed as a ranger, while Rabbit was a technician with Macedonian Forests.

After noticing a convoy of four lorries laden with woods moving on the road near Matejce, they tried to stop them. Three of the lorries managed to get away, while the rangers blocked the way to the fourth one.

A man got out of the lorry and opened fire at the vehicle of the Forest Police. One bullet proved fatal for Bajrami, killing him while inside the vehicle. Rabbit got out of the Lada Niva and started running. He didn't get far, before the poachers shot him dead.

Makfax Agency's attempts to provide information as to who reported the event and who ferried Rabit to the Kumanovo Medical Center, as Police said earlier.

The Kumanovo Police did not confirm to the Makfax's correspondent that forest poaching mafia stands behind the murders. Nonetheless, employees of the Kumanovo branch of Macedonian Forests claim that despite their actions, "not four, but four hundred lorries laden with woods" are poached in this area.

Police announced that the two men "have been killed on their way back home", by a "perpetrator" who used "an automatic weapon".

The forest mafia is a major problem in Macedonia for decades. The illegal forest cut down has gain momentum after 1999, to reach the pick during the armed conflict in Macedonia in 2001.

The experts estimate that this illegal business generates about 6 million euros on annual basis. Suspicions have been raised that persons employed in the institutions whose responsibility is to prevent this kind of crime were involved in some cases.

When it comes to this part of the country, the wood poaching mafia from Lipkovo area operates in the perimeter including the villages of Matejce, Lipkovo, Otlja, Vistica, Belanovce, Strima. They hire lumbermen from Kosovo to cut down woods, before selling them illegally in the Kumanovo's outskirts.

Undersøgelse af Makedonsk medvirken til ulovlig tilbageholdelse på anmodning af USA. Makfax skriver:

Delegation of the Temporary Committee of the European Parliament (EP) on the alleged illegal activities of CIA in Europe is due to arrive today in Skopje for talks with Macedonian officials on El-Masri case, it was announced in Brussels.

The seven-member delegation led by the Portuguese Carlos Coelho will hold talks with some dozen Macedonian senior officials, deputies and experts, Makfax reports.

The investigating team of the European Parliament is scheduled to meet Thursday afternoon with President Branko Crvenkovski, Vice-Prime Minister Radmila Sekerinska and the incumbent deputy and former Foreign Minister Slobodan Casule.

The Temporary Committee probing into El-Masri as well as other linked cases, was established last January in order to examine the allegations of CIA's involvement in illegal detention and kidnapping in European countries under assistance of the local authorities.

Macedonia is included in the investigation because of the German citizen with Lebanese lineage Khaled El-Masri, who claims that he was mistakenly abducted by the Macedonian police in end 2003, who handed him over to CIA. He was than transferred to Afghanistan, where he was tortured in the inquiry for his involvement in terrorist operations.

Upon several days of investigation, CIA established that the arrested person was not the wanted member of Al Qaeda with the same name, and set him free in Albania. Macedonia's official position is that El-Masri entered legally in Macedonia and left the country 28 days later at the Kosovo border crossing. The European Parliament made public a report yesterday, saying here have been more than 1 000 undeclared CIA flights over European territory since 2001.

GRÆKENLAND

Seneste Parlamentsvalg 040307.

Græsk politi har pågrebet en Græker og nogle Albanere der mistænkes for involvering i hashsmugling/-handel. Kathimerini skriver:

Police yesterday arrested a 50-year-old Greek man and six Albanian nationals after stopping two cars on a country road in the northwestern prefecture of Ioannina. Officers said they confiscated 125 kilos of cannabis from the car driven by the Greek man. They then arrested two Albanians in another car and confiscated small quantities of cannabis from their Ioannina home before arresting another four Albanians, believed to be members of the same ring.

Kathimerini har et interview med en amerikansk forsker - Donald Quataert, author of *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* - der er interesseret i **det civile samfund i Osmannerriget**. Avisen skriver:

Exploring 'civil society' in Ottoman times. Empire's farmers, miners and traders constitute a rich lore of material less examined than its politics, says Donald Quataert

By Nikos Vatopoulos - Kathimerini

Donald Quataert speaks with passion about the Ottoman Empire, which has been his subject for more than 30 years. He teaches it as a postgraduate subject at Binghamton University, in New York state, and it is the subject of his fascinating book "The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922," first published in English in 2001 and now available in Greek translation by Marinos Sariyannis from Alexandria press.

