



Weekly Media Report

17 to 22 February 2014

International Affairs

Japanese Minister visits Albania – *Balkan Web, (Albania), 17 February 2014*

Takao Makino, Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, said in a meeting with Albanian Foreign Minister that the presence of Japanese investments in Albania will increase in the future. The two agreed that co-operation should be strengthened in both political and economic fields. In the meeting with the President of Republic Bujar Nishani, Makino spoke about the steps being taken to open a Japanese Embassy in Tirana in the next future, with the aim of enhancing the bilateral relations. The strengthening of parliamentary co-operation, as part of the overall bilateral co-operation, was at the centre of a meeting between Makino and the Assembly Speaker Ilir Meta.

<http://www.balkanweb.com>

North Korea human rights abuses resemble those of the Nazis, says UN inquiry – *The Guardian (UK), 18 February 2014*

North Korea's leadership is committing systematic and appalling human rights abuses against its own citizens on a scale unparalleled in the modern world, crimes against humanity with strong resemblances to those committed by the Nazis, a United Nations inquiry has concluded. The UN's commission on human rights in North Korea, which gathered evidence for almost a year, including often harrowing testimony at public hearings worldwide, said there was compelling evidence of torture, execution and arbitrary imprisonment, deliberate starvation and an almost complete lack of free thought and belief.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/17/north-korea-human-rights-abuses-united-nations>

European Affairs

Eurozone countries should form United States of Europe, says EC vice-president – *The Guardian (UK), 17 February 2014*

Viviane Reding calls for full fiscal and political union for 18 eurozone countries but says UK should remain apart. Delivering the Mackenzie Stuart Lecture, named after the first British judge to serve as president of the European court of justice, the European justice commissioner endorsed Churchill's view in a famous speech in Zurich in 1946 that Britain should remain apart from the United States of Europe.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/17/eurozone-countries-united-states-europe-viviane-reding>

National Affairs

Italian president asks Renzi to form government – *BBC (UK), 17 February 2014*

It follows the resignation on Friday of PM Enrico Letta after he was ousted in a vote called by Mr Renzi at a meeting of their centre-left Democratic Party. The party had accused Mr Letta of failing to tackle the ailing economy. Mr Renzi, who has never been elected as MP, must now negotiate a deal with Mr Letta's former coalition partners and could be sworn in on Thursday.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26222179>

Nine policemen injured in anti-government protests in Montenegro – Reuters (Montenegro), 17 February 2014

Nine policemen were injured in Montenegro's capital Podgorica on Saturday when rocks were thrown from a crowd of several hundred people demanding the resignation of the government, a police spokeswoman said. "We want to live, we want to work!" protesters angry about high unemployment and the slow pace of economic reform chanted in front of the government headquarters before being dispersed with teargas. "We want them to resign!" The demonstrators had no political backing but were responding to a call on a Facebook profile entitled "Revolution in Montenegro - everyone on the streets". The profile disappeared during the course of the day. Montenegro is the second former Yugoslav republic to see street clashes in the past 10 days over a lack of jobs. On February 7, protesters across Bosnia set fire to government buildings and fought with riot police in the worst civil unrest there since the 1992-95 war. Unemployment in Montenegro, a candidate for European Union membership with a population of 680,000 people, is close to 15 percent, according to official figures. Nearly one third of young people between the ages of 23 and 30 are out of work. A recent Eurobarometer survey indicated that around 40 percent of Montenegrins see unemployment as the biggest concern.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/15/us-montenegro-protests-idUSBREA1E0QL20140215>

Ukraine: Deadly clashes around parliament in Kiev – BBC (UK), 18 February 2014

Violent clashes have erupted during anti-government protests in Ukraine's capital, Kiev, with at least nine people, including two policemen, dead. In the worst violence in weeks, police used rubber bullets and stun grenades as thousands of protesters marching on parliament. A deadline set by the security forces for the violence to end has passed with no immediate sign of police action. The clashes came as MPs were due to debate changes to the constitution. The proposals would curb the powers of President Viktor Yanukovich, but the opposition say they were blocked from submitting their draft, meaning no debate could take place.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26236860>

Whole-life sentences verdict due – The Guardian (UK), 18 February 2014

Leading judges are to give a crucial ruling on Tuesday on whether whole-life sentences are legal in the UK. A panel of five judges, headed by Lord Chief Justice Lord Thomas, will announce their decision on "life-means-life" tariffs at the court of appeal in London. Sentencing in a number of high-profile criminal cases has been put on hold – including the terms to be handed out to soldier Lee Rigby's murderers – pending the judgement. At a hearing in January the judges were urged to find that imposing sentences which mean a prisoner can never be released are not "manifestly excessive or wrong in principle".

