

Sidste Nyt fra Albanien, Kosóva og Makedonien

The Latest News from Albania, Kosóva and Macedonia



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PM Berisha har haft besøg af den Danske Ambassadør, Niels Severin Munk

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Balkan, generelt *The Balkans*

Kosóva *Kosóva [Kosovo]*

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England *England*

Tyskland *Germany*

Frankrig *France*

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

Rusland *Russia*

Kina *China*

UGEOVERSIGT (resumé)

Næste nr ventes at udkomme Fredag 17.11.2006

Kosóva: **FM Søren Gade (DK) har været i Kosóva og bl.a. mødt SRSG Joachim Rücker** . Der foreligger intet om indholdet - heller ikke på FM's websted - men der er et UNMIK-billede af begivenheden.

Der har været det første kvartalsmøde mellem SRSG Rücker og KPC [Kosovo Protection Corps] / TMK. The KPC Commander was congratulated for performance in the on-going reconstruction work of Kosovo Serb properties in Svinjarë/Svinjare and for the continued efforts and results in the implementation of Standard 8 and reaching out to ethnic minorities.

UNIFEM Good Will Ambassador Nicole Kidman Visits Kosovo 14-15th October. In Pristina, Kosovo, UNIFEM Good Will Ambassador Nicole Kidman, UNIFEM Kosovo Project Manager Flora Macula, and UNIFEM Executive Director Noeleen Heyzer listen to inter-ethnic dialogue between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs discussing ways to re-establish links between their communities and work together to build a peaceful future for their families and communities.

Albanien: **PM Berisha har haft besøg af den Danske Ambassadør, Niels Severin Munk.**

Arbejdet på Kalimash-Morinë-vejen er 'fløjtet' i gang; Kalimash ligger i Kukës-området. Morinë [Morina i bestemt form] ligger på grænsen til Kosóva. Vejen er en del af vejen mellem Kosóva og de Albanske havne ved Adriaterhavet; den har stor betydning for samhandelen og trafikken mellem Albanien og Kosóva.

Den Albanske UM, Besnik Mustafaj, har - telefonisk - drøftet forskelligt med sin kinesiske kollega, Li Zhaoxing, dels om Albanien's standpunkt i striden om ét eller to Kina, dels om det bilaterale forhold, dels - og ikke mindst - om hvordan Kina, som permanent medlem af Sikkerhedsrådet, bør forholde sig i Kosóva-spørgsmålet. Mustafaj søgte at overbevise UM Li Zhaoxing at Kina burde acceptere Kosóva's selvstændighed [hvilket fremgår af bemærkningen om at Kosóva-spørgsmålet er enkeltstående].

Den sorte økonomi. Der har netop været en konference herom. Vicedirektør Fatos Ibrahimi (Bank of Albania) holdt et oplæg.

Albanien fik tidligere på måneden ny Forsvarschef. Generalmajor Luan Hoxha afløste Generalløjtnant Pëllumb Qazimi.

Ohrid-søen. Fiskeri ... Lokale Makedonske Myndigheder er bekymrede. På den Albanske side af søen fiskes Kuran-ørred, der er en stor delikatesse.

Serbien: PM Kostunica har talt i Nis om folkeafstemningen i den kommende weekend om en ny forfatning. Ét af hovedmålene er at slå fast at Kosovo er en grundlæggende del af Serbien. Er der flertal for forfatningen har Regeringen sikret sig at den er bundet på hænder og fødder. Dét i sig selv har næppe nogen reel, men en stor symbolsk betydning, for næppe nogen regner længere med at fhv Præsident Martti Ahtisaari kan skabe grundlaget for et kompromis. En løsning af Kosovo-spørgsmålet må nødvendigvis vedtages af Sikkerhedsrådet. Patriark Pavle støtter den nye forfatning.

Makedonien: Makfax beretter om et universitetsslagsmål i Tetovo; tre universitetslærere brækkede næsen på en fjerde, muligvis fordi han var blevet udnævnt til dekan.

Grækenland: Kathimirini skriver om **udlændinges køb af fast ejendom i Grækenland,** herunder om etniske Albaneres køb. I grænseområderne skal man have militærets godkendelse.

USA: Præsident Bush har holdt en længere tale på en pressekonference om Iraq-krigen. Den begynder således: Thank you all very much. I'm going to spend a little more time on my opening comments than I usually do, but I'll save plenty of time for questions. Over the past three years I have often addressed the American people to explain

developments in Iraq. Some of these developments were encouraging, such as the capture of Saddam Hussein, the elections in which 12 million Iraqis defied the terrorists and voted for a free future, and the demise of the brutal terrorist Zarqawi. Other developments were not encouraging, such as the bombing of the U.N. Headquarters in Baghdad, the fact that we did not find stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, and the continued loss of some of America's finest sons and daughters.

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 FNs 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. Søren Jessen-Petersen fratræder igen i slutningen af juni 2006 • 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](#)



Pressemeddelelser fra UNMIK:

FM Søren Gade (DK) har været i Kosóva og bl.a. mødt SRSG Joachim Rucker. Der foreligger intet om indholdet - heller ikke på FM's websted - men der er et UNMIK-billede af begivenheden.



Foto: UNMIK/DPI

Møde om Kosóva's 'sikkerhedsstruktur'. UNMIK skriver:

Tuesday, 17 October 2006

ISSR Steering Committee Meeting discusses draft Kosovo Internal Security Structure Report

PRISTINA - The Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) Steering Committee met yesterday to discuss the draft of the ISSR report. The meeting was chaired by Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Kosovo (SRSG) Joachim Rucker. Among those who participated were Prime Minister Agim Çeku, Assembly President Kole Berisha and COMKFOR Lt. General Roland Kather.

"The importance of the ISSR process, now reaching its culmination, is that it is a transparent and consultative process involving the direct participation of people from all walks of life in Kosovo," the SRSG said.

The Prime Minister Agim Çeku said "the Report is a very balanced analysis and makes useful recommendations which can be used by the Government for the security of Kosovo."

The members of the Steering Committee made a number of comments still to be included in the draft report expected to be made public in December. They mentioned in particular the costing aspect for those recommendations which will require funding.

The ISSR Steering Committee, the principal body responsible for directing and monitoring the ISSR process, is chaired by the SRSG and consists of 20 high level representatives of the international community, PISG, political parties, religious groups and minority communities. Besides the SRSG, COMKFOR and the Prime Minister, participants in yesterday's meeting included a representative of the President of Kosovo, Ministers of Economy, Justice and Interior, as well as heads of OSCE and EU Pillars.

Der har været det første kvartalsmøde mellem SRSG Rucker og KPC / TMK. The KPC Commander was congratulated for performance in the on-going reconstruction work of Kosovo Serb properties in Svinjarë/

Svinjare and for the continued efforts and results in the implementation of Standard 8 and reaching out to ethnic minorities.



SRSG Joachim Rücker and KFOR Commander Lt-Gen. Roland Kather co-chair their first quarterly KPC Development Group (KPCDG) meeting, at UNMIK HQ. Foto: UNMIK/DPI

UNMIK/PR/1598

Wednesday, 25 October 2006

KPCDG reaffirms support to the Kosovo Protection Corps

PRISTINA – Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Kosovo (SRSG) Joachim Rücker and KFOR Commander Lt.-Gen. Roland Kather this afternoon co-chaired the quarterly meeting of the Kosovo Protection Corps Development Group (KPCDG) at UNMIK HQ. Participants at the meeting included Prime Minister Agim Çeku, KPC Coordinator Maj.-Gen. Chris Steirn CBE, KPC Commander Lt.-Gen. Sylejman Selimi, representatives of Contact Group Liaison Offices, the Dutch Liaison Office, the European Commission and the European Union.

This is the first KPCDG meeting since the SRSG and COMKFOR assumed their current appointments. They took the opportunity to reiterate their support to the KPC and its continued development. In particular, the KPC Commander was congratulated for performance in the on-going reconstruction work of Kosovo Serb properties in Svinjarë/Svinjare and for the continued efforts and results in the implementation of Standard 8 and reaching out to ethnic minorities.

Lt.-Gen. Kather briefed the meeting on the recently revised training support provided by KFOR, which targets key areas and the management level within the KPC. Lt.-Gen. Kather also stated that he was impressed with the motivation of KPC members and the cooperation between the KPC and KFOR.

Maj.-Gen. Steirn brought to the meeting's attention draft selection criteria aimed at further professionalisation, which were supported, and the recent report of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). The GICHD report supported the view that the KPC demining capacity would be sufficient to manage the residual mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) threat in Kosovo beyond 2007. The recommendation was also endorsed by the Development Group.

Lt.-Gen. Selimi detailed the extensive work and results of the KPC since the previous meeting in continuing to professionalise and contribute to a positive future for Kosovo, and expressed the KPC's readiness to undertake any other tasks. Prime Minister Çeku congratulated the KPC for the great progress made in all fields and appealed to members of the Development Group to allow for planning to proceed in respect of the KPC, to ensure that prospective transformation is successfully implemented and that obligations continue to be fulfilled after status is determined. The Development Group agreed that there is merit in thinking and planning ahead and, while detailed plans depend on the status settlement and cannot yet be made, Maj.-Gen. Steirn was invited to take this process

forward.

There was also a discussion regarding the Marshall Center and it was agreed that Marshall Center's expertise could be invited to Kosovo to help the KPC in their further development.

Nicole Kidman har været på besøg



UNIFEM Good Will Ambassador Nicole Kidman Visits Kosovo 14-15th October. In Pristina, Kosovo, UNIFEM Good Will Ambassador Nicole Kidman, UNIFEM Kosovo Project Manager Flora Macula, and UNIFEM Executive Director Noeleen Heyzer listen to inter-ethnic dialogue between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs discussing ways to re-establish links between their communities and work together to build a peaceful future for their families and communities. Credits should read: UNIFEM

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

En verden udenfor

KOSOVO: En beskrivelse af en dags gøremål og oplevelser her i Kosovo uge 42.

23-10-2006 kl. 14:57

Af forskellige forfattere fra Liaison Monitoring Team 5.

Tirsdag den 17. oktober tog Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) 5 og 4 en tur på skydebanen. Vi startede med at indskyde vores geværer, hvorefter vi gik ned på pistolbanen. Alt i alt var skydebanedagen en succes. Vejret var

dejligt, og vi præsterede rent faktisk at ramme noget af det, vi sigtede efter. Da vi havde ryddet op på skydebanen, var vi lige hjemme at vende i Camp Oluf Rye med skiverne og resten af ammunitionen.