Quataert's innovative approach is based on research into everyday life and the vast majority of the population who were outside the mechanisms of power. Kathimerini asked him about his work.

Why are you so interested in the Ottoman Empire?

I grew up loving and reading history of all sorts. As a young man, I worked in Turkey for two years, on a radar installation. When I returned to the US, I enrolled in some undergraduate courses in Middle East history, mainly to learn more about where I had just spent two years of my life. When I learned of Ottoman history, I quickly became attracted to it: The prospect of carrying out study and research in a historical field that, at that time, had drawn little scholarly attention was very appealing to me.

It seemed to me that I could do original research on important subjects. So, my first topic, for my PhD dissertation, was intended to be the peasantry of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century.

Ottoman history research to me seemed to be a wonderful way to contribute to the study of the human past.

Ottoman history is such an open field of study, with so many important topics just waiting to be examined. And the sources for that study are so incredible, ranging from the vast collections of the Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul, to the reports of the representatives of the European powers, such as Germany or Britain, to the archives for the Center for Asia Minor Studies here in Athens, to the personal papers of Ottoman subjects. It is a fabulous set of research opportunities for those who love history.

The way you focus on people makes your analysis considerably different from other perceptions of the empire based on power and politics.

It is true that too much of Ottoman history writing focuses on the state, its leaders, bureaucrats and military personnel. Even with all of the changes in Ottoman history writing over the three decades since I first began research and writing, most historians still concern themselves with the power elites and powerbrokers of the Ottoman state. While these writings often have great value, they say little or nothing about how most people, most of the time, lived their lives.

In my own research, by contrast, I have sought to focus on "history from below," and study the 95 percent of Ottoman society who were its cultivators and workers and not members of the state apparatus.

Thus, over the years, I have written on: social movements opposed to European imperialism in the Ottoman Empire; home, workshop and factory workers in Ottoman textile production; workers in the Ottoman transport sectors and, most recently, coal miners. By studying these

various groups of Ottoman subjects, I have gained insights into the daily lives of “average” persons. One of my greatest achievements, I believe, was to rescue these lives from being forgotten by those in the present day.

Ever changing

What major changes took place in the Ottoman Empire during the last two centuries of its existence?

There are several major changes: First, there was an increasing growth of capitalism in the Ottoman world; the volume and value of internal and international trade grew significantly, bringing new incomes to Ottoman merchants, workers and peasants.

Levels of consumption of goods grew, stimulating sales and triggering still further changes in the commercialization of the economy.

There also was an increasing involvement of the Western Great Powers — England, France, Russia — in internal Ottoman affairs as these powers competed with one another for supremacy in the strategically and commercially important lands of the Ottoman Empire.

Third, the combination of these first two forces brought about movements in some Ottoman territories, mainly in the Balkan provinces, which were the richest and most populous areas of the empire, for separation from the Istanbul state.

In various areas, including what became the state of Greece, merchants and others became dissatisfied with their share of the profits resulting from the increasing trade, and joined forces with other discontented groups in the society. Feeling that the Ottoman state was taking too great a portion, feeling excluded from fuller political participation and encouraged by one or another of the Great Powers, these dissatisfied groups successfully formed independence movements.

Later on, within the territories of these now-separate states, such as Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, they promoted the formation of nationalist identities. In a fourth major change, the Ottoman state, ironically, became more efficient and effective in its rule over the remaining, but poorer, Ottoman lands in Anatolia and the Arab provinces.

In the remaining territories, the Ottoman state sought to create the identity of “Ottomanism” to compete with the various separatist movements that were and had been developing.

Was the Ottoman Empire entirely a non-Western power?

In fact, the Ottoman Empire was very much a Western power and was understood to be and accepted as part of the European state system by the Western European governments for many centuries.

In the mid-19th century, moreover, the Treaty of Paris recognized the Ottoman Empire as part of the Concert of Europe. The fact that Islam was the religion of the Ottoman dynasty and Ottoman elites has caused many observers to treat the Ottoman Empire as a non-Western entity, but in fact it is very much part of European and Western history.

