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Kosovo declares independence

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18th February, 2008

THE ARTICLE

A new country was born on February 17th as Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia. The streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital city, were full of fireworks and people partying, as Kosovans celebrated their status as the world's newest nation. However, the scene in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, was very different. Serbia's government called the declaration illegal and said it would never, ever recognize it. Serbians believe Kosovo is a sacred part of the Serbian homeland. Russia and China condemned Kosovo for declaring itself independent and said the move could spark a new conflict in the Balkans. Moscow now fears that Chechnya and other regions, those Vladimir Putin calls "frozen conflicts," will try and push for independence from Russia. Putin called, unsuccessfully, for a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

Republic of Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci said his new country would be a "democratic, multi-ethnic state." He said all of its citizens would enjoy the same rights – both the ethnic Albanians which form 90% of the population and the 10% Serb minority. Thaci told his parliament: "We never lost faith in the dream that one day we would stand among the free nations of the world, and today we do...Dreams are infinite, our challenges loom large, but nothing can deter us from moving forward to the greatness that history has reserved for us." In a warning to Serbia, he said: "Kosovo will never be ruled by Belgrade again." The USA, Britain, France, Germany and Italy supported Kosovo's move and will help the young country develop in its early years. The European Union, however, is split over whether or not to recognize Kosovo's independence.

WARM-UPS

1. INDEPENDENCE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about being independent. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

new countries / fireworks / partying / capital city / conflicts / independence / multi-ethnic states / minorities / losing faith / challenges / being ruled

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use all of the above words and make your own story based on the headline. Change partners and share your stories.

4. NEW NATION: With your partner(s), create a new nation. Fill in the details in the table. Change partners and share what you created.

| | | | |
|---------|--|----------|--|
| Name: | | Motto: | |
| Flag: | | Anthem: | |
| Symbol: | | Capital: | |

5. INDEPENDENCE DAY: With your partner, talk about which of the things below are important for a country's independence day. Rank them in order of most important. Change partners and share your ideas and findings

- a. _____ a public holiday with no work / school
- b. _____ flying the nation's flag from your house
- c. _____ singing the national anthem
- d. _____ fireworks
- e. _____ special "Independence Day" TV programmes
- f. _____ a ceremony remembering national heroes

6. NATION: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'nation'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

7. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A **strongly** believes that any region of the world can declare itself an independent country if a majority of its citizens want independence; Student B **strongly** disagrees. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Kosovo became a new, independent republic of Serbia. | T / F |
| b. People in the Serbian capital were not happy on February 17 th . | T / F |
| c. Russia and China fully support Kosovo's independence. | T / F |
| d. Vladimir Putin said there would be wars colder than the Cold War. | T / F |
| e. Kosovo's prime minister said his new nation would be fair to all. | T / F |
| f. Serbs make up almost half of Kosovo's population. | T / F |
| g. Kosovo's prime minister did not rule out being ruled by Serbia. | T / F |
| h. Not all of the European Union members support Kosovo's move. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. declared | a. governed |
| 2. partying | b. criticized |
| 3. sacred | c. celebrating |
| 4. condemned | d. nation |
| 5. spark | e. dominate |
| 6. state | f. holy |
| 7. infinite | g. ignite |
| 8. loom large | h. divided |
| 9. ruled | i. announced |
| 10. split | j. limitless |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Kosovo declared its independence | a. Kosovo's independence |
| 2. full of fireworks and people | b. from Serbia |
| 3. their status as the | c. moving forward |
| 4. spark a new | d. state |
| 5. a special meeting of the United Nations | e. conflict in the Balkans |
| 6. a democratic, multi-ethnic | f. loom large |
| 7. We never lost faith | g. partying |
| 8. our challenges | h. Security Council |
| 9. nothing can deter us from | i. world's newest nation |
| 10. split over whether or not to recognize | j. in the dream |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A new country was _____ on February 17th as Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia. The streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital city, were full of fireworks and people _____, as Kosovans celebrated their _____ as the world's newest nation. However, the scene in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, was very different. Serbia's government called the declaration illegal and said it would never, ever _____ it. Serbians believe Kosovo is a _____ part of the Serbian homeland. Russia and China condemned Kosovo for declaring itself independent and said the move could _____ a new conflict in the Balkans. Moscow now fears that Chechnya and other regions, those Vladimir Putin calls "frozen conflicts," will try and _____ for independence from Russia. Putin _____, unsuccessfully, for a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

