

Open letter to the President of Kosovo

Brussels, 3rd of April 2020

Dear President Thaçi,

We are deeply worried about the current political developments in Kosovo and want to address our concerns in this open letter. We Greens have always supported Kosovo's path to independence and democratisation, and we cannot stay silent during the current crisis. The no-confidence vote against Prime Minister Albin Kurti's government is a setback for political stability in the Western Balkans at a time when cohesion is urgently needed. Recent claims about possible constitutional changes through 82 Members of Parliament further are a reason for concern for us.

We call on you to ensure a functioning government in this time of crisis that reflects the results of the last election. In the current worldwide pandemic, a country with no functioning government and a constitutional crisis at its hand would endanger the health and wellbeing of its whole population. The Kosovar government has so far handled the crisis effectively and even succeeded in taking important steps to abolish the tariffs. Albin Kurti's government carried the hopes of the young generation of Kosovo for political advancement and dismantling this government clearly contradicts the democratic will of Kosovo's population.

For the time after the pandemic, it is our position that new elections are in order according to the constitution of Kosovo, since the end of Albin Kurti's government is not the result of a resignation, but of a lost no-confidence vote. We believe that you, as the President, should honour the principle of checks and balances and ensure that democratic maxims and the rule of law are respected.

The US-backed deal for Serbia and Kosovo that you also favour is profoundly worrying. Any deal that includes a shift of borders according to ethnic criteria could result in dangerous destabilisation. Border modifications and land swaps based on ethnic criteria have in the past led to wars, great human suffering and displacement in the Balkans. Kosovo is a multi-ethnic country, and we strongly contradict any effort trying to return to politics from the 1990s.

We Greens continue to advocate for democracy and the rule of law in Kosovo, and for its continued inclusion in EU support measures during the global pandemic. This battle is about stability, public health and peace in Kosovo, a battle that cannot be won without respect for democracy.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Waitz, Member of the European Parliament & Co-Chair of the European Green Party

Reinhard Bütikofer, Member of the European Parliament

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Member of the European Parliament

Romeo Franz, Member of the European Parliament