How did communication and transportation progress in the 19th century facilitate the disintegration of the empire?

Such progress actually often retarded the disintegration of the empire. The telegraph and railroads allowed the Istanbul rulers to better keep track of and control their subjects in many areas of the empire. Such improvements, including steamships, also facilitated trade and commerce and increased the personal incomes of many Ottoman subjects and the revenues of the state itself. For example, central Anatolia became a wheat breadbasket for the first time, thanks to the building of a railroad connecting Istanbul, Konya and Ankara.

Do you consider Turkey to be the modern country that inherited the Ottoman Empire? Are modern Turks happy to be viewed as children of the Ottomans?

Turkey is one modern country that is a successor state of the Ottoman Empire. There are many others, including Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. Modern Turks are divided

in their attitudes toward the Ottoman Empire — some are proud of that heritage; others view the Ottomans as inept and corrupt reactionaries whose empire deserved to die.

What is the major contribution of the Ottoman Empire in terms of progress and change in the Near East?

The Ottoman Empire offers an alternative to the nation-state as a model of political and social organization. At its best, the Ottoman Empire was a multiethnic, multi-religious entity in which, for centuries, members of religious minorities had legally guaranteed rights.

In this system Muslims were superior to non-Muslims. But, in those years, the state had the legal obligation to protect and defend the rights of its non-Muslim subjects. While this obligation sometimes was ignored, the defense of such rights was one of the duties of the state.

In contrast, minorities in Western Europe long existed on sufferance, without legal rights. This changed after the Enlightenment. In response, the Ottoman state formulated this notion of Ottomanism, in which all subjects were legally equal. This was the official ideology at the end of the empire.

What are you teaching now and what are your plans as a researcher and writer?

I am teaching an undergrad course on the Middle East and the United States, seeking to trace America's relationship with and impact on the peoples and countries of the region. I also have been teaching a graduate course on Ottoman social and economic history since 1700. There is quite an active Ottoman history graduate program here at Binghamton University.

My future research will continue my study of the coal miners of the Zonguldak region of the Black Sea. I recently completed a book on this subject, for which I utilized the wonderful archives of the Center for Asia Minor Studies which recorded the oral testimonies of many Ottoman Greeks who once lived in the Zonguldak region. For this, I am hoping to use the archives of Ottoman Greek merchants who operated coal mines around Zonguldak in the 19th century.

TYRKIET

UMs rejsevejledning: <http://www.um.dk/da/menu/Borgerservice/FoerRejsen/Rejsevejledninger/RejsevejledningTyrkiet.htm>.

Seneste Parlamentsvalg blev holdt 021103. Det blev i December 2004 aftalt (med EUs Regeringschefer) at der i Oktober 2005 skal indledes forhandlinger om **optagelse af Tyrkiet i EU**.

LANDE UDEN FOR BALKAN OG ØSTLIGE MIDDELHAV. NATO-LANDE

ITALIEN

Mother Teresa. I anledning af saligkåringen ('beatificeringen') 031019 har Vatikanet etableret en internetside: http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20031019_index_madre-teresa_en.html

USA



CIA World Factbook 2006 Now Available

The World Factbook 2006 is now available on the Central Intelligence Agency Web site (<http://www.cia.gov>). The World Factbook remains the CIA's most widely disseminated and most popular product, now averaging almost 6 million visits each month. In addition, tens of thousands of government, commercial, academic, and other Web sites link to or replicate the online version of the Factbook .

This reference site is updated biweekly throughout the year to provide wide-ranging and hard-to-locate information about the background, geography, people, government, economy, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues for countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. The nine primary information categories and the 139 subcategories for most entities include geographic coordinates, current account balances, number of mobile cellular telephones, heliports, legal systems, refugees, literacy, HIV/AIDS-deaths, and much more. Included among the 271 geographic entries is one for the "World," which incorporates data and other information summarized where possible from the other 270 country listings.

The World Factbook 2006 contains six appendices with reference information ranging from abbreviations and descriptions of international organizations and groups to cross-referenced lists of country data codes. The 2006 edition includes 15 reference maps, which are available in both JPEG and PDF formats. Many country maps and flags have been updated to reflect changes and refinements over the past year.