Det var dog en kort visit, for vi havde andre planer for dagen. Vi skulle højt op i bjergene. Vi skulle helt derop, hvor træerne bliver hvide og luften en anelse tyndere. Turen derop førte os forbi den opdæmmede Gazivodsko sø; en kunstig sø på cirka 20 kilometers længde, som bliver brugt til produktion af strøm. Vandstanden i søen var relativ lav.

Faktisk var den så lav, at vores til lejligheden medbragte serbiske tolk fortalte os, at han kunne skimte et af de huse, der nu ligger under vandet.

En anden af vores tolke fortalte os, da vi kom hjem, at han som knægt/ung mand havde svømmet i søen næsten hver dag i sommerperioden. Han fortalte os også, at søen havde været opdæmmede i lidt over 30 år.

Men det må være mærkeligt at svømme i søen og tænke på, at lige under ens fødder gemmer der sig op til flere spørgelsesbyer. Huse, der stod der, da vandet lige så stille kom krybende op om soklen. At, hvis man bare dykker ned under overfladen, så vil man finde en død menneskeverden.

En verden af træ, teglsten og beton, der langsomt bliver slidt væk af vandet, der blot ønsker at omfavne det blidt. Ethvert spor af livet fra før, bliver i kornstørrelser ført af sted med blide strømme for til sidst helt at forsvinde som tårer i regn. Tanken er en anelse skræmmende.

Men efter det lille sorte tankespil, blev synet løftet fra det kolde dybe vand op imod Kosovo' bjerge. Vores rejse fortsatte videre opad til en verden, der syntes meget mere levende end den, vi lige havde forladt. Der var træer på alle bjergsider, solen skinnede uhindret på vores ansigter, og folk arbejdede i skovparcellerne langs vejsiderne.

Man kunne ikke lade være med at lade sig imponere, når man på et af turens mange stop kunne kigge ud over Kosovo' store vidder, dybe dale og høje bjerge, som alle spillede sammen til at skabe et ualmindeligt flot landskab. På et tidspunkt befandt vi os i en sådan position, at vi kunne kigge ud over to store dale.

Højden havde da også nærmet sig de 1500 meter, men der var stadig over 300 meter til toppen. Den skulle dog ikke vise sig at blive en skuffelse, for det var som at træde ind i en helt anden verden. Træerne blev hvide af sne, ens ånde blev synlig, og alligevel syntes solen at skinne lidt kraftigere. Udsigten var ikke mindre end fænomenal og turen en deklareret succes.

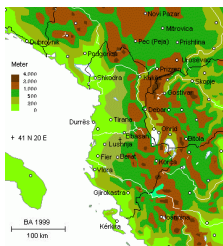
Efter lidt tid på toppen gik turen nedad igen. Igennem den levende verden, forbi den døde verden, og hele vejen tilbage til den verden, vi selv kom fra. Vi tog billeder og følelser fra hver af disse verdener med tilbage til vores egen verden og kunne blot konstatere, at dette land rummer mere, end hvad de fleste tror og ser.

Dette land er meget mere end den død og ødelæggelse, der har hærget landet igennem flere århundreder. Og det er det, vi skal fokusere på, når vi kører rundt i vores egen verden.

ØST KOSÓVA / PRESEVO-DALEN / SYD-SERBIEN

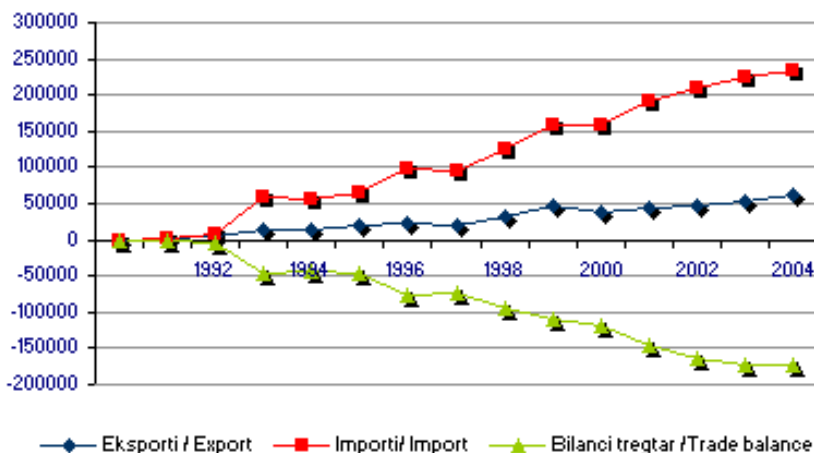
For nemheds skyld bruges betegnelsen *Øst Kosóva / Presevo-dalen* om det omstridte område med byerne: Presheva, Medvegja og Bujanoci (Albansk stavemåde). Ca. 75 % af befolkningen skønnes at være etniske Albanere - måske omkring 70.000. En modstandsgruppe har tidligere været i funktion, men synes nu at 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)



Seneste handelstal: Maj 2006: <http://bjoerna.net/sidste-nyt/313.htm#Handelsbalance> [Bemærk ændring i farvekoder]

Meddelelser til udlændinge fra det Albanske Indenrigsministerium. Det Engelske Udenrigsministeriums 'Country Advice' til rejsende kan findes på adressen: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Servlet?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=1013618385522>. 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)]

Præsident Moisiu har været i Peqin [der ligger mellem Rrogozhina og Elbasan] for at fejre Eid-al-Fitr, festen ved afslutningen af Ramadan'en



Præsidenten besøgte også de lokale myndigheder i Peqin



Præsidentkontoret har udsendt flg.:

October 23, 2006

The President of the Republic, Alfred Moisiu wished today the Albanian Muslim believers wherever they might be about the Eid al-Fitr Holiday. This time, the wish of the Head of state for wellbeing and prosperity to all the Albanian Muslims came from the city of Peqin.

During his visit, President Moisiu was received by Skënder Hasa, the Mayor of the Peqin Municipality, Sokol Elezi, Deputy Prefect of Peqin, Hamit Kosta, parliamentarian of the area and also by other authorities of local government. After greeting and wholeheartedly wishing the local inhabitants gathered to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, the Head of state visited the Mosque of Peqin and met with its Mufti, Shaban Thartari. During the conversation the Mufti expressed the special gratitude to President Moisiu for sharing this great joy and the celebration of the Holiday with the inhabitants of Peqin by stressing that for them this is a major appreciation done by the President of the Republic.

On his side, the Head of state, during a communication with the media pointed out that also the celebration of this Holiday is an opportunity to be reminded that all the Albanians must unite like brothers and join their forces to progress ahead and to build a truly democratic Albania that belongs to us all. The Head of state especially addressed the young generation not to forget the religious understanding, harmony and tolerance that make up a precious asset of the Albanian people and also to carefully preserve these unique and integrating values of our country in the European family.

At the conclusion of his visit, President Moisiu held a meeting with the authorities of the local government, who informed the Head of state regarding the progress of the work to improve infrastructure, preserve law and order, reduce poverty in Peqin, etc. President Moisiu also stopped for a visit in the family of the sister of Mustafa Gjinishi, one of the remarkable fighter and activist of the National Liberation Antifascist War.

PM Sali Berisha's aktiviteter: [Billederne i denne sektion kan som regel forstørres ved at klikke på dem (mens man er

på nettet)]

PM Berisha har deltaget i en konference om Albanien's optagelse i NATO. Albanien er parat til at 'betale' hvad der er nødvendigt for at blive optaget, sagde han.



PM Berisha har haft besøg af den Danske Ambassadør, Niels Severin Munk

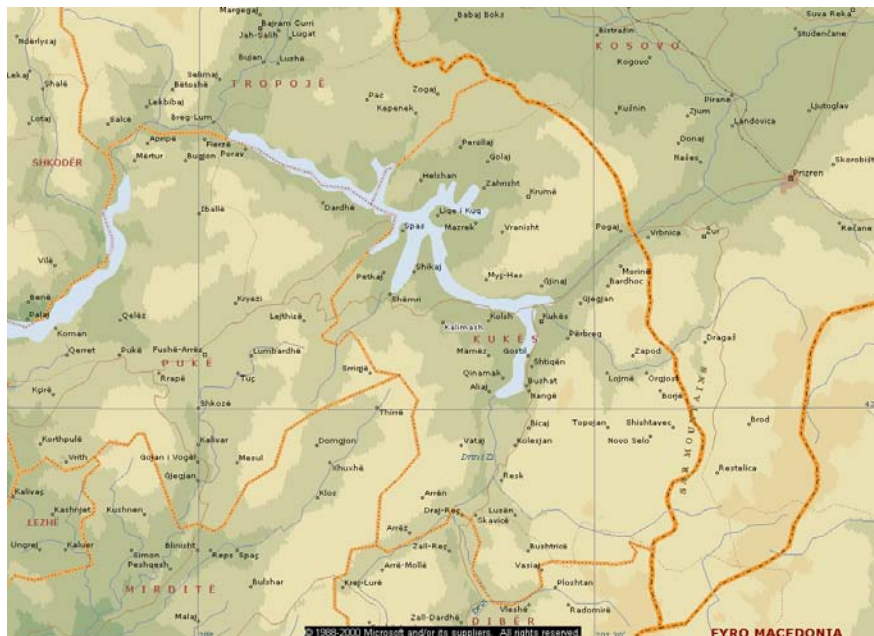


Terminalen i Rinas-Lufthavnen er blevet udbygget



Arbejdet på Kalimash-Morinë-vejen er 'fløjtet' i gang; Kalimash ligger i Kukës-området. Morinë [Morina i bestemt form] ligger på grænsen til Kosóva. Vejen er en del af vejen mellem Kosóva og de Albanske havne ved Adriaterhavet; den har stor betydning for samhandelen og trafikken mellem Albanien og Kosóva:





Klik på kortet for at forstørre det



Den Albanske UM, Besnik Mustafaj, har - telefonisk - drøftet forskelligt med sin kinesiske kollega, Li Zhaoxing, dels om Albanien's standpunkt i striden om ét eller to Kina, dels om det bilaterale forhold, dels - og ikke mindst - om hvordan Kina, som permanent medlem af Sikkerhedsrådet, bør forholde sig i Kosóva-spørgsmålet. Mustafaj søgte at overbevise UM Li Zhaoxing at Kina burde acceptere Kosóva's selvstændighed [hvilket fremgår af bemærkningen om at Kosóva-spørgsmålet er enkeltstående]. Det Albanske UM skriver

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj had a phone conversation today, October 24th 2006, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Li Zhaoxing.

Focusing on bilateral relations, Minister Mustafaj, assessed the high level of economic relations with China and emphasised that it's time to pass to another stage, that of Chinese investments in Albania. We would like Albania be China's main partner in the region, Mustafaj said.

Regarding the cooperation in terms of international organizations, Minister Mustafaj and Minister Li Zhaoxing expressed their contentment on the level of this cooperation, particularly in UN. In this framework Minister Mustafaj assured his counterpart that the Albanian Government will maintain its decision, that of recognising only one China.

Special attention was also attached to Kosova issue, Minister Mustafaj highlighted that the negotiations on its status settlement have entered the final phase. It is expected that President Ahtisaari, presents his recommendations to the Security Council in the coming months.

Mustafaj expressed his conviction that China, as a Security Council permanent member, will contribute to the benefit of peace and stability in the Balkan region, supporting a long term and steady solution, in harmony with the will of the absolute majority of Kosova population. The Albanian Government considers Kosova's case unique and dissimilar to any other one, Mustafaj underscored.

At the end of the conversation both Ministers agreed that through diplomatic channels choose the convenient time

for the expected visit of Minister Mustafaj in China.

Den sorte økonomi. Der har netop været en konference herom. Vicedirektør Fatos Ibrahim (Bank of Albania) holdt et oplæg, der kan hentes som PDF fra: http://www.bankofalbania.org/include_php/previewdoc.php?file_id=1531. Det hedder indledningsvist:

Since the inception of the programme undertaken by the Bank of Albania, in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Finance, on reducing cash, it came clear that the issue of cash in economy cannot be treated as separate from the issue of the informal economy. The companies, which try not to expose their activities to the third parties, will avoid banks and will find alternative sources of financing and payment, mainly in cash. Therefore, the Government initiative on reducing the informal economy is to be welcomed when bearing in mind the great impact it will have on reducing the cash economy.

It needs to be said that the process of formalizing the economy has not been considered as an excuse for not undertaking a number of measures and initiatives, which may accelerate the progress of cash reduction.

Albanien fik tidligere på måneden ny Forsvarschef. Generalmajor Luan Hoxha afløste Generalløjtnant Pëllumb Qazimi. På billedet står Qazimi tv, Hoxha th. Forsvarsministeriet har udsendt nedenstående. En smule er gået galt eftersom man omtaler Præsident Moisiu som 'majesty':



In the Training ad Doctrine Command was held the ceremony of hand over duty by the Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi. The duty was taken over by the Major General Luan Hoxha. In this ceremony were presents the highest representative of the MoD such as: Minister of Defense Mr. Fatmir Mediu, Deputy Ministers of Defense Ms. Zana Xhuka and Mr. Petrit Karabina, Deputy Commander of Joint Allied Forces Naples, General Dusty Miller, Ambassadors of NATO countries, Defense Attaches accredited in Tirana, representatives of DIE, SAIC e DAKOT and representatives of religious communities.

The General Commander of The Armed Forces, His Majesty Dr. Alfred Moisiu was the guest of honor.

Commander of the ceremony presented the forces to the President of the Republic. He inspected the participating troops accompanied by the Minister of Defense, Fatmir Mediu and the Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi, who handed over the duty and Major General, Luan Hoxha, who took it over.

The opening speech was delivered by the Minister of Defense, Fatmir Mediu. He made a resume of the professionalism and the hard work done by the General Qazimit stressing that: "I found in him since at the very beginning not only a consultant but also a real colleague to discuss with and determine the most fruitful and convenient ways to upgrade the standards of the organization and the usage of the Armed Forces in benefit of the security and defense of our country as well as of the Peace Support Operations outside of the country". He was very professional open minded regarding the military issues of leading and organizing, dynamic and

competent on finding quick and effective solutions, he was the General of the sacrifice, good at knowing people and always close to the officers, NCOs and to the soldiers as well”.

Minister Mediu stressed that: Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi, as the Chief of the General Staff during his two mandates, which was a period where have been taken many progressive steps related to the transformation and the reformation of the AF into a modern interoperable force with the other allied forces or of the coalition's, along with the contribution of all officers and Generals has the undisputable merits for the fulfillment without any exes of these transformations.

In his speech, the Minister focused on the results of the Albanian Army pointing out that our Armed Forces are proud to be on the front line of the integrating Euro-Atlantic processes that they are being successfully carried out by our country.

They have increased the prestige of our country by making it an effective part of the worldwide contribution on the increase of the security on the fight against the international terrorism and strengthening the peace.

Subsequently he introduced the Major General, Luan Hoxha, who took over the duty [as a] Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

In his speech, Minister Mediu stressed that : “ I am convinced that with the long effective military experience and the international collaboration of the General Hoxha, the General Staff will further consolidate the best achievement we have had so far”.

The General Commander of the AF and at the same time the President of the Republic Alferd Moisiu, stressed that: “today is a very important event for the new history of the Albanian army. For the first time the hand over and take over duty of the General Staff is being organized through an official ceremony, which acknowledges the merits, contributions, values and responsibilities on leading the AF”.

He appreciated the work done by the General Qazimi and the results achieved on the AF. He particularly focused on the contribution which is being given by Albania for the safeguarding the peace in the world.

“We are already represented successfully on the international peacekeeping operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Bosnia. We have managed to gain the faith of our military partners and we have taken important forward steps on the reformation of the AF, transforming them into the professional forces capable and determined to fulfill the constitutional mission”.

President, Moisiu expressed also the pleasure, wishes and the highest consideration for the General Hoxha, as a military, intellectual and estimable for the duty of Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces. “I am fully convinced that General Hoxha will know how to put in practice his long experience on the GS and the maximal support given to the AF by the Albanian state and society in order to develop further more the initiated reforms by showing his willingness, professionalism and by having a clear vision of leading”.

The President of the Republic, Alfred Moisiu and the Minister of Defense, Fatmir Mediu awarded the Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi [the Scanderbeg Order].



Gen. Qazimi, FM Mediu, Præsident Moisiu, General Hoxha

Subsequently the Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi proceeded with his speech. He highly appreciated the collaboration with the current head of the Ministry of Defense, Minister Fatmir Mediu. He also thanked the Government and the Prime Minister Sali Berisha for the support given to the AF for the sooner integration in NATO.

He thanked as well his collaborators, the countries of the Alliance and the Partners; his counterparts, our defense attaches and those of the foreign countries, the representatives of DIE, SAIC, DAKOT, ODC and he rendered a special thank to our peacekeeping troops all over the world.

At the end he thanked the deputy chief of the GS, Major General Luan Hoxha for his support and his military experience stressing that: "I am confident on his successes and in the Albania integration in NATO". Subsequently the General Commander of the Armed Forces, His Majesty Dr. Alfred Moisiu handed in the National Flag to the new Chief of the General Staff, Major General Hoxha

General Hoxha particularly thanked in his speech General Qazimi "with whom I have shared so many years of working together". He also thanked the Prime Minister Sali Berisha, the Minister of Defense Fatmir Mediu and the President of the Republic for the new assignment pledging that he will do the best to fulfill it with dignity and devotion.

General Dusty Miller gave a greeting speech on behalf of the Command and NATO Staff .He pointed out the results achieved by the AF and the success on the work done by Lieutenant General Pëllumb Qazimi.

The ceremony concluded with the taking a photo with the guests of honor and the Chiefs of General Staff who handed in and took over the duties.

Ohrid-søen. Fiskeri ... Makfax skriver:

Local authorities won't allow exploitation of Ohrid Lake under concession. The Council of the Ohrid Municipality held a session today, which produced a recommendation to the Government to postpone concluding concession agreement for exploitation of the Ohrid Lake. The Council based its decision on the fact that no biological justification for fishing of endemic trout species exists as no mechanisms for protection of the lake's fish stock are put in place, Makfax's correspondent reported. The Council also suggested conducting a transfer of responsibilities encompassing fish stock protection to Ohrid and Struga's local authorities. The Agriculture Ministry announced last February a public competition for awarding concession license for exploitation of the Ohrid Lake. Three bidders have submitted applications thus far, however, none of them delivered a plan for fish stock protection to the competent Hydrobiological Institute.

På den Albanske side af søen fiskes Kuran-ørred, der er en stor delikatesse.

EU-Kommissionens Mission i Albanien udgiver et newsletter. Seneste udgave er fra September. Det kan downloades fra: [http://www.delalb.cec.eu.int/en/newsletter/ECD_NL7%20\(Sept06\)_PDF_Final%20\(eng\)-OK.pdf](http://www.delalb.cec.eu.int/en/newsletter/ECD_NL7%20(Sept06)_PDF_Final%20(eng)-OK.pdf)

SERBIEN

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/Servlet?pagename=OpenMarket%2FXcelerate%2FShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029390590&a=KCountryAdvice&aid=1013618386622> • En biografi over tidligere Forbundspræsident Kostunica kan læses på [Serbiske Politikere](#).

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

Kosovo / Kosóva: PM Kostunica har talt i Nis om folkeafstemningen i den kommende weekend om en ny forfatning. Ét af hovedformålene er at slå fast at Kosovo er en grundlæggende del af Serbien. Er der flertal for forfatningen har Regeringen sikret sig at den er bundet på hænder og fødder. Dét i sig selv har næppe nogen reel, men en stor symbolsk betydning, for næppe nogen regner længere med at fhv Præsident Martti Ahtisaari kan skabe grundlaget for et kompromis. En løsning af Kosovo-spørgsmålet må nødvendigvis vedtages af Sikkerhedsrådet. Den Serbiske Regering skriver:

Support for new Constitution at referendum to confirm people stand behind it

Nis, Oct 26, 2006 – Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, following the Serbian government's session held today in Nis, called upon citizens to go to the polls in great numbers at the referendum to support the Constitution, thus showing unity, patriotism and love for Serbia.

Kostunica told a press conference that Serbia is a country with diversity and is proud of it. The new Constitution safeguards and guarantees this diversity because our strength comes from it.

He recalled that Serbian parliament unanimously adopted the draft of the Constitution, and said that now it is time to show the same unity on October 28 and 29 because only in that way people may stand behind the Constitution.

It is not the Constitution of one government, one party or an individual, but the people's Constitution, which is needed by our country to define it according to its full capacity, Kostunica stated.

The Serbian Prime Minister said that the new Constitution unifies the country and resolves the question of human and minority rights, as well as the issue of decentralisation. He recalled that the fundamental principles of the supreme legal act are based upon the Charter of the United Nations which guarantees territorial integrity and sovereignty.

According to Kostunica, the new Constitution of Serbia safeguards the unity of the country. The status of Kosovo-Metohija is being called into question aggressively and contrary to the law by certain parts of the international community. He added that the province is part of Serbia, historically and legally, and also according to the fundamental principles upon which the international order rests.