<http://www.theguardian.com/law/2014/feb/18/whole-life-sentences-verdict-due>

40 Albanian students and teachers were poisoned at the Gostivar Economic High School – Top Channel TV, (Macedonia), 20 February 2014



An unidentified person has launched a poisoning gas that has seriously affected students and teachers. "They had respiratory problems, tears, burning of noses and throats. We were obliged to take all students outside the school", declared Kasam Kasami, vice director. 12 of the students were sent to the Shkup (Skopje) Toxicology Clinic. "There are 18-year-old students and some professors. They don't need intensive interventions. However, they will stay hospitalized until they get better", declared Andon Xhibishev, Director of the Toxicology Department. The Macedonian Prime Minister, Nikolla Gruevski, and the Albanian Ministers of the Macedonian government visited the victims in hospital. "Doctors and hospital doctors informed me that all of the patients have no life threatening danger", declared the Deputy Minister of Education, Safet Neziri. The Deputy Minister of Interior, Zemri Qamili, declared that the police is looking into several suspects. "For the moment, we cannot speculate. We are working on the case and we have several suspects, but we will have more to say after we will have more concrete information", Qamili explained. The Head of the Gostivar Commune, Nevzad Bejtja, was also affected by the attack. He declared that the poisoning of students and teachers is an inhumane act.

<http://www.top-channel.tv>

Yulia Tymoshenko released from jail – delfi.lv (LV), 22 February 2014

Yulia Tymoshenko, Ukraine's former Prime Minister, who was sentenced to seven years in prison for disadvantageous for Ukraine gas supply agreement with Russia in October 2011, has been released from jail. Herself and The West says her imprisonment was closely related to her former competitor in presidential elections Viktor Yanukovich political vendetta. Highest Rada of Ukraine supported the resolution, according to which the detained former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko was released on Saturday. For this decision voted 322 deputies, which will allow not to wait for the (ex-)President Viktor Yanukovich's signature on the adopted law.

<http://www.delfi.lv/news/world/other/nesagaidot-yanukovica-apstiprinajumu-ukrainas-parlaments-atbrivo-timosenko.d?id=44241271>

Ukraine's parliament removes President Viktor Yanukovich – Reuters (U.S.), 22 February 2014

Ukraine's parliament voted to remove President Viktor Yanukovich after three months of street protests, while his arch-rival Yulia Tymoshenko hailed opposition demonstrators as "heroes" in an emotional speech in Kiev after she was released from jail. Yanukovich abandoned the capital to the opposition on Saturday and denounced what he described as a coup after several days of bloodshed this week that claimed 82 lives. Removal of the pro-Russian Yanukovich should pull Ukraine away from Moscow's orbit and closer to Europe. It is also a reversal for Russian President Vladimir Putin's dream of recreating as much as possible of the Soviet Union in a new Eurasian Union. Moscow had counted on Yanukovich to deliver Ukraine as a central member. Members of the Ukrainian parliament, who abandoned Yanukovich after this week's bloodshed, applauded and sang the national anthem after declaring him constitutionally unable to carry out his duties. An early election was set for May 25.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/22/us-ukraine-idUSBREA1G0OU20140222>

Economy

Human Rights and Child Protection

Albanian children access to pornography through the internet – Top Channel TV (Albania), 20 February 2014

There are thousands of Albanian minors who can have access to pornography or who can become sex victims through the internet. IT experts underline that parents should avoid leaving computers in children rooms, since they might unconsciously fall prey to abuses.

Parents may use filters in their children's computers, which they can download from the internet. But is this enough? "There are three types of filters that Microsoft Windows already has, and parents simply have to install them. There are filters that block pornographic materials. More than 50% of children have access to porn in schools, internet cafes or in their homes. Special laws are needed for police to investigate those who put these materials in the computers of our children", declared Iannis Laouris, Executive Director of Cyberethics Center. 62% of children have internet in their rooms. Many teenagers have cell phones that can navigate to internet. Most of children use internet in bars where no one can filter the materials they're watching. Experts ask stronger laws for protecting children in schools, but that say that it's only half of the job. The rest is up to parents, who must know what children watch in the internet. "Parents must make sure that their children are protected. They need to learn more about technology. It is obligatory for schools to use filters, but the biggest problem are internet cafes. A solution in Europe is blocking these pages by law", declared Laouris. But this is the era of internet, and children have much more knowledge than parents. It is necessary not only to take measures with filters, but also to create a friendly communication with children, so that they can understand what is wrong. Cybernetic crime has advanced quickly. More and more children are affected by pornographic videos without even being aware. A camera installed in a computer is enough for someone to use it remotely for spying and sell the video in real time. Experts say that users should be careful with the places where they leave their computers.

<http://www.top-channel.tv>