In addition to the regular information updates, The World Factbook 2006 features several new or revised fields. In the Economy category, the Factbook is now reporting national GDP figures in US dollars converted at official exchange rates (OER) in addition to GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) rates, since both measures contain information useful to readers. Traditionally, only PPP-converted GDP values were reported. In the Transportation category, the former "Highways" entry is now "Roadways," while "Ports and harbors" has been retitled "Ports and terminals."

"Rank Order" pages are also available for the online user, enabling visitors to select and view data from among 47 data fields in the geography, people, economy, communications, transportation, and military categories. Some of the topics that can now be ranked include natural gas production, proved reserves of oil, exports, imports, and Internet hosts. Most of the information is rank-ordered from highest to lowest for all countries where data are available. Individual pages can be readily viewed, and instructions are provided for downloading and saving the information into a database or spreadsheet.

The World Factbook 2006 is available for download in Zip file format for both high-bandwidth users and low-bandwidth users via the "Download This Publication" link on the Factbook home page or directly from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/download.html>.

Printed copies of The World Factbook 2006 will be available for purchase in July from the Government Printing Office (<http://bookstore.gpo.gov>) and the National Technical Information Service (<http://www.ntis.gov>). Ordering and pricing information for both domestic and international customers will be available on the GPO and NTIS Web sites.

Amerikansk støtte til energiprojekt i Albanien. Den Amerikanske Ambassade skriver:

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador Marcie B. Ries

Ceremony on Submission to the Government of Albania of ASG Power SA \$1.9 Billion Project in the Energy Field

I'd like to welcome everyone here today.

First of all, I'd like to thank the Prime Minister very much for being with us today. He is very, very busy, so we would like to get right down to the facts. I want to say that I am extremely excited about this project. It is a really great project all around. It's an international project with an American interest, Swiss interest, and I want to welcome the Swiss Ambassador, Italian as well, and I think just generally, it's good for Albania. This project will be the largest foreign direct investment project ever in Albania -- \$1.9 billion. Let me give you some facts beyond that one, which is in itself startling. This project has the capacity to provide within the next 18 months access to low-cost night power from Western Europe. During construction it will provide four thousand jobs and permanently 400. And, maybe this is the most important: upon completion, it will provide enough energy to address all of Albania's power and gas needs. But in the larger scheme of things, it will help establish Albania as a good place for foreign direct investment, it will have a major positive impact on the overall environment, it will give a boost to the economy and the balance of payments, and will make Albania a major player in the European energy field.

I think what we are doing here today reinforces the support of the U.S. Government for Albania's economic growth. It's good for us, for U.S. business. We're anticipating that it'll include about \$600 million in U.S. equipment and services. And, finally, the participation of the U.S. Ex-Im Bank opens up additional foreign direct investment opportunities for U.S. companies. So, with that, I would like to turn it over to the Prime Minister to say a few words.

ENGLAND

TYSKLAND

FRANKRIG

DANMARK (NORGE, SVERIGE)

Flygtninge fra Kosovo / Kosóva. Dansk Flygtningehjælp har udsendt et informationsmateriale til dem. Nedenfor følger den danske udgave. Serbisk-sproget udgave kan downloades fra: <http://bjoerna.net/sidste-nyt/DFH-Serbisk-0603.pdf>, Albansk-sproget udgave kan downloades fra: <http://bjoerna.net/sidste-nyt/DFH-Albansk-0603.pdf>

NYHEDSBREV TIL KOSOVARER I DANMARK

Udgivet af Dansk Flygtningehjælp, Marts 2006

Dette nyhedsbrev henvender sig til kosovarer, som overvejer at vende tilbage til Kosovo. Nyhedsbrevet udgives af Dansk Flygtningehjælp, som er en organisation, der arbejder uafhængigt af statslige og politiske interesser.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp har i foråret 2006 sat fokus på asylansøgere og flygtninges tilbagevenden til Kosovo. Baggrunden er, at Kosovo atter befinder sig i en forholdsvis stabil

situation, som har gjort det muligt for mange såvel albanere, serbere, romaer, ashkalier mv. at vende hjem - både fra nærområderne og fra Europa. I Danmark sidder omkring 300 afviste asylansøgere på danske asylcentre, mens der er ca. 1.000 personer fra Kosovo med en flygtningestatus.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp støtter kosovarer, som overvejer at vende hjem til Kosovo. Det gælder både afviste asylansøgere og flygtninge med opholdstilladelse. Nyhedsbrevet har til formål at informere kosovarer om bl.a. situationen i Kosovo og om støttemuligheder ved evt. tilbagevenden.

