



KOSOVO

## Kosovo Adopts Amnesty For Serbs

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By RFE/RL

Kosovo's parliament has adopted an amnesty for Serbs who had rebelled against the government.

The law pardons locals Serbs who agitated against Kosovo's authority after the mainly ethnic Albanian territory broke away from Serbia in 2008.

The legislation is a key part of the EU-brokered deal agreed by the two sides in April to normalize their ties. That deal opened the door to EU accession talks for Belgrade and allows Pristina to extend its authority to a northern, Serb-populated pocket of Kosovo.

Kosovo Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice Hajredin Kuci addressed parliament before the vote on July 11.

"When a law is not fit for the people we should change the law and not the people," Kuci said.

"In this logic we have seen that the previous draft bill was not good enough for the parliament of the Republic of Kosovo, for a part of civil society, and for a part of other [political] subjects and individuals, therefore the bill presented today is changed."

Ninety of Kosovo's 120 lawmakers voted in favor of the amnesty.

Only the opposition Vetevendosje (Self-Determination) Party opposed the bill.

"The amnesty is about to take place before the disarmament and demilitarization of the north of Kosovo. Don't forget that in the north of Kosovo there are more weapons than in the whole of Kosovo. There must be a disarmament and demilitarization first and

then the amnesty," party leader Albin Kurti said.

"But the amnesty will take place without [Serbia] apologizing [for the war] and without disarmament, and demilitarization of that area that for 14 years has been under the control of Serbia's structures."

Around 100 civil-society activists protested outside the parliament against the law.

Earlier this month, the Serbs of northern Kosovo proclaimed their own legislature, instead of agreeing to take part in local elections the Kosovo authorities have set in November.

With reporting by dpa and Reuters

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