Every attempt at creating a dispute concerning a part of Serbia's territory is clearly defined by the Constitution as violation of Serbia's law and international law, said Kostunica, and added that Serbia, through this Constitution once more reminds us of Kosovo-Metohija, that is why the referendum is particularly important.

The Serbian Prime Minister said that consultations regarding constitutional law in a wide sense have begun, but actual consultations should be expected after the referendum.

There is a lot of work to be done about the referendum. After that, we will hold a parliament session at which the Constitution will be proclaimed, Kostunica said and voiced hope that the unanimity expressed in the Constitution's adoption will be repeated upon the adoption of a law on its implementation.

He stated that the Action plan for the completion of cooperation with the Hague tribunal is being carried out successfully and that he is fully convinced that it will yield results.

Kostunica stressed that the fifth session of the Serbian government has been held in Nis as Nis was Serbia's historical capital in which the country's senior state institutions were based in the 19th and 20th centuries.

He said that today's government session is the first in the 21st century to be held in Nis, but not the last.

The Serbian Prime Minister visited the Main Cathedral Church in Nis after the press conference.

Patriark Pavle støtter den nye forfatning. Den Serbiske Regering skriver:



Patriarch Pavle, Serbian Orthodox Church endorse new Constitution

Belgrade, Oct 26, 2006 – Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica met today with His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle and said that the new Constitution will suit everyone living in Serbia, adding that the important thing is that Kosovo will be preserved within Serbia since it is the country's "nucleus".

Kostunica stated that Kosovo-Metohija is a constituent part of Serbia historically, as well as legally from the point of view of both internal and international law because in the international order peace is based on the fact that borders of existing countries must be respected.

Patriarch Pavle and the Serbian Orthodox Church invited citizens to vote at the referendum and support the new Constitution.

The Prime Minister, who was invited to the Patriarchate by Patriarch Pavle, said that during their meeting they recalled the fact that in the previous period all national communities, all churches and religious communities in Serbia and various political organisations and parties have shown their support for Serbia's first and essential precondition of existence – the Constitution.

Serbia is an independent state today and it is necessary to define its national and state identity, said the Prime Minister.

In the course of our history we have gone through many greater temptations and hardships and faced much graver tasks than this one which is before us today. We don't have any alternative but to carry out this task. The state must have a constitution, stressed Kostunica adding that only through decentralisation and democratisation can the state as a whole be preserved.

Dialog med Serbien. Den Serbiske Præsident har for lidt mere end et år siden udgivet en bog om dette emne. Se: <http://www.narodnakancelarija.srbija.yu/eng/book/publications.htm> (som jeg først har opdaget fornylig). Man skriver:

29th September, 2005.

Book Promotion "Dialogue with Serbia"

The book "Dialogue with Serbia" by Stjepan Gredelj is written on the basis of the letters that People's Office of the President of the Republic received during last year.

According to the author, enormous number of letters, more than 12000, is catastrophic for local society and country, because it demonstrates a huge and increasing non-confidence in already existing institutions of the system. The citizens are convinced, said Gredelj, that the institutions are ineffective, inert, bureaucratic, arrogant and usually incapable and unwilling to solve the "common" everyday problems of the "common" people.

Another conclusion, although it seems a bit optimistic at first sight, is that "citizens appeal to the one (and only) institution that they still believe in!", just strengthens the first impression. If the President of a country (with objectively limited authority) is the last straw to grasp at for solving all kinds of problems (sometimes with unrealistic expectations), what kind of country is that? - says Gredelj. Poverty, injustice, unemployment, illness, hunger, debt, broken home- all of that is joined in an insoluble syndrome and "Dialogue with Serbia" is like a

“social history of the present times”.

In the name of the publisher “Media Center”, Nebojsa Spaic said that, among other things, this book is an immense list of topics for journalists because every single case (destiny) from cover to cover has a potential of a first-class story. Director of People’s Office Dragan Djilas explained that the idea for the book “Dialogue with Serbia” arose from the need to realize what we are, in order to draw a conclusion about the way we would like to be.

MONTENEGRO

Præsidentvalg 030611: Filip Vujanovic blev valgt. Forrige Parlamentsvalg 021020, seneste 060910.

Folkeafstemning 21.05.2006 om Montenegro's forhold til statsforbundet Serbien-Montenegro. Der var et mindre flertal for at udtræde af forbundet (55,4% mod 44,6%), hvilket er blevet anerkendt af EU m.fl. Serbien har accepteret den nye tingenes tilstand, skønt der var nogen murren efter at resultatet blev kendt.

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 (= imødekommenelse 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). **Parlamentsvalg fandt sted 020915.** Der kan henvises til flg. OSCE/ODIHR-oversigtsside: http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/field_activities/skopje2002/. **Seneste Parlamentsvalg fandt sted i Juli 2006: Den hidtidige Regering led nederlag.** Der kan henvises til: <http://www.osce.org/item/19800.html> og http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2006/07/19801_en.pdf

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

Makfax beretter om et **universitetsslagsmål i Tetovo**: Three professors at the State University in Tetovo (DTU) beat up today their colleague, professor Miftar Ziberi, outside the University's building, Makfax's correspondent reported. Professor Ziberi ended up in Tetovo's hospital with broken nose. The Police already raised charges for assault and battery against the three professors, identified as V.A., I.D. and S.E. Unofficial sources hinted at Wednesday's appointment of Ziberi as a Dean at one of the University's Departments as a possible motive for the attack.

Ohrid-søen. Fiskeri ... Makfax skriver:

Local authorities won't allow exploitation of Ohrid Lake under concession. The Council of the Ohrid Municipality held a session today, which produced a recommendation to the Government to postpone concluding concession agreement for exploitation of the Ohrid Lake. The Council based its decision on the fact that no biological justification for fishing of endemic trout species exists as no mechanisms for protection of the lake's fish stock are put in place, Makfax's correspondent reported. The Council also suggested conducting a transfer of responsibilities encompassing fish stock protection to Ohrid and Struga's local authorities. The Agriculture

Ministry announced last February a public competition for awarding concession license for exploitation of the Ohird Lake. Three bidders have submitted applications thus far, however, none of them delivered a plan for fish stock protection to the competent Hydrobiological Institute.

På den Albanske side af søen fiskes Kuran-ørred, der er en stor delikatesse.

GRÆKENLAND

Seneste Parlamentsvalg 040307.

Kathimirini skriver om udlændinges køb af fast ejendom i Grækenland, herunder om etniske Albaneres køb. I grænseområderne skal man have militærets godkendelse:

Neighbors want to buy more property

Hundreds of citizens from mostly neighboring countries, such as Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia, are showing interest in buying real estate in northern Greece, particularly the prefectures of Thessaloniki, Halkidiki, Pieria and Imathia. However, time-consuming procedures in obtaining permits - the process can go on for between seven months and three years - discourage many of them, turning them to the Aegean islands or other countries.

The main reason for the delays is that the aforementioned districts are border areas, where foreigners used to be forbidden from buying property but now are required to have their applications approved by military authorities.

According to data issued by the Armed Forces General Staff and published by the Athens News Agency, the authorities approved about 500 applications by non-EU citizens in the 1991-2006 period in these areas. Of these, 359 were in Thessaloniki, 126 in Halkidiki, six in Pieria and seven in Imathia. Now about 250 applications are pending in all border areas of the country, largely the result of the rise in immigrants' living standards and increasing access to banks.

Ethnic Albanians, who form the largest immigrant minority in Greece, seem to prefer Thessaloniki (152 applications approved) during the period in question, followed by Georgians (41) and Bulgarians (27). Of the 126 permits issued in Halkidiki, 24 were for Serbian citizens, 23 for Bulgarians and 22 for Albanians.

Multifold demand

According to Dimitris Garoufas, the number of applications would have been much higher in the absence of the time-consuming procedures, as property sellers cannot reasonably be expected to wait for such a long time for the prospective buyers to obtain their permits.

Ioanna Hrousala-Bilisi, the president of Thessaloniki notaries, says their association is considering calling for a lifting of the designation of Thessaloniki as a border area.

"If this requirement is waived, I estimate property buying by citizens of these countries will rise tenfold, judging by the interest expressed," said Dimitris Garoufas, the president of the city's bar association.

Hrousala-Bilisi also notes the multitude of documents required to follow up the application, including proof of the origin of the funds to pay for the property so as to make sure it is not connected to illegal activities.

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



Præsident Bush har holdt pressekonference om Iraq-krigen Thank you all very much. I'm going to spend a little more time on my opening comments than I usually do, but I'll save plenty of time for questions. Over the past three years I have often addressed the American people to explain developments in Iraq. Some of these developments were encouraging, such as the capture of Saddam Hussein, the elections in which 12 million Iraqis defied the terrorists and voted for a free future, and the demise of the brutal terrorist Zarqawi. Other developments were not encouraging, such as the bombing of the U.N. Headquarters in Baghdad, the fact that we did not find stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, and the continued loss of some of America's finest sons and daughters:



President George W. Bush discusses Iraq with reporters during a press conference in the East Room Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2006. "I will send more troops to Iraq if General Casey says, I need more troops in Iraq to achieve victory," said President Bush in response to a reporter's question about the troops serving in Iraq. White House photo by Paul Morse

Press Conference by President Bush

Relased by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary

The East Room, 10:31 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very much. I'm going to spend a little more time on my opening comments than I usually do, but I'll save plenty of time for questions.

Over the past three years I have often addressed the American people to explain developments in Iraq. Some of these developments were encouraging, such as the capture of Saddam Hussein, the elections in which 12 million Iraqis defied the terrorists and voted for a free future, and the demise of the brutal terrorist Zarqawi. Other developments were not encouraging, such as the bombing of the U.N. Headquarters in Baghdad, the fact that we did not find stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, and the continued loss of some of America's finest sons and daughters.

Recently, American and Iraqi forces have launched some of the most aggressive operations on enemy forces in Baghdad since the war began. They've cleared neighborhoods of terrorists and death squads, and uncovered large caches of weapons, including sniper scopes and mortars and powerful bombs. There has been heavy fighting. Many enemy fighters have been killed or captured, and we've suffered casualties of our own. This month we've lost 93 American service members in Iraq, the most since October of 2005. During roughly the same period, more than 300 Iraqi security personnel have given their lives in battle. Iraqi civilians have suffered unspeakable violence at the hands of the terrorists, insurgents, illegal militias, armed groups, and criminals.

The events of the past month have been a serious concern to me, and a serious concern to the American people. Today I will explain how we're adapting our tactics to help the Iraqi government gain control of the security situation. I'll also explain why, despite the difficulties and bloodshed, it remains critical that America defeat the enemy in Iraq by helping the Iraqis build a free nation that can sustain itself and defend itself.