Har du spørgsmål til Dansk Flygtningehjælp, kan du ringe til vores albansk/serbokroatiske telefonrådgivning på tlf. 3373 5230 hver tirsdag mellem kl.13 - 14.

Læs her i nyhedsbrevet om:

- Situationen for kosovarer i Danmark
- Situationen for tilbagevendte i Kosovo
- Dansk Flygtningehjælps rådgivning til kosovarer i Danmark
- Flygtninge med opholdstilladelse kan få støtte til at vende hjem

SITUATIONEN FOR KOSOVARER I DANMARK

Der sidder godt 300 asylansøgere fra Kosovo i Danmark, som har fået endeligt afslag på opholdstilladelse. Det betyder samtidig, at de har fået besked på at forlade Danmark for at vende hjem til Kosovo.

Fra juli 2000 til august 2002 blev 88 personer udsendt med tvang. Der blev under ledsagelse udsendt 8 personer i 2003, 45 personer i 2004 og 18 personer i 2005. Der er indtil videre i 2006 ikke gennemført ledsagede udsendelser til Kosovo. Dansk politi henvender sig løbende til UNMIK for at underrette om fremtidige tvangsmæssige udsendelser til Kosovo. Indtil nu er dette alene sket for etniske albanere, goranier, bosniakker og etniske tyrkere. I UNHCR's retningslinjer fra marts 2005 er der endvidere åbnet op for, at der efter en konkret vurdering kan ske tvangsmæssig udsendelse af etniske ashkalier og egyptere til Kosovo (Rigspoliets Udlændingeafdeling, februar 2006).

Tal og fakta for asylansøgere fra Kosovo

- I 2005 og 2006 har Flygtningenævnet ikke givet opholdstilladelse til asylansøgere fra Kosovo.
- I 2003 og 2004 har Flygtningenævnet i 14 sager givet opholdstilladelse til asylansøgere fra Kosovo.
- I 2005 blev der i 26 sager givet humanitær opholdstilladelse svarende til 68 personer.
- Pr. 4. februar 2006 sad der 310 kosovarer i aktuel udsendelsesposition hvilket betyder, at de har fået endeligt afslag på ophold i Danmark og skal forlade landet.

Udover afviste asylansøgere lever der omkring 1.000 flygtninge med en dansk opholdstilladelse i Danmark. Kun få har valgt at opgive deres opholdstilladelse i Danmark for at vende tilbage til Kosovo.

SITUATIONEN FOR TILBAGEVENDTE I KOSOVO

Krigen i 1999 og efterfølgende uroligheder stiller Kosovo og dens befolkning overfor store udfordringer i disse år. Ikke mindst i forhold til de mange personer som vender tilbage til Kosovo.

Op til og under krigen i 1999 måtte et stort antal personer af forskellig etnisk oprindelse flygte fra Kosovo. Det skønnes, at der stadig lever omkring 200.000 fordrevne personer i Serbien og endnu flere i de europæiske lande. Hertil kommer ca. 20.000 internt fordrevne i selve Kosovo. Der er også mange personer, som er vendt tilbage til Kosovo efter at have været på flugt. For dem er det afgørende, at sikkerheden er god, at det er muligt at opnå en rimelig indkomst, at børnene har adgang til skole, og at der er et sundhedssystem som fungerer.

Sikkerhed og arbejde

FN's Flygtningehøjkommissariat UNHCR vurderer, at både sikkerheden og bevægelsesfriheden for etniske mindretal generelt er i fremgang over hele Kosovo. Der er dog stadig områder i Kosovo, hvor fx romaer og andre etniske mindretal ikke er velkomne. Dansk Flygtningehjælp har for nylig været i kontakt med forskellige lokale organisationer i Kosovo, som rapporterer, at sikkerhedssituationen flere steder er god, og at der i den senere tid ikke har været voldelige overgreb eller trusler mod minoriteter i blandede områder. Det gælder fx i Gnjilane, hvor der lever ca. 450 romaer i tre forskellige områder og i Prizren, hvor der lever ca. 4.500 romaer. I Prizren har romaer desuden deres eget kulturcenter.

