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Authors

Christina Muchow
Armaan Needles



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KOSOVO: Political Deadlock Likely to Persist Amid Parliament's Dissolution

Summary: Pristina's political deadlock will likely persist following the parliament's failure to elect a new president and the current president's attempt to dissolve parliament, which is likely leading to the third round of elections since February 2025.

Development: On 6 March, Kosovan President Vjosa Osmani announced her dissolution of the parliament and intent to hold snap elections, elections called earlier than regularly scheduled, in early April. On 5 March, the parliament missed a constitutional deadline to elect a new president after opposition parties boycotted the vote, resulting in a lack of a quorum. The governing party, Vetevendosje, announced an appeal to the Constitutional Court, arguing that the constitution gives the parliament another 60 days to try to elect a president. On 10 March, the Constitutional Court barred Osmani from announcing an election date and suspended the parliament's ongoing efforts to elect a president until 31 March, according to Reuters. Pristina also held parliamentary elections in February 2025, which failed to produce a majority government and led to snap elections in December 2025. Vetevendosje's gained nine seats from the February elections to the December elections, which, alongside its alliance with small ethnic minority parties, allowed it to establish a majority.

Analysis: Pristina's political deadlock will likely persist. Regardless of whether the Constitutional Court allows the immediate snap elections to proceed or grants Vetevendosje the 60 additional days it seeks, the opposition parties will likely not cease their boycott without significant concessions, including the selection of a candidate from outside Vetevendosje. Vetevendosje would likely not consider this an acceptable compromise, leading to another round of snap elections. Snap elections would have a roughly even chance of strengthening Vetevendosje's position, but likely not by a wide enough margin to avoid the need to compromise with other parties to form a coalition and elect a new president.

[Christina Muchow]

[IRAN: New Supreme Leader and President's Statement Likely Reveal Growing Split](#)

Summary: Recent statements by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian show a more conciliatory, reformist approach, likely revealing a growing split between Pezeshkian and his faction and the regime's more powerful hardline elements, including the new supreme leader.

Background: On 8 March, the Iranian Assembly of Experts selected Mojtaba Khamenei as the new supreme leader. Khamenei was a mid-level cleric with close ties to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Intelligence Organization (IRGC-IO) and Basij and used these ties to suppress pro-reform protests in 2009, according to the Institute for the Study of War. Khamenei had never held a formal government position but leveraged his familial and security connections to exert considerable influence over Iranian internal politics, promoting hardline candidates and policies, according to NPR. This follows Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's 7 March apology to Middle Eastern countries attacked by Iranian forces. Pezeshkian stated that the Leadership Council, which governed Iran before the Assembly of Experts selected a new supreme leader, had ordered the armed forces to exclusively attack American facilities, not the host countries. Pezeshkian's statement reflected longstanding regime policy, but hardliners criticized his apology, according to the Institute for the Study of War. On 11 February, Pezeshkian also apologized to the Iranian public for the country's economic problems, although he maintained that the protests were riots inflamed by Iran's enemies, according to *Al Jazeera*.

Analysis: The selection of Khamenei amid growing controversy surrounding Pezeshkian's relatively reformist position likely reflects increasing polarization within the upper echelons of Iranian government. Khamenei's selection almost certainly represents a victory for hardline elements of the regime and its security forces, who retain a staunch supporter in the country's most powerful position. However, Pezeshkian's recent statements likely reflect a desire to soften the regime's positions and cool tensions between the regime and its opponents, both within Iran and in the region. The public nature of his statements, despite high-level backlash, likely reflects growing dissent within the regime against the hardline elements.

[Christina Muchow]

CHINA: Oil Supply Disruptions Likely Driving Military Focus Around South China Sea

Summary: Oil disruptions caused by the Iran war will likely affect China's military dispositions in the South China Sea and Taiwan. Beijing will likely focus on securing energy routes and sustaining its military pressure on Taiwan despite the fuel shortage.

Development: The escalation of the 2026 Iran War affected oil shipments via the Strait of Hormuz, which transports approximately one-fifth of the total global petroleum shipments, according to *The Guardian*. China is the largest importer of crude oil in the world, and it depends on imports from the Middle East, including discounted Iranian oil, according to Reuters. China also imports crude oil from Venezuela, which currently faces export constraints and US-led sanctions, according to Reuters. Approximately 80 percent of China's imported oil is transported via the Strait of Malacca before reaching Chinese shores, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Chinese officials and analysts often refer to this dependence on the Strait of Malacca as the "Malacca dilemma," according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted more than 160 military operations in the Indo-Pacific region in 2025, including in the South China Sea and Taiwan, according to CSIS. Chinese military aircraft and naval ships have patrolled the Taiwan Strait in recent years, according to CSIS.

Analysis: Beijing's need for oil imports will likely factor into its military calculations in the South China Sea and near Taiwan. Because naval operations, air patrol missions, and large-scale military maneuvers demand large quantities of oil, disruptions in oil supply would therefore pose a potential limitation on the Chinese military's capacity. Chinese energy insecurity will likely heighten its focus on the sea routes for oil transport, particularly in the Taiwan Strait. The Chinese military will likely focus its military forces in the first island chain to manage the fuel demands and protect strategic shipping routes. This would enable Beijing to sustain pressure on Taiwan and its rivals, such as Tokyo and Washington. The unstable situation in the global oil supply will likely sustain the Chinese military focus on the first island chain to maintain the security of the Chinese coastline and energy supply routes.

[Armaan Needles]

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Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

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Christina Muchow, a Senior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 493, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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Eagle Eye Intelligence
3700 Willow Creek Rd.
Prescott, AZ 86301 eagleeyeintel.com