


The Political Movement for the Republic of Kosovo - July 2, 1990

Agon Krasniqi

Abstract: The purpose of writing this paper is to provide new information on the political situation in Kosovo during the year 1990, with a particular focus on the political movement in Kosovo for the Republic of Kosovo. The analysis of the July 2nd event holds significant importance for Albanian historiography, marking the first major step by Albanians of Kosovo in opposing the March 1989 constitution, which had revoked Kosovo's autonomy a status initially achieved through the 1974 constitution. As a result, Kosovo was reclassified as a subject under the Serbian Republic. My study's focus on the July 2nd event aims to examine archival sources and interpret them using an analytical method, to offer a perspective on one of Kosovo's most pivotal events in the 1990s. The objectives of the paper will focus on the political situation in Kosovo following the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy, which influenced the political developments in Kosovo during 1990. The focus will then shift to the constitutional declaration of July 2nd, the delegates, the developments during the declaration of the republic, the decisions made during the session, as well as the developments after the July 2nd event and the international reactions. This work relies heavily on archival resources from the State Agency of Kosovo Archives (ASHAK), the Municipal Archive of Kaçanik, the "Sadik Tafarshiku" Library, and the "Rilindja", "Bujku", "Bota Sot" newspapers. In addressing this topic, my focus has been on uncovering archival sources and interpreting them. Based on this approach, I will present various archival documents, including the minutes from July 2, 1990—a historical event symbolizing the declaration of Kosovo's republic within the framework of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). This act demonstrates Kosovo's reaction against the 1989 constitution, which revoked its autonomy, indicating Kosovo's position as equal to the other republics within the SFRY. This reaction was marked in the hall of the Kosovo Assembly on July 2, 1990, with the participation of 114 delegates; by July 3, the final delegate was also present, bringing the total to 115 delegates who signed the declaration for Kosovo to become the seventh republic of Yugoslavia. The reason for the delay of the 115th delegate refers to extraordinary events and difficult conditions for attending the session. Thus, with the 115 signatures of the

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 Phd, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa-Türkiye, agonk122@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0752-250X>

 <https://ror.org/03tg3eb07>

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delegates of the Kosovo Assembly, Kosovo was declared a Republic of Yugoslavia, which was a success of the political movement, a success that surpassed even the declaration of autonomy in 1974. Through the use of archival sources and their scientific interpretation, we will draw key conclusions regarding the topic, helping to understand the role and significance of the July 2nd event in Kosovo's history.

Keywords: Autonomy, Yugoslavia, Republic, Kosovo, July.

Introduction

The aim of my work is to address the topic “The Political Movement for the Republic of Kosovo – July 2, 1990.” As mentioned above, my research is based on archival sources through which I will analyze the events of July 2nd and examine the role and importance of this event in Kosovo's political history. Considering the course of events, we will raise several hypotheses that will be addressed below, such as: What was the reason behind the constitutional declaration, under what conditions was the July 2nd session held, and how was such an event perceived by the international community?

The July 2nd event was one of the most significant in Kosovo's history during the 1990s, as it marked the unanimous decision of 114 delegates to oppose the revocation of autonomy. In response, they issued a declaration stating that Kosovo was an independent entity within Yugoslavia, thereby declaring Kosovo a republic within the Yugoslav framework. This declaration by the Assembly asserted Kosovo's political self-determination within Yugoslavia, affirming Kosovo's status as an equal entity within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Additionally, Kosovo was seen as a political-constitutional entity, with its population considered one of the largest among the peoples within the SFRY. The July 2nd declaration recognized even the Serbian population residing in Kosovo as a nation with equal rights. This event also represented a unified rejection of the Serbian Republic's constitution (RS) of March 23, 1989, imposed by RS leader Slobodan Milosevic, which revoked Kosovo's autonomy—an autonomy previously granted by Josip Broz Tito in 1974. (Hetemi, 2020: 324). Consequently, the delegates annulled the Kosovo Assembly's decisions of March 23 and expressed support for

the previous Yugoslav constitution. The declaration, consisting of five points and read by Bujar Gjurgjeallo under the direction of Muharrem Shabani, was unanimously accepted by the delegates present.

The July 2nd declaration consolidated internal unity among Kosovo's political structures and society. As a result, Kosovo began reflecting on its past, challenging the last 50 years of its history. Through this decision, the delegates also opposed the 1945 constitution, which had left Kosovo as a unit under Serbia within Yugoslavia. This declaