



March 11, 2008

New governments of Spain and Cyprus will refuse Kosovo recognition

KosovoCompromise Staff

The new governments of Spain and Cyprus will remain on the line of their predecessors and will refuse to recognize Kosovo's unilateral secession, their foreign ministers said in Brussels on Monday.

"We have not changed our position in regards to recognizing Kosovo, which means we will not recognize it", said Marcos Kyprianou, who became Cypriot foreign minister after the February elections.

"The new government of Spain will not change its position on the non-recognition of Kosovo", said Miguel Angel Moratinos, whose Socialist Party won the Spanish parliamentary elections yet again on Sunday.

Meanwhile, in Bamako, the president of Mali, Amadou Toumani Toure, has expressed the Malian stance on Kosovo: international norms must be respected because their abuse and the violation of territorial integrity could threaten a series of countries with a similar problem.

In Dakar, at the senior-level gathering of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the issue of Kosovo's recognition has sparked deep division.

Responding to a call from Washington, Turkey has been lobbying strongly for Muslim countries' recognition of Kosovo, but it has met strong resistance from Azerbaijan, Egypt, Indonesia and Sudan.

Following a senior officials' meeting over the weekend, the OIC only emphasized a need to be "in solidarity with the Kosovar people", without giving clear support to independence and without encouraging member states to recognize Kosovo's independence. The Turkish delegation is expected to hold bilateral talks with its counterparts to increase support for Kosovo's recognition.

Only five Muslim countries have recognized Kosovo so far (Albania, Afghanistan, Senegal, Malaysia and Turkey) – a worrying development for Washington, which attempted to portray its creation of an "independent Kosovo" as a U.S. "positive gesture" towards Islam.

This interpretation has, however, been met with widespread skepticism in the Muslim world.

A summit of the 57-member OIC is scheduled for Thursday and Friday.