

- Tadic: Albania Instigated Kosovo Separatism

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As soon as he announced that he will run for re-election, Serbian President Boris Tadic has started his campaign with what works best in Serbian election campaigns – Kosovo.

Prishtina, 6 September, 2006 – “Kosovo problem was largely engineered by outside support of Albanian separatism”, Serbia President Boris Tadic said on Thursday in an exclusive interview with Itar-Tass. “Big problems popped up precisely due to the fact that some foreign states backed Kosovo Albanians in their aspirations for national independence. They hoped to win this independence by the summer of 2007, and when their expectations failed to materialize, disappointment set in,” the head of state noted. “I regard as quite unacceptable the threat to resort to violence, which is used as the key argument to achieve independence. Each state, created under a threat of violence, becomes a factor of destabilization, a reason for emergence of hard processes with far-reaching consequences,” Tadic emphasized. “This is true of the entire world, including of course the Balkans. Serbia cannot agree to such development of events.” The Serbia leader is convinced that Kosovo is not ready for independence due to domestic reasons either. “To speak frankly, there are no grounds in Kosovo to build a present-day community, capable of respecting human rights, including the rights of citizens of non-Albanian origin,” Tadic claimed. “The present-day Kosovo is thoroughly criminalized. The international community, represented in Kosovo by military and civil structures, runs into the big problem of overcoming consequences of this crime.” Kosovo’s independence would create “a precedent, lurking a huge danger of destabilising many other areas in the world”, the president continued. “I spoke of this recently at the summit of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in Istanbul, where Russian President Putin was present. “I said at the time that there are many such flash points, as is the case with Kosovo, in the Black Sea region,” Tadic continued. “All those who seek independence, would hail a decision on Kosovo’s independence so as to exploit it in their own interests. If such a precedent is created, not a single state where there are peoples, controlling part of territory, can preserve stability.” “We should think of stability, development and of long-term interests of all states. We should think of preventing destruction of the very foundations of the present-day world by a decision on the future of Kosovo and Metohija,” the president said with conviction. “Serbia will not accept independence of Kosovo even due to the fact that it has a duty as a state as well as due to conviction that we shall provoke instability all over the world in this way” Tadic concluded. Movement for Independence in Kosovo existed since its occupation by Serbia during the Balkan Wars of the early 20th century. This movement intensified when the violations of basic human rights by Serb police and military became an everyday occurrence in Kosovo and when its autonomous status was suspended illegally by Serbia. In 1999, Serbia conducted a campaign of terror that forced population expulsion on a scale not seen in Europe since the Second World War. The majority of the ethnic Albanian population was driven from their homes and forced into Macedonia and Albania. As a result, under no circumstance will they accept to be under Serbian rule again. Thousands of Kosovo Albanians are still unaccounted for as a result. On February 2, 2007, UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari delivered to Belgrade and Pristina leaders a draft status settlement proposal. While not yet mentioning the word “independence,” the draft Settlement included several provisions that were widely interpreted as implying statehood for Kosovo.

Although it does not grant unconditional independence, Kosovo side accepted the proposal, while Serbia is currently blocking its implementation with the aid of Russia, its traditional ally.