Our security at home depends on ensuring that Iraq is an ally in the war on terror and does not become a terrorist haven like Afghanistan under the Taliban. The enemy we face in Iraq has evolved over the past three

years. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, a sophisticated and a violent insurgency took root. Early on this insurgency was made up of remnants of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party, as well as criminals released by the regime. The insurgency was fueled by al Qaeda and other foreign terrorists, who focused most of their attention on high-profile attacks against coalition forces and international institutions.

We learned some key lessons from that early phase in the war. We saw how quickly al Qaeda and other extremist groups would come to Iraq to fight and try to drive us out. We overestimated the capability of the civil service in Iraq to continue to provide essential services to the Iraqi people. We did not expect the Iraqi army, including the Republican Guard, to melt away in the way that it did in the phase of advancing coalition forces.

Despite these early setbacks, some very important progress was made, in the midst of an incredibly violent period. Iraqis formed an interim government that assumed sovereignty. The Iraqi people elected a transitional government, drafted and adopted the most progressive democratic constitution in the Arab world, braved the car bombs and assassins to choose a permanent government under that constitution, and slowly began to build a capable national army.

Al Qaeda and insurgents were unable to stop this progress. They tried to stand up to our forces in places like Fallujah, and they were routed. So they changed their tactics. In an intercepted letter to Osama bin Laden, the terrorist Zarqawi laid out his strategy to drag Iraq's Shia population into a sectarian war. To the credit of the Shia population, they resisted responding to the horrific violence against them for a long time.

Yet the persistent attacks, particularly last February's bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra, one of Shia Islam's most holy shrines, eventually resulted in sectarian reprisals. The cycle of violence, in which al Qaeda insurgents attacked Shia civilians and Shia death squads retaliated against Sunnis, has sharply increased in recent months, particularly in Baghdad.

As the enemy shifts tactics, we are shifting our tactics, as well. Americans have no intention of taking sides in a sectarian struggle or standing in the crossfire between rival factions. Our mission is to help the elected government in Iraq defeat common enemies, to bring peace and stability to Iraq, and make our nation more secure. Our goals are unchanging. We are flexible in our methods to achieving those goals.

On the military side, our commanders on the ground are constantly adjusting our tactics to stay ahead of our enemies. We are refining our training strategy for the Iraqi security forces so we can help more of those forces take the lead in the fight, and provide them better equipment and fire power to be successful. We've increased the number of coalition advisors in the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Interior so they can better plan and execute security operations against the enemy.

We have changed our force structure so we can better respond to the conditions on the ground. For example, during the Iraqi elections, we increased our force levels to more than 150,000 troops to ensure people could vote. Most recently, we have moved additional coalition and Iraqi forces into Baghdad so they can help secure the city and reduce sectarian violence.

After some initial successes, our operations to secure Baghdad have encountered greater resistance. Some of the Iraqi security forces have performed below expectations. Many have performed well and are fighting bravely in some of Baghdad's toughest neighborhoods. Once again, American troops are performing superbly under very difficult conditions. Together, with the Iraqis, they've conducted hundreds of missions throughout Baghdad. They've rounded up or killed key insurgents and death squad leaders.

As we fight this enemy, we're working with the Iraqi government to perform the performance -- to improve the performance of their security forces, so they can regain control of the nation's capital, and eventually resume primary responsibility for their country's security.

A military solution alone will not stop violence. In the end, the Iraqi people and their government will have to make the difficult decisions necessary to solve these problems. So, in addition to refining our military tactics to defeat the enemy, we're also working to help the Iraqi government achieve a political solution that brings together Shia and Sunnis and Kurds and other ethnic and religious groups.

Yesterday, our Ambassador to Iraq, Zal Khalilzad laid out a three-step approach. First, we're working with political and religious leaders across Iraq, urging them to take steps to restrain their followers and stop sectarian violence.

Second, we're helping Iraqi leaders to complete work on a national compact to resolve the most difficult issues dividing their country. The new Iraqi government has condemned violence from all quarters and agreed to a schedule for resolving issues, such as disarming illegal militias and death squads, sharing oil revenues, amending the Iraqi constitution, and reforming the de-Baathification process.

Third, we're reaching out to Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Jordan, and asking them to support the Iraqi government's efforts to persuade Sunni insurgents to lay down their arms and accept national reconciliation. The international community is also supporting the international compact that outlines the support that will be provided to Iraq as it moves forward with its own program of reform.

These are difficult tasks for any government. It is important for Americans to recognize that Prime Minister Maliki's unity government has been in office for just over five months. Think about that. This young government has to solve a host of problems created by decades of tyrannical rule. And they have to do it in the midst of raging conflict, against extremists from outside and inside the country who are doing everything they can to stop this government from succeeding.

We're pressing Iraq's leaders to take bold measures to save their country. We're making it clear that America's patient [sic] is not unlimited. Yet we also understand the difficult challenges Iraq's leaders face, and we will not put more pressure on the Iraqi government than it can bear. The way to succeed in Iraq is to help Iraq's government grow in strength and assume more control over its country as quickly as possible.

I know the American people understand the stakes in Iraq. They want to win. They will support the war as long as they see a path to victory. Americans can have confidence that we will prevail because thousands of smart, dedicated military and civilian personnel are risking their lives and are working around the clock to ensure our success. A distinguished independent panel of Republicans and Democrats, led by former Secretary of State Jim Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton, is taking a fresh look at the situation in Iraq and will make recommendations to help achieve our goals. I welcome all these efforts. My administration will carefully consider any proposal that will help us achieve victory.

It's my responsibility to provide the American people with a candid assessment on the way forward. There is tough fighting ahead. The road to victory will not be easy. We should not expect a simple solution. The fact that the fighting is tough does not mean our efforts in Iraq are not worth it. To the contrary; the consequences in Iraq will have a decisive impact on the security of our country, because defeating the terrorists in Iraq is essential to turning back the cause of extremism in the Middle East. If we do not defeat the terrorists or extremists in Iraq, they will gain access to vast oil reserves, and use Iraq as a base to overthrow moderate governments across the broader Middle East. They will launch new attacks on America from this new safe haven. They will pursue their goal of a radical Islamic empire that stretches from Spain to Indonesia. I know many Americans are not satisfied with the situation in Iraq. I'm not satisfied, either. And that is why we're taking new steps to help secure Baghdad, and constantly adjusting our tactics across the country to meet the changing threat. But we cannot allow our dissatisfaction to turn into disillusionment about our purpose in this war. We must not look at every success of the enemy as a mistake on our part, cause for an investigation, or a reason to call for our troops to come home. We must not fall prey to the sophisticated propaganda by the enemy, who is trying to undermine our confidence and make us believe that our presence in Iraq is the cause of all its problems

If I did not think our mission in Iraq was vital to America's security, I'd bring our troops home tomorrow. I met too many wives and husbands who have lost their partners in life, too many children who won't ever see their mom and dad again. I owe it to them and to the families who still have loved ones in harm's way to ensure that their sacrifices are not in vain.

Our country has faced adversity before during times of war. In past wars, we've lost young Americans who gave everything to protect our freedom and way of life. In this war, we've lost good men and women who've given their lives for a cause that is necessary and it is just. We mourn every loss, and we must gird ourselves for the sacrifices that are yet to come. America's men and women in uniform are the finest in the world. I'm awed by their strength and their character. As General Casey reported yesterday in Iraq, "the men and women of the Armed Forces... have never lost a battle in over three years in the war." Every American can take pride in our troops, and the vital work they are doing to protect us.

Our troops are fighting a war that will set the course for this new century. The outcome will determine the destiny

of millions across the world. Defeating the terrorists and extremists is the challenge of our time and the calling of this generation. I'm confident this generation will answer that call and defeat an ideology that is bent on destroying America and all that we stand for.

And now I'll be glad to answer some of your questions. Terry.

QUESTION:Mr. President, the war in Iraq has lasted almost as long as World War II for the United States. And as you mentioned, October was the deadliest month for American forces this year -- in a year. Do you think we're winning, and why?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, this is a different kind of war than a war against the fascists in World War II. We were facing a nation state -- two nation states -- three nation states in World War II. We were able to find an enemy by locating its ships, or aircraft, or soldiers on the ground. This is a war against extremists and radicals who kill innocent people to achieve political objectives. It has a multiple of fronts.

Afghanistan was a front in this war against the terrorists. Iraq is now the central front in the war against the terrorists. This war is more than just finding people and bringing them to justice; this war is an ideological conflict between a radical ideology that can't stand freedom, and moderate, reasonable people that hope to live in a peaceful society.

And so it's going to take a long time, Terry. I am confident we will succeed. I am confident we'll succeed in Iraq. And the reason I'm confident we'll succeed in Iraq is because the Iraqis want to succeed in Iraq. The ultimate victory in Iraq, which is a government that can sustain itself, govern itself, and defend itself, depends upon the Iraqi citizens and the Iraqi government doing the hard work necessary to protect their country. And our job is to help them achieve that objective. As a matter of fact, my view is the only way we lose in Iraq is if we leave before the job is done.

And I'm confident we can succeed in the broader war on terror, this ideological conflict. I'm confident because I believe the power of liberty will defeat the ideology of hate every time, if given a chance. I believe that the radicals represent the few in the Middle East. I believe the majority of people want to live in a peaceful world. That's what I believe.

And I know it's incumbent upon our government and others who enjoy the blessings of liberty to help those moderates succeed because, otherwise, we're looking at the potential of this kind of world: a world in which radical forms of Islam compete for power; a world in which moderate governments get toppled by people willing to murder the innocent; a world in which oil reserves are controlled by radicals in order to extract blackmail from the West; a world in which Iran has a nuclear weapon. And if that were to occur, people would look back at this day and age and say, what happened to those people in 2006? How come they couldn't see the threat to a future generation of people?

Defeat will only come if the United States becomes isolationist and refuses to, one, protect ourselves, and, two, help those who desire to become -- to live in a moderate, peaceful world. And it's a hard struggle, no question about it. And it's a different struggle.

QUESTION:Are we winning?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely, we're winning. Al Qaeda is on the run. As a matter of fact, the mastermind, or the people who they think is the mastermind of the September the 11th attacks is in our custody. We've now got a procedure for this person to go on trial, to be held for his account. Most of al Qaeda that planned the attacks on September the 11th have been brought to justice.

Extremists have now played their hand; the world can clearly see their ambitions. You know, when a Palestinian state began to show progress, extremists attacked Israel to stop the advance of a Palestinian state. They can't stand democracies. Extremists and radicals want to undermine fragile democracy because it's a defeat for their way of life, their ideology.