Ifølge flere organisationer er ét af de største problemer i Kosovo nu den høje arbejdsløshed, som rapporteres til at være mellem 40 og 60%. Dette er stærkt medvirkende til økonomiske og sociale problemer i Kosovo generelt. I marts 2005 startede et program, som støttes af Danmark, med sigte på fremme af erhvervsudvikling og beskæftigelse i Kosovo. Den samlede beløbsramme er 50 mio. kr. og programmet løber i fire år fra 2005-2008. Under programmet er indgået aftaler med fire mikrokreditinstitutioner om tilførsel af lånekapital. Mikrokreditterne ydes som lavtforrentede lån til små og mellemstore virksomheder.

Uddannelse og sundhed

Den høje arbejdsløshed gør det vanskeligt for tilbagevendte at skaffe sig et ordentligt indtægtsgrundlag. Uddannelsesmulighederne i Kosovo er endnu sparsomme. Helt tilbage fra 2001 har UNMIK arbejdet intenst på at fremme projekter, hvor man integrerer forskellige etniske minoriter i den samme skole. Fx i Bince, hvor organisationen Caritas Italiana har været med til gennem forsoning, dialog og samarbejde at lave et multietnisk uddannelsessted.

Sundhedssystemet i Kosovo lider under mangel på kapacitet. Som følge af borgerkrigen i 1998-1999 og den efterfølgende uro og etniske konflikter lider mange kosovarer af psykiske ar på sjælen. Ifølge en amerikansk undersøgelse fra år 2001 led hele 25% af befolkningen, eller 475.000 personer, af posttraumatisk stress. Selvom krigen er slut fortsætter krigen inde i mange folks hoveder.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp i Kosovo

Dansk Flygtningehjælp har været tilstede i Kosovo siden 1998, og arbejder for at hjælpe flygtninge, der har et ønske om at vende hjem.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp hjælper med at:

- give små legater, der gør det muligt for flygtningene at skaffe sig en indtægt, og dermed gøre sig uafhængige af hjælp udefra
- genopbygge sundhedsklinikker eller genoprette vandforsyning og forbedre de sanitære forhold
- støtte hjemvendte flygtninge med at genopbygge deres hus og udlevere nødvendigt udstyr i form af køkkengrej, mindre landbrugsredskaber eller fx tæpper og senge.
- forsone de forskellige etniske grupper for at forhindre nye konflikter og dermed at gøre det muligt for de mange flygtninge at vende hjem.

TILBUD TIL KOSOVARER I DANMARK

Dansk Flygtningehjælp, Care4You Association og Dansk Røde Kors tilbyder forskellige rådgivnings- og uddannelses tilbud til kosovarer i Danmark. Du kan nedenfor læse om de forskellige tilbud.

Dansk Flygtningehjælps rådgivning til afviste asylansøgere fra Kosovo

Dansk Flygtningehjælp tilbyder individuel rådgivning til alle kosovarer med afslag på opholdstilladelse i Danmark. I rådgivningen vil du have mulighed for både at tale med en jurist om din asylsag og med en erfaren repatrieringsrådgiver om muligheder og udfordringer ved at rejse hjem til Kosovo.

Under tidligere gruppesamtaler med kosovarer er spørgsmålet blevet rejst om Dansk Flygtningehjælp kan hjælpe med en opholdstilladelse i Danmark. I Danmark er det de danske myndigheder, som udsteder opholdstilladelser, mens Dansk Flygtningehjælp - som humanitær organisation - har visse muligheder for at rejse særlige spørgsmål overfor de danske asylmyndigheder. Dansk Flygtningehjælp kan derfor tilbyde at kigge på din sag med nye øjne, se om der skulle være muligheder, som endnu ikke er udnyttede.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp har også talt med personer, som har spurgt om mulighederne for evt. at opgive livet på asylcentret i Danmark og vende tilbage til Kosovo. Her er der mulighed for at opnå forskellige former for støtte som fx:

