

Serbia wants Kosovo talks without deadline

by UPI

BRUSSELS - Serbian officials told the European Union there is no need for a deadline for talks on the future status of its breakaway Kosovo province. Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said leaders of Kosovo ethnic-Albanians, insisting on Kosovo independent of Serbia, would have no interest in continuing talks if they knew a deadline was already set, the EU Observer reported Friday. Jeremic told the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg, France, Thursday, the leaders of Serbia and of Kosovo Albanians, being aware there is no deadline, would intensify their efforts to reach a compromise solution to the future status of the province. Diplomats of the EU, Russia and the United States have been helping Serbs and Kosovo Albanians having direct talks, of which the first round was held in New York Sept. 28 and failed to reach a breakthrough. The next round is scheduled for Oct. 14 in Brussels. The three international diplomats are to submit a report on the Serbia-Kosovo talks to the United Nations Dec. 10. Serbia is determined to keep Kosovo as its integral part, and Kosovo Albanians insist on independence from the Belgrade government. Predominantly ethnic-Albanian Kosovo has been U.N.-administered territory since 1999, when NATO troops were deployed to contain ethnic conflicts.

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