People now understand the stakes. We're winning, and we will win, unless we leave before the job is done. And the crucial battle right now is Iraq. And as I said in my statement, I understand how tough it is, really tough. It's tough for a reason; because people understand the stakes of success in Iraq. And my point to the American people is, is that we're constantly adjusting our tactics to achieve victory.

Steve. Q Thank you, Mr. President. Are you considering sending more U.S. troops to Iraq? What would be the justification for it? And how reliable is this new timetable of 12 to 18 months?

THE PRESIDENT: I will send more troops to Iraq if General Casey says, I need more troops in Iraq to achieve victory. And that's the way I've been running this war. I have great faith in General Casey. I have great faith in Ambassador Khalilzad. I trust our commanders on the ground to give the best advice about how to achieve victory. I want to remind you, victory is a government that can sustain itself, govern itself -- a country that can govern itself, sustain itself and defend itself, and serves as an ally in the war on terror -- which stands in stark contrast to a government that would be chaotic, that would be a safe haven for the enemy to launch attacks on us.

One way for the American people to understand what Iraq could look like is what Afghanistan looked like under the Taliban, a place where there was no freedom; a place where women were taken to the public square and beaten if they did not adhere to the strict, intolerant guidelines of the Taliban; a place where thousands trained to attack America and our allies. Afghanistan doesn't have nearly the resources that Iraq has. Imagine a safe haven for an enemy that ended up with the resources that it had.

It is -- and so this is a war where I say to our generals, do you have what it takes to win. Now, General Casey talked about part of our strategy, and part of the strategy is to give the Iraq government the tools necessary to protect itself, to defend itself. If you're able to defend yourself, you're more likely to be able to govern yourself, as well. But politics -- the political way forward and the military way forward must go hand in hand.

And what the General was saying yesterday is that there is a three-step process to enable the Iraqi forces to be able to help this government bring security. One was to train and equip. The goal is 325,000 troops; 137,000 military and the balance, police. Second was to put the Iraqi security forces in the lead. Six of ten divisions now are in the lead in helping this government defend itself. The strategy has been to embed U.S. personnel, officers and non-com officers, into these forces to help them gain the confidence and the capacity to be effective when they're in the lead.

And the third step is for the Iraqi security forces to be able to operate independently. And this, perhaps, is going to be one of the most difficult aspects of having the Iraqis ready to go, because that means they have to be able to drive themselves, maintain their vehicles, provide logistics, have combat service support. And that's what General Casey was describing.

The key is that our commanders feel that there -- they have got enough flexibility to design the program to meet the conditions on the ground. You know, last spring, I thought for a period of time we'd be able to reduce our troop presence early next year. That's what I felt. But because we didn't have a fixed timetable, and because General Casey and General Abizaid and the other generals there understand that the way we're running this war is to give them flexibility, have the confidence necessary to come and make the right recommendations here in Washington, D.C., they decided that that wasn't going to happen. And so what he was describing to you was the way forward to make sure that the Iraqis are fully prepared to defend themselves.

QUESTION:What about the 12 to 18 month estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a condition, a base estimate. And that's important for the American people to know. This notion about, you know, fixed timetable of withdrawal, in my judgment, is a -- means defeat. You can't leave until the job is done. Our mission is to get the job done as quickly as possible.

Let's see here -- David.

QUESTION:Mr. President, for several years you have been saying that America will stay the course in Iraq; you were committed to the policy. And now you say that, no, you're not saying, stay the course, that you're adapting to win, that you're showing flexibility. And as you mentioned, out of Baghdad we're now hearing about benchmarks and timetables from the Iraqi government, as relayed by American officials, to stop the sectarian violence.

In the past, Democrats and other critics of the war who talked about benchmarks and timetables were labeled as defeatists, defeat-o-crats, or people who wanted to cut and run. So why shouldn't the American people conclude that this is nothing from you other than semantic, rhetorical games and all politics two weeks before an election?

THE PRESIDENT: David, there is a significant difference between benchmarks for a government to achieve and a timetable for withdrawal. You're talking about -- when you're talking about the benchmarks, he's talking about the fact that we're working with the Iraqi government to have certain benchmarks to meet as a way to determine whether or not they're making the hard decisions necessary to achieve peace. I believe that's what you're referring to. And we're working with the Iraqi government to come up with benchmarks.

Listen, this is a sovereign government. It was elected by the people of Iraq. What we're asking them to do is to say, when do you think you're going to get this done, when can you get this done, so the people themselves in Iraq can see that the government is moving forward with a reconciliation plan and plans necessary to unify this government.

That is substantially different, David, from people saying, we want a time certain to get out of Iraq. As a matter of fact, the benchmarks will make it more likely we win. Withdrawing on an artificial timetable means we lose.

Now, I'm giving the speech -- you're asking me why I'm giving this speech today -- because there's -- I think I owe an explanation to the American people, and will continue to make explanations. The people need to know that we have a plan for victory. Like I said in my opening comments, I fully understand if the people think we don't have a plan for victory, they're not going to support the effort. And so I'll continue to speak out about our way forward.

Jessica.

QUESTION: Sir, you've called Iran part of the "axis of evil" and Syria a "state sponsor of terrorism." You said earlier today that your administration will consider any proposal that will help us achieve victory. So I'm wondering, if it's determined that Iran and Syria could help you achieve victory in Iraq, would you be willing to work with them?

THE PRESIDENT: Iran and Syria understand full well that the world expects them to help Iraq. We've made that very clear to them.

Let me talk about the Iranian issue. We've got a lot of issues with Iran. First is whether or not they will help this young democracy succeed. The second issue, of course, is whether or not they will help the Lebanese democracy succeed -- the Siniora government, which is -- a priority of this government is to help that Siniora government. The big issue right now is whether or not Iran will end up with a nuclear weapon. And so our issues with Iran are many. And our position is very clear to the Iranians: There is a better way forward for the government and the people than to be isolated.

And we will continue to work to make it clear to the Iranian government that all three accounts and the sponsor of terrorists will cause more isolation. We've got a very active diplomatic effort taking place. The Iranians know our position on Iraq, and they know it clearly. More importantly, they know the Iraqis' position relative to Iran. We're helping a sovereign government succeed. And the Iraqis have sent messages to the Iranians: To help us succeed, don't interfere in the internal affairs.

As to Syria, our message to Syria is consistent: Do not undermine the Siniora government in Lebanon; help us get back the -- help Israel get back the prisoner that was captured by Hamas; don't allow Hamas and Hezbollah to plot attacks against democracies in the Middle East; help inside of Iraq. They know our position, as well, Jessica.

QUESTION: May I just follow? James Baker has, himself, said that he believes the U.S. should work with Iran. So would you be willing to work with Iran in a way that allows some sort of negotiations in Iraq, even if they don't come to the table in the P-3 and P-5 negotiations?

THE PRESIDENT: Jessica, Iran has a chance to come to the table with the United States to discuss a variety of issues. And the way forward is one that I had made clear at previous press conferences, and that is, if they would verifiably stop their enrichment, the United States will be at the table with them. In the meantime, they understand our position, and they understand, more importantly, the Iraqi position about their interference inside their country. Q Thank you, Mr. President. Prime Minister Maliki apparently gave his own news conference this morning, where he seemed to be referring to Ambassador Khalilzad and General Casey yesterday, when he said, nobody has the right to set any timetables in Iraq -- and also, seemed to be upset about the raid in Sadr

City, saying he wasn't consulted. And I believe the quote was, "It will not be repeated." Do you still have full, complete and total confidence in Prime Minister Maliki as a partner in Iraq? And what can you tell the American people about his ability to rein in the militias since he seems to derive much of his power from them?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. First, this is back to the question that David asked about benchmarks. You called it "timetables."

QUESTION:He did, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, he called it "timetables," excuse me. I think he was referring to the benchmarks that we're developing that show a way forward to the Iraqi people, and the American people for that matter, about how this unity government is going to solve problems and bring the people together. And if his point is, is that those benchmarks, or the way forward can't be imposed upon Iraq by an outside force, he's right. This is a sovereign government. But we're working closely with the government to be able to say, here's what's going to happen then, here's what we expect to happen now, here's what should be expected in the future.

Second part of your question?

QUESTION:I was wondering, first of all, he seemed to be pushing back with --

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, on the sectarian -- on the militias. I heard that, and I asked to see his complete transcript of this press conference, where he made it very clear that militias harm the stability of his country. Militias -- people out -- who operate outside the law will be dealt with. That's what the Prime Minister said in his press conference. The idea that we need to coordinate with him is a -- makes sense to me. And there's a lot of operations taking place, which means that sometimes communications may not be as good as they should be. And we'll continue to work very closely with the government to make sure that the communications are solid.

I do believe Prime Minister Maliki is the right man to achieve the goal in Iraq. He's got a hard job. He's been there for five months, a little over five months, and there's a lot of pressure on him, pressure from inside his country. He's got to deal with sectarian violence; he's got to deal with criminals; he's got to deal with al Qaeda -- all of whom are lethal. These are people that will kill. And he wants to achieve the same objective I want to achieve, and he's making tough decisions.

I'm impressed, for example, by the way he has got religious leaders, both Sunni and Shia, to start working together. I appreciate the fact that he has made a very clear statement on militias. And, by the way, death squad members are being brought to justice in this -- during these operations in Baghdad.

I speak to him quite frequently, and I remind him we're with him, so long as he continues to make tough decisions. That's what we expect. We expect that the Iraqi government will make the hard decisions necessary to unite the country and listen to the will of the 12 million people.

Let's see here. Yes, sir, Bret.

QUESTION:Thank you, Mr. President. North Korean leaders apparently today warned South Korea against joining international sanctions, saying South Korea would pay a high price if they did so. Are you still confident that South Korea and China will implement the full force of the U.N.-passed sanctions? And what happens if North Korea continues to thumb its nose at the world?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe that -- first of all, I've been briefed on this subject recently by the Secretary of State, who just came back from the Far East. She met with the Japanese, the South Koreans, the Chinese and the Russians. Her report is that all countries understand we must work closely together to solve this problem peacefully. And that means adhering to the latest United Nations Security Council resolution that was passed.

The leader of North Korea likes to threaten. In my judgment, what he's doing is just testing the will of the five countries that are working together to convince him there is a better way forward for his people. I don't know the exact words he used, but he is -- this is not the first time that he's issued threats. And our goal is to continue to remind our partners that when we work together, we're more likely to be able to achieve the objective, which is to solve this problem diplomatically. And so I would report to you the coalition remains firm, and we will continue to work to see to it that it does remain firm.

Baker.