sacred
partying
push
recognize
born
spark
called
status

Republic of Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci said his new country would be a "democratic, multi-ethnic _____." He said all of its citizens would enjoy the same _____ – both the ethnic Albanians which form 90% of the population and the 10% Serb _____. Thaci told his parliament: "We never lost faith in the dream that one day we would _____ among the free nations of the world, and today we do...Dreams are infinite, our challenges loom large, but nothing can _____ us from moving forward to the greatness that history has reserved for us." In a warning to Serbia, he said: "Kosovo will never be _____ by Belgrade again." The USA, Britain, France, Germany and Italy supported Kosovo's move and will help the young country _____ in its early years. The European Union, however, is _____ over whether or not to recognize Kosovo's independence.

minority
develop
stand
ruled
state
deter
split
rights

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

A new country _____ February 17th as Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia. The streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital city, were full of fireworks and _____, as Kosovans celebrated their status as the _____. However, the scene in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, was very different. Serbia's government called the _____ said it would never, ever recognize it. Serbians believe Kosovo is a sacred part of the Serbian homeland. Russia and China condemned Kosovo for declaring itself independent and _____ spark a new conflict in the Balkans. Moscow now fears that Chechnya and other regions, those Vladimir Putin _____" will try and push for independence from Russia. Putin called, unsuccessfully, for a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

Republic of Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci said his new country would be a "democratic, _____." He said all of its citizens would _____ – both the ethnic Albanians which form 90% of the population and the 10% Serb minority. Thaci told his parliament: "We never _____ dream that one day we would stand among the free nations of the world, and today we do..._____, our challenges loom large, but nothing can deter us from moving forward to the greatness that history has _____." In a warning to Serbia, he said: "Kosovo will never be ruled by Belgrade again." The USA, Britain, France, Germany and Italy supported Kosovo's move and _____ country develop in its early years. The European Union, however, is split over _____ recognize Kosovo's independence.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**capital**' and '**city**'.

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| capital | city |
| | |

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• born• full• scene• never• spark• frozen | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• multi• form• lost• loom• ruled• split |
|--|--|

STUDENT CONFLICTS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about conflicts in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

| | STUDENT 1 | STUDENT 2 | STUDENT 3 |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Q.1. | | | |
| Q.2. | | | |
| Q.3. | | | |
| Q.4. | | | |
| Q.5. | | | |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
 - b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'independence'?
 - c) What are your feelings toward Kosovo's independence?
 - d) What do you know about Kosovo?
 - e) Do you think Kosovo should compete as a country at the Beijing Olympics?
 - f) Do you think different regions of Russia and the world will now try and push for independence?
 - g) How many more regions are there in the world that you would like to become countries?
 - h) Why do you think China is against Kosovo independence?
 - i) Do you celebrate the independence of your country?
-

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Is your country a successful multi-ethnic state?
- c) Do all citizens in your country enjoy the same rights?
- d) What do you think it's like to be a minority in a country?
- e) Are your dreams infinite?
- f) Do your challenges loom large?
- g) What do Britain and the USA need to do to help Kosovo in its early years?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Vladimir Putin?
- i) Did you like this discussion? Why (not)?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

A new country was (1) _____ on February 17th as Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia. The streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital city, were full of fireworks and people (2) _____, as Kosovans celebrated their status (3) _____ the world's newest nation. However, the scene in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, was very different. Serbia's government called the declaration illegal and said it would never, ever recognize it. Serbians believe Kosovo is a (4) _____ part of the Serbian homeland. Russia and China condemned Kosovo for declaring itself independent and said the move could spark a new conflict in the Balkans. Moscow now (5) _____ that Chechnya and other regions, those Vladimir Putin calls "frozen conflicts," will try and push for independence from Russia. Putin called, unsuccessfully, (6) _____ a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