- 1) modtagelse og transport til oplyst hjemadresse, startpakke med møbler, mad, hygiejneartikler, udstyr mv.
- 2) praktisk støtte til registrering hos fx lokale myndigheder mv.
- 3) støtte til mindre reparation af huse, husleje for en kortere periode og lign.
- 4) støtte til indkomsts-kabende aktiviteter fx til erhvervsudstyr

Dansk Flygtningehjælp kommer løbende rundt på asylcentre. Du er naturligvis også velkommen til at kontakte os - evt. via en centermedarbejder - på tlf.: 3373 5230. Vær opmærksom på, at der tirsdage mellem kl. 13 - 14 er telefonrådgivning på albansk/serbokroatisk.

Indkomst i Kosovo - rådgivning og lånemuligheder

Hvis du overvejer at vende tilbage, men er i tvivl om dine muligheder for at skabe en ordentlig indkomst tilbyder Care4you Association rådgivning om erhverv og start af egen lille virksomhed i Kosovo. Det kan fx være hvordan du forbereder en erhvervsplan, mulighederne for at opnå små og billige lån i Kosovo mv. Du kan kontakte Søren Egdal fra Care4You Association på email: se@care4you.dk eller mobiltelefon: 2044 2468.

Kurser i Danmark

Det kan være en god idé at forbedre sin erhvervsmæssige kunnen og viden forud for hjemrejse til Kosovo. Det forbedrer ens muligheder for at opnå et job og dermed en indkomst, som kan forsørge en familie. Hos Dansk Røde Kors kan du deltage i en række forskellige kurser, fx PC-kørekort, viceværtskursus, mediekursus eller et iværksætterkursus som giver dig kendskab til at starte egen virksomhed. For mere information kontakt Dansk Røde Kors Kulturhus og tal med Lars Brøgger på telefon 3296 0088 eller email lab@redcross.dk

FLYGTNINGE MED OPHOLDSTILLADELSE KAN FÅ STØTTE TIL AT VENDE HJEM

Hvis du er flygtning med opholdstilladelse, udlænding med humanitær opholdstilladelse, familiesammenført eller indvandrer, og ønsker at vende hjem for at tage varigt ophold i Kosovo, kan du ifølge repatrieringsloven søge om økonomisk støtte til at vende hjem.

Den økonomiske støtte kan bl.a. omfatte:

- Flybillet til hjemlandet
- Transport af ejendele
- Hjælp til etablering i hjemlandet
- Indkøb og transport af erhvervsudstyr.

Dansk Flygtningehjælp tilbyder rådgivning og information til kosovarer, som overvejer at vende tilbage. Du finder pjecer og anden information på vores hjemmeside: www.flygtning.dk/atvendehjem. Du kan også kontakte rådgiver i Dansk Flygtningehjælp Anne-

Dorthe Helmich på tlf. 3373 5230 eller Vagn Larsen på tlf.: 3373 5231.

Nyhedsbrev til kosovarer i Danmark er udgivet af Dansk Flygtningehjælp. Ansvarshavende redaktion er Anne-Dorthe Helmich, Dansk Flygtningehjælp. Redaktion: Ole Larsen, Dansk Flygtningehjælp, Borgergade 10,3. Postboks 53, 1002 København K. Tlf. 3373 5000. Fax 3391 4507. www.flygtning.dk. Redaktionen afsluttet 20. marts 2006. Nyhedsbrevet må gerne kopieres. Flere eksemplarer kan fås ved henvendelse til Dansk Flygtningehjælp, Asyl og Repatriering. Tlf. 3373 5237. E-mail: ole.larsen@drc.dk

Ugerapport fra Dansk KFOR. Hærens Operative Kommando - se under: [Kosova](#).

LANDE UDEN FOR BALKAN OG ØSTLIGE MIDDELHAV. IKKE NATO-LANDE

RUSLAND

UMs Rejsevejledning: <http://www.um.dk/da/menu/Borgerservice/FoerRejsen/Rejsevejledninger/RejsevejledningRusland.htm>

KINA

Information om »Sidste Nyt«

»Sidste Nyt om Albanien, Kosóva og Makedonien« hører til et web-site om de Balkan-lande hvor der lever mange Albanere:
<http://bjoerna.dk/albanerne.htm>.