QUESTION:Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for taking questions today.

THE PRESIDENT: What was that?

QUESTION:Thank you for taking questions today.

THE PRESIDENT: Baker, I'm just happy to be able to do so, brother. (Laughter.) I can't tell you how joyful it is. (Laughter.)

QUESTION:When you first ran for President, sir, you talked about the importance of accountability. We learned from Bob Woodward's recent book that Secretary Card, on two occasions, suggested that you replace Secretary Rumsfeld, and both times you said, no. Given that the war in Iraq is not going as well as you want, and given that you're not satisfied as you just told us today, why hasn't anybody been held accountable? Should somebody be held accountable?

THE PRESIDENT: Peter, you're asking me why I believe Secretary Rumsfeld is doing a good job, I think, if I might decipher through the Washington code.

QUESTION:-- or someone else --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let's start with Rumsfeld, Secretary Rumsfeld. I've asked him to do some difficult tasks as the Secretary of Defense -- one, wage war in two different theaters of this war on terror, Afghanistan and Iraq, and at the same time, asked him to transform our military posture around the world and our military readiness here at home. In other words, the transformation effort into itself is a big project for any Secretary to handle. But to compound the job he has, he's got to do that and, at the same time, wage war. And I'm satisfied of how he's done all his jobs.

He is a smart, tough, capable administrator. As importantly, he understands that the best way to fight this war, whether it be in Iraq or anywhere else around the world, is to make sure our troops are ready, that morale is high, that we transform the nature of our military to meet the threats, and that we give our commanders on the ground the flexibility necessary to make the tactical changes to achieve victory.

This is a tough war in Iraq. I mean, it's a hard fight, no question about it. All you've got to do is turn on your TV. But I believe that the military strategy we have is going to work. That's what I believe, Peter. And so we've made changes throughout the war, we'll continue to make changes throughout the war. But the important thing is whether or not we have the right strategy and the tactics necessary to achieve that goal. And I believe we do.

Dick.

QUESTION:And from the --

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute, let me say -- the ultimate accountability, Peter, rests with me. That's the ultimate -- you're asking about accountability, that's -- rests right here. It's what the 2004 campaign was about. If people want to -- if people are unhappy about it, look right to the President. I believe our generals are doing the job I asked them to do. They're competent, smart, capable men and women. And this country owes them a lot of gratitude and support.

Yes, now Dick, sorry.

QUESTION:Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: It was a clever little follow-up you slipped in there. Sorry, Gregory. I mean, look -- Gregory is still mad he didn't get the follow-up, but it's okay.

QUESTION:You've said, Mr. President, several times here this morning that the definition of failure in Iraq would be to leave before the job was done. But you also said that you have no intention of seeing our troops standing in the crossfire of a sectarian war within that country. With many observers on the ground saying that civil war in Iraq is as close as it's ever been, how do you reconcile those two statements? And what happens if a full-fledged civil war breaks out?

THE PRESIDENT: Dick, our job is to prevent the full-scale civil war from happening in the first place. It's one of the missions, is to work with the Maliki government to make sure that there is a political way forward that says to the people of Iraq, it's not worth it. Civil war is not worth the effort -- by them. That's the whole objective, is to help this government be able to defend itself and sustain itself, so that the 12 million people that voted -- they didn't vote for civil war, they voted to live under a constitution that was passed. And so we will work to prevent that from happening. I --

QUESTION:What about --

THE PRESIDENT: Let me finish. I view that this is a struggle between radicals and extremists who are trying to prevent there to be a democracy, for a variety of reasons. And it's in our interest that the forces of moderation prevail in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East. A defeat there -- in other words, if we were to withdraw before the job is done, it would embolden extremists. They would say, you know, we were right about America in the first place, that America did not have the will necessary to do the hard work. That's precisely what Osama bin Laden has said, for example. A defeat there would make it easier for people to be able to recruit extremists and kids, to be able to use their tactics to destroy innocent life. A defeat there would dispirit people throughout the Middle East who wonder whether America is genuine in our commitment to moderation and democracy.

And I told you what the scenario, Dick, could look like, 20 or 30 years from now, if we leave before the job is done. It's a serious business. And that's why I say it's the call of this generation. And I understand how tough it is, see, but I also said in my remarks, just because the enemy has been able to make some progress doesn't mean we should leave. Quite the contrary; we ought to do everything we can to help prevent them from making progress. And that is what our strategy is.

Elaine.

QUESTION:What if there is a civil war?

THE PRESIDENT: You're asking me hypotheticals. Our job is to make sure there's not one, see. You been around here five-and-a-half years, you know I won't answer hypotheticals. Occasionally slip up, but --

QUESTION:Thank you, Mr. President. You talk about the U.S. government and the Iraqi government working closely together on benchmarks. I'm wondering, sir, why was Prime Minister Maliki not at the news conference yesterday with General Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad? Would that not have sent a strong message about there being a very close level of cooperation between the two governments?

THE PRESIDENT: Elaine, I have no idea why he wasn't there.

QUESTION:Was he invited, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I'm not the scheduler of news conferences. I do know they work very closely together, and they've got a very close working relationship, and that's important.

QUESTION:May I ask you, sir, following up, when you say that you're not satisfied with the way things are going in Iraq, why should that not be interpreted by some to mean that you are dissatisfied with Prime Minister Maliki's performance?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I know Prime Minister Maliki, I know how hard his job is, and I understand that he is working to make the decisions necessary to bring this country together. And he's -- look, we'll push him, but we're not going to push him to the point where he can't achieve the objective. And we'll continue to work with him. He represents a government formed by the people of Iraq. It's a -- and he's got a tough job. I mean, think about what his job is like. He's got to deal with political factions. He's got to deal with the hatred that is left over from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein.

There's a lot of people still furious about what happened to them during Saddam Hussein's period. You can imagine that. What happens if your brother or sister had been assassinated by Saddam Hussein and his political party? You'd be -- you wouldn't be happy about it. Reconciliation is difficult in a society that had been divided and tortured by a tyrant.

And Prime Minister Maliki has got the difficult job of reconciling these grievances, and different political parties on top of that, plus dealing with violence. I've talked to him a lot. I like his spirit, I like his attitude. He's confident we can achieve the mission. He's not -- he's realistic about how difficult it is in Iraq.

It's in our government's interest that we help him succeed because he wants a unified country. And I believe we will succeed. I know we're not going to succeed, however, if we set artificial timetables for withdrawal, or we get out of there, or we say to the enemy, just keep fighting, we'll leave soon. That's not going to work. What will work is a strategy that's constantly -- tactics that constantly change to meet the enemy. And that's what I was describing in my speech, we're constantly adjusting. As the enemy changes, we change. War is not a -- this war, and other wars, they're not static. They're dynamic events. And we must adjust to meet those events, and we are.

Jim.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. President. Does the United States want to maintain permanent bases in Iraq? And I would follow that by asking, are you willing to renounce a claim on permanent bases in Iraq? THE PRESIDENT: Jim, any decisions about permanency in Iraq will be made by the Iraqi government. And, frankly, it's not in much of a position to be thinking about what the world is going to look like five or 10 years from now. They are working to make sure that we succeed in the short-term. And they need our help. And that's where our focus is.

But remember, when you're talking about bases and troops, we're dealing with a sovereign government. Now, we entered into an agreement with the Karzai government. They weren't called permanent bases, but they were called arrangements that will help this government understand that there will be a U.S. presence so long as they want them there. And at the appropriate time, I'm confident we'll be willing to sit down and discuss the long-term security of Iraq. But right now we're discussing how to bring security to Baghdad, and what do we do in al Anbar province, where al Qaeda still uses violent methods to achieve political objectives.

You know, it's interesting, if you -- I'm sure people who watch your TV screens think the entire country is embroiled in sectarian conflict and that there's constant killing everywhere in Iraq. Well, if you listened to General Casey yesterday, 90 percent of the action takes place in five of the 18 provinces. And around Baghdad, it's limited to a 30-mile area. And the reason I bring that up is that while it seems to our American citizens that nothing normal is taking place -- and I can understand why, it's a brutal environment there, particularly that which is on our TV screens -- that there is farmers farming, there are small businesses growing, there's a currency that's relatively stable, there's an entrepreneurial class, there's commerce. General Abizaid was describing to me what it was like to go to Baghdad markets.

There's a lot of work to be done, don't get me wrong, but it is -- there are people living relatively normal lives who I believe -- strongly believe that they want to continue that normalcy, and it's up to Prime Minister Maliki to do everything he can to make the situation as secure as possible.

Ann. Sorry, Rutenberg, you're through.

QUESTION: Thank you, sir. Is the coming election a referendum on Iraq? Should it be?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the coming election is a referendum on these two things: which party has got the plan that will enable our economy continue -- to continue to grow, and which party has a plan to protect the American people. And Iraq is part of the security of the United States. If we succeed -- and when we succeed in Iraq, our country will be more secure. If we don't succeed in Iraq, the country is less secure.

The security of this country -- and look, I understand here in Washington, some people say we're not at war. I know that. They're just wrong in my opinion.

The enemy still wants to strike us. The enemy still wants to achieve safe haven from which to plot and plan. The enemy would like to have weapons of mass destruction in order to attack us. These are lethal, cold-blooded killers. And we must do everything we can to protect the American people, including questioning detainees, or listening to their phone calls from outside the country to inside the country. And there was -- as you know, there was some recent votes on that issue. And the Democrats voted against giving our professionals the skill -- the tools necessary to protect the American people.

I will repeat, like I've said to you often, I do not question their patriotism; I question whether or not they

understand how dangerous this world is. And this is a big issue in the campaign. Security of the country is an issue, just like taxes are an issue. If you raise taxes, it will hurt the economy. If you don't extend the tax cuts, if you don't make them -- in other words, if you let the tax cuts expire, it will be a tax increase on the American people.

Take the child tax credit; if it is not made permanent, in other words, if it expires, and you got a family of four sitting around the breakfast table, the taxpayers can be sure that their taxes will go up by \$2,000 -- \$500 for that child, \$500 for the one right there, \$500 for this one, and \$500 for that one. That is a tax increase. And taking \$2,000 out of the pockets of the working people will make it harder to sustain economic growth.

So the two issues I see in the campaign can be boiled down to who best to protect this country, and who best to keep taxes low. That's what the referendum is about.

Let's see here -- David. Hold on for a minute. David.

QUESTION: Thank you, sir. You've long talked about the importance when the federal government is involved in an effort, spending money and resources, of measuring success, accountability, as Peter said. Now you've set some benchmarks on the Maliki government. You've said that you're expecting him to make tough decisions. Can you tell the American people how you plan to measure his success in reaching those benchmarks, and what happens if he doesn't hit those benchmarks?