Republic of Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci said his new country would be a "democratic, multi-ethnic (7) _____." He said all of its citizens would enjoy the same rights – both the ethnic Albanians which form 90% of the population and the 10% Serb (8) _____. Thaci told his parliament: "We never lost faith in the dream that one day we would stand among the free nations of the world, and today we do...Dreams are infinite, our challenges loom large, but nothing can deter us (9) _____ moving forward to the greatness that history (10) _____ reserved for us." In a warning to Serbia, he said: "Kosovo will never be ruled by Belgrade again." The USA, Britain, France, Germany and Italy supported Kosovo's move and will help the young country develop (11) _____ its early years. The European Union, however, is split over (12) _____ or not to recognize Kosovo's independence.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) birth | (b) born | (c) been | (d) creating |
| 2. | (a) parties | (b) party | (c) partying | (d) parted |
| 3. | (a) as | (b) of | (c) by | (d) on |
| 4. | (a) sacrifice | (b) scarred | (c) scared | (d) sacred |
| 5. | (a) fear | (b) afraid | (c) fears | (d) fearless |
| 6. | (a) for | (b) by | (c) up | (d) on |
| 7. | (a) statue | (b) static | (c) status | (d) state |
| 8. | (a) major | (b) minority | (c) minor | (d) majority |
| 9. | (a) on | (b) as | (c) for | (d) from |
| 10. | (a) having | (b) have | (c) has | (d) has had |
| 11. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) by | (d) under |
| 12. | (a) whether | (b) wither | (c) weather | (d) whichever |

WRITING:

Write about *Kosovo* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out about Kosovo's independence. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. BALKANS: Make a poster about each of the Balkan countries. How have their recent histories been different? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. NEW NATION: Write a magazine article about the creation of the world's newest nation. Include imaginary interviews with a Pristina resident and someone who thought independence was a bad idea.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci. Ask him three questions about what he will do over the coming months. Give him three suggestions on what he should do from now to make Kosovo a success. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. declared | a. announced |
| 2. partying | b. celebrating |
| 3. sacred | c. holy |
| 4. condemned | d. criticized |
| 5. spark | e. ignite |
| 6. state | f. nation |
| 7. infinite | g. limitless |
| 8. loom large | h. dominate |
| 9. ruled | i. governed |
| 10. split | j. divided |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Kosovo declared its independence | a. from Serbia |
| 2. full of fireworks and people | b. partying in the streets |
| 3. their status as the | c. world's newest nation |
| 4. spark a new | d. conflict in the Balkans |
| 5. a special meeting of the United Nations | e. Security Council |
| 6. a democratic, multi-ethnic | f. state |
| 7. We never lost faith | g. in the dream |
| 8. our challenges | h. loom large |
| 9. nothing can deter us from | i. moving forward |
| 10. split over whether or not to recognize | j. Kosovo's independence |

GAP FILL:

Kosovo declares independence

A new country was **born** on February 17th as Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia. The streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital city, were full of fireworks and people **partying**, as Kosovans celebrated their **status** as the world's newest nation. However, the scene in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, was very different. Serbia's government called the declaration illegal and said it would never, ever **recognize** it. Serbians believe Kosovo is a **sacred** part of the Serbian homeland. Russia and China condemned Kosovo for declaring itself independent and said the move could **spark** a new conflict in the Balkans. Moscow now fears that Chechnya and other regions, those Vladimir Putin calls "frozen conflicts," will try and **push** for independence from Russia. Putin **called**, unsuccessfully, for a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

Republic of Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci said his new country would be a "democratic, multi-ethnic **state**." He said all of its citizens would enjoy the same **rights** – both the ethnic Albanians which form 90% of the population and the 10% Serb **minority**. Thaci told his parliament: "We never lost faith in the dream that one day we would **stand** among the free nations of the world, and today we do...Dreams are infinite, our challenges loom large, but nothing can **deter** us from moving forward to the greatness that history has reserved for us." In a warning to Serbia, he said: "Kosovo will never be **ruled** by Belgrade again." The USA, Britain, France, Germany and Italy supported Kosovo's move and will help the young country **develop** in its early years. The European Union, however, is **split** over whether or not to recognize Kosovo's independence.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - b 2 - c 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - a 7 - d 8 - b 9 - d 10 - c 11 - b 12 - a