Her kan du også finde »gamle nyheder«, anmeldelser, links og en [Balkan Brevkasse](#).

»Sidste Nyt« sættes på nettet senest hver fredag morgen, hvor der sendes besked til dem der ønsker det.

Bestilling / afbestilling sker ved at sende en e-mail med teksten »Nyheder udbedes« / »Nyheder afmeldes«.

Nyheder, materiale, kommentarer og spørgsmål modtages *meget* gerne, både om småting og større ting. Send en e-mail.

Tilsvarende hvis du opdager en fejl. Fejl vil blive rettet hurtigst muligt.

»Sidste Nyt« og <http://bjoerna.dk/albanerne.htm> drives *non-profit* og uden finansiering »udefra«.

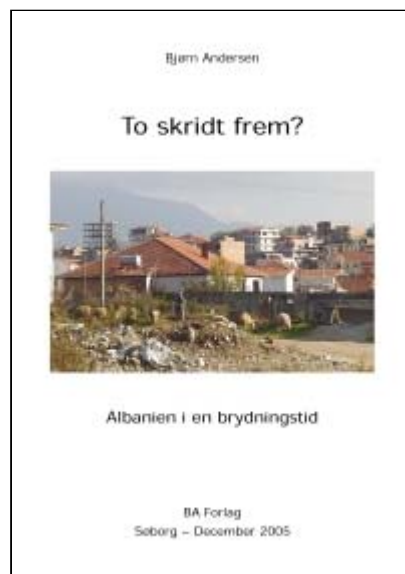
Hvis du vil være med til at finansiere udgivelsen kan du lettest gøre det ved at købe én eller flere af mine bøger.

Send gerne en mail hvis der er - små eller store - tekniske problemer.

[Bemærkninger om EDB-sikkerhed](#).

Du må citere hvis du angiver hovedsidenes adresse: bjoerna.dk

Siderne om Albanerne finder du på: bjoerna.dk/albanerne.htm



»To skridt frem? Albanien i en brydningstid«

Baggrundsmateriale kan findes via:
<http://bjoerna.net/to-skridt-frem/#Linksamling>

»Albansk Almanak 2004«

Almanak'en for 2004 er udkommet i december 2005. Her finder du nyhedsbrevene fra 2004 og nogle kommentarer.

Bogen udgives i et sæt bestående af et hæfte (de første 77 sider) og en CD (alle 1264 sider). På CD'en også supplerende materiale - ikke mindst »1912 - Med den serbiske Armé i Makedonien« - Fritz Magnussen's beretninger v/ Palle Rossen.

Se indholdsoversigt på: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/almanak-2004.htm>.

Se pris på: [Bestillingsliste](#).

Udgaven for 2005 ventes at udkomme i april 2006.

»Albanske Studier« bd. 1-2

Kommentarer til Bjøl, Huntington, Machiavelli, Sørlander, DUPI (Humanitær Intervention), Clausewitz, Mao Zedong, Lars R. Møller, Malcolm og flere andre.

Englændere på rejse i Albanien: Edward Lear, Edith Durham og Robert Carver.

Bøger om slægtsfejder og blodhævn. Diskussion af Anne Knudsen's disputats om blodhævn på Korsika og af Ismail Kadare's roman »Ufuldendt april«.

Baggrundsmateriale om den Sønderjyske general Christian von Holstein, der deltog i Habsburgernes felttog ind i Kosóva i 1689-90.

Sidst i bogen et forsøg på en sammenfatning i form af nogle 'grundlæggende synspunkter'.

Desuden en kommentar til Hans Hækkerup's »På skansen«. På CD'en supplerende materiale om traditionelle Albanske klædedragter og om Holstein. Hans bog om Kosovo er omtalt i »Albansk Almanak 2004«.

Du kan downloade indholdsfortegnelsen og kommentaren til »På skansen« fra: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/studier-2002.htm>

Bogen findes i trykt form og på CD (som pdf-fil). Papirudgave 368 A4-sider i 2 bind. Bogen sælges som papirudgave m/ CD og som CD alene. Se pris på: [Bestillingsliste](#).

Til dig der kigger på et ældre nummer af »Sidste Nyt«.

Seneste udgave af denne »annonce« kan ses på:

[»Sidste Nyt«](#) (klik)