THE PRESIDENT: David, the first objective is to develop benchmarks that the government agrees with and that we think are important. You can't -- it's really important for the American people to understand that to say, okay, these are the benchmarks you must live with, is not going to work nearly as effectively as if we have -- when we have buy-in from the government itself, the sovereign government of Iraq.

And so the step is to say to the Maliki government, which we're doing, let us work in concert to develop a series of benchmarks to achieve different objectives. And the purpose of that is to assure the Iraqi people that this unity government is going to work to -- for the improvement of the Iraqi people. In other words, it will be beneficial for the government to say to the Iraqi people, here is what we intend to do and here's when we intend to do it.

It will also be beneficial for the American people to be able to see that this Iraqi government is going to make the difficult decisions necessary to move forward, to achieve the goal. And that's what we're talking about when it comes to benchmarks. It's -- again, I repeat: One should not expect our government to impose these benchmarks on a sovereign government. You'd expect us to work closely with that government to come up with a way forward that the government feels comfortable with. And there's probably going to be some bones of contention during these discussions, but, nevertheless, we'll respect the fact that the Iraq government is sovereign, and they must respect the fact that we've got patience, but not unlimited patience.

QUESTION: What happens if that patience runs out?

THE PRESIDENT: See, that's that hypothetical Keil is trying to get me to answer. Why do we work to see to it that it doesn't work out -- run out? That's the whole objective. That's what positive people do. They say, we're going to put something in place and we'll work to achieve it.

Let's see here. Steven.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. President. With a Republican Congress, you failed to achieve three major goals of your second term: Social Security reform, a tax code overhaul, and a comprehensive immigration bill. Why shouldn't Americans give Democrats a chance to work with you on those issues, especially when divided government seemed to work in the late 1990s on the budget?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a tricky little question there. (Laughter.) First, I haven't given up on any of those issues. I've got two years left to achieve them. And I firmly believe it is more likely to achieve those three objectives with a Republican-controlled Congress and a Republican-controlled Senate. And I believe I'll be working with a Republican-controlled Congress and a Republican-controlled Senate.

I understand here in Washington people have already determined the outcome of the election, like it's over even before the people actually start heading -- voting. But that's not what I see when I'm on the campaign trail. Yes, we've got some people dancing in the end zone here in Washington, D.C.; they've got them measuring their

drapes; they're going over to the Capitol, and saying, my new office looks beautiful, I think I'm going to have this size drape there, or this color. But the American people are going to decide, and they're going to decide this race based upon who best to protect the American people and who best to keep the taxes low.

Secondly, I'll tell you what I see -- you didn't ask, but I'm going to tell you anyway. I see there's a lot of enthusiasm amongst the grassroots activists. Our people are going out there to man the phones and to put up the yard signs. You know, they're showing up when it comes time to -- these absentee votes. We're organized. We've got a fantastic grassroots organization to turn out the vote. This campaign has obviously got national implications to it, no question about it -- the Iraq war, the security of the country, economic vitality and growth. But each of these elections turn out to be local in their scope and in their character.

And we've got good candidates running hard. And we're going to win. Now, I know that defies conventional wisdom here. I'm not suggesting anybody in this august crowd has determined the outcome of the election already, but they're running profiles on who this person is going to be running this office, or this one that's going to be -- magazines have got all kinds of new stars emerging when they haven't won the votes yet.

And anyway, thanks for asking about the campaign. I'm enjoying it out there. I like campaigning. It's what guys like me do in order to get here. We campaign. We shake the hands, you know, and give the speeches. And Laura is campaigning, too. From my perspective, our people are ready to go out there and vote for -- vote our candidates back into power.

Let me see here, Michael Allen.

QUESTION:Thank you, Mr. President. Your comment earlier that last spring you believed that troops would be able to come home early next year --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

QUESTION:-- I wonder if you could talk to us about how you came to believe that, and over what period of time, or whether it was a single development because you realized that wasn't feasible.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no, look, Mike, here's the way it works. I meet with our -- or talk to our generals all the time. And the security situation looked like at that point in time that beginning next year, we could reduce our troop presence. That's what we felt -- until the conditions on the ground changed. And when they changed, our generals changed their attitude. And when their attitude changed, my attitude changed.

Look, I want to get our troops home as fast as we can. But I do not want to leave before we achieve victory. And the best way to do that is to make sure we have a strategy that works, tactics that adjust to the enemy, and commanders that feel confident making recommendations to the Secretary and to the Commander-in-Chief. And that's how that happened. In other words, they're saying it looks like things are positive, things are stepping up. The security situation is -- looks like it could be this way. And then when it change, we changed. And that's important for the American people to know, that we're constantly changing tactics to meet the situation on the ground.

Knoller.

QUESTION:Excuse me --

THE PRESIDENT: No.

QUESTION:May I follow up?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you're taking Wolffe's time. Is this your question, Wolffe?

QUESTION:No, sir, it's not.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, okay.

QUESTION:But I yield.

THE PRESIDENT: Then it's your question.

QUESTION:Only for a moment.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay. Q I just wanted to ask you quickly, sir, if you believe that Iraq will be able to defend, sustain and govern itself by the time you leave office?

THE PRESIDENT: Mike, I believe Iraq will be able to defend, govern and sustain itself; otherwise, I'd pull our troops out. See, you all got to understand that. And the parents of our troops must understand, that if I didn't believe we could succeed, and didn't believe it was necessary for the security of this country to succeed, I wouldn't have your loved ones there. That's what I want these parents to hear.

And that's a backhanded way of getting me to put a timetable. My answer is, we'll work as fast as we can get the job done.

Mark and then Richard.

QUESTION:Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That way it will give you time to --

QUESTION:I understand why you would claim or assert that the Republicans will win the midterm elections. But if in your heart of hearts you really didn't think that, would you tell us so? (Laughter.) And are you resentful that some Republican candidates seem to be distancing themselves from you?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, no, I'm not resentful, nor am I resentful that a lot of Democrats are using my picture. All I ask is that they pick out a good one. (Laughter.) Make me look good, at least, on the picture.

Mark, the first part of your question, the serious part, if I thought we were going to lose, would I tell you -- we're not going to lose, in my heart of hearts. (Laughter.) No, again, I understand how -- look, I read the -- look at the newspapers around here. I can see why you would think that I'm concealing something in my heart of hearts. The race is over as far as a lot of the punditry goes. They've got it all figured out. And they just -- as I said, they're dancing in the end zone. They just haven't scored the touchdown, Mark, you know, there's a lot of time left. And these candidates are working hard out there. And my message to them is, keep talking about the security of the United States and keeping taxes low, and you'll come back here.

Last question, Richard.

QUESTION:Thank you, Mr. President. Back in 2000, you campaigned around the country saying you wanted to usher in the responsibility era, to end the days when people said, if it feels good, do it, and if you've got a problem, blame somebody else.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

QUESTION:Yet over the last several months, we've seen many members of your own party in Congress embroiled in one scandal or another and all too ready to blame somebody else, whether prosecutors, or Democrats, or even the media. So I'm wondering, why do you think it is so many people in your own party have failed to live up to the standards of the responsibility era?

THE PRESIDENT: If any person in any party fails to live up to high standards, they ought to be held to account, Richard. It's important for there to be trust in the halls of Congress and in the White House, and throughout government. People got to trust elected leaders in order for democracy to work to its fullest extent. And I fully expect people to be held to account if there's wrongdoing, just like I expect corporate executives to be held to account for wrongdoing; just like I expect people throughout our society to be held to account for wrongdoing.

People do have to take responsibility for the decisions they make in life. I take responsibility for the decisions I make. I also understand that those of us in positions of responsibility have the duty to bring honor to the offices we hold. People don't have to agree with somebody's opinion, there's all kinds of opinions here. But in order to make this country work, and to make democracy succeed, there's got to be high standards, and people must be held to account to achieve those standards.

I thank you for your time. See you on the campaign trail.

ENGLAND

TYSKLAND

FRANKRIG

DANMARK (NORGE, SVERIGE)

FM Søren Gade (DK) har været i Kosóva og bl.a. mødt **SRSJ Joachim Rücker**. Der foreligger intet om indholdet - heller ikke på FM's websted - men der er et UNMIK-billede af begivenheden.



Foto: UNMIK/DPI

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



Den Albanske UM, Besnik Mustafaj, har - telefonisk - drøftet forskelligt med sin kinesiske kollega, Li Zhaoxing, dels om Albanien's standpunkt i striden om ét eller to Kina, dels om det bilaterale forhold, dels - og ikke mindst - om hvordan Kina, som permanent medlem af Sikkerhedsrådet, bør forholde sig i Kosóva-spørgsmålet. Mustafaj søgte at overbevise UM Li Zhaoxing at Kina burde acceptere Kosóva's selvstændighed [hvilket fremgår af bemærkningen om at Kosóva-spørgsmålet er enkeltstående]. Det Albanske UM skriver

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj had a phone conversation today, October 24th 2006, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Li Zhaoxing.

Focusing on bilateral relations, Minister Mustafaj, assessed the high level of economic relations with China and emphasised that it's time to pass to another stage, that of Chinese investments in Albania. We would like Albania be China's main partner in the region, Mustafaj said.

Regarding the cooperation in terms of international organizations, Minister Mustafaj and Minister Li Zhaoxing expressed their contentment on the level of this cooperation, particularly in UN. In this framework Minister Mustafaj assured his counterpart that the Albanian Government will maintain its decision, that of recognising only one China.

Special attention was also attached to Kosova issue, Minister Mustafaj highlighted that the negotiations on its status settlement have entered the final phase. It is expected that President Ahtisaari, presents his recommendations to the Security Council in the coming months.

Mustafaj expressed his conviction that China, as a Security Council permanent member, will contribute to the benefit of peace and stability in the Balkan region, supporting a long term and steady solution, in harmony with the will of the absolute majority of Kosova population. The Albanian Government considers Kosova's case unique and dissimilar to any other one, Mustafaj underscored.

At the end of the conversation both Ministers agreed that through diplomatic channels choose the convenient time for the expected visit of Minister Mustafaj in China.

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«.



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*].

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.

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

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»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](#).

»Albansk Almanak 2005«

Almanak'en for 2005 er udkommet i april 2006. Her finder du nyhedsbrevene fra 2005 og forskelligt supplerende materiale.

Bogen udgives i et sæt bestående af et hæfte (ugeoversigterne) og en CD (med ugebrevne og det supplerende materiale - i alt omkring 2.150 sider).

Se pris på: [Bestillingsliste](#).

»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](#).

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