
Kosovo: Osmani elected President. Krastev (political analyst) to SIR, “generational change in post-war politics”. Issue of Serbia still pending

A young, charismatic 38-year-old woman: here is the portrait of the new president of Kosovo, Vjosa Osmani, elected by the Parliament in Pristina on 4 April. Osmani is the fifth president of Kosovo after the historic leader Hashim Thaci, who resigned in November to serve a war crimes sentence, and the second woman after Atifete Jahjaga, who was in office from 2011 to 2016. “The election shows that a generational change is underway in Kosovo’s politics, for the new generation who did not take part in the war is now at the forefront”, Balkan analyst Nikolay Krastev told SIR news agency. “Actually - Krastev continued -, Osmani had already served as ad-interim president from November until March. Osmani embodies the change, but we should not expect radical U-turns especially with regard to the negotiations with Serbia”. Indeed, in her first statement after the election, the President called for dialogue and “the normalization of relations”, but reiterated that Belgrade must apologize and bring to court those responsible for the war crimes committed in the late 1990s. “Peace will only be achieved when we receive Serbia’s apology, when justice is done for those who have suffered those crimes”, she said. “It is already a step forward - Krastev explained - for talks with Serbia are not a top priority, at least at first sight, for the government of Prime Minister Albin Kurti”. “The new president, however, - the expert concluded - will seek to represent a new, more European-oriented Kosovo with international partners, including the US. The new political class will need to focus on the economy and institutional reforms”.

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