

Black Shadow appears in South Serbia

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By BalkanUpdate.com

BUJANOVAC -- Monday – A statement from a group calling themselves the Black Shadow released on an internet site threatens both the Serbian and Albanian officials in the South Serbia.

According to the statement, which maintains that the group is working under the wing of the Albanian Nationalist Army, the unit will not accept discussions between Belgrade and Pristina that do not include the question of South Serbia, or as it is referred to in the statement, “East Kosovo.”

The Black Shadow unit “for the first and last time” is calling on the Albanian leaders to start using the term “East Kosovo” instead of “Presevo Valley” when referring to the region, and to put aside their personal interest. The Albanian leaders of the region are also being asked to “demand from the Serbian occupiers to have all of the members of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac released from prison immediately,” and are asking the international community to not make the same mistakes it made in Kosovo in between 1997 and 1999, which led to the war in Kosovo and “in East Kosovo in 2000 and 2001.”

Albanian police officers were advised that they will be answering to the people of the region if they continue to work in the interest of the Serbs.

The Serbian political leaders in the region are being asked to have their troops and police forces retreat from South Serbia. The final message in the statement to the Serbian Government advises them to “take their hands off of Kosovo, because we are prepared to defend it in blood.”

Is the unit real or not?

Sources close to the Liberation Army of Bujanovac, Medvedja and Presevo claim that the Black Shadow unit does not exist. The sources say that the statement which appeared on the internet represents yet another chapter in the political battles going on in Presevo and Bujanovac.

Commenting on the threats made by the Black Shadow unit, the Forum for Ethnic Relations’ Coordinator, Dusan Janjic, said that he cannot state for certain who is behind the appearance of this group.

“I am still not prepared to say whether the Black Shadows are an Albanian extremist organization, but it’s obvious that a form of extremism is standing behind this group. It is obvious that they are trying to evoke fear in the lives of the Serbian and Albanian officials in order to separate the Serbs and Albanians in light of the coming Kosovo status discussions, and to evaluate the status of Albanians in Serbia.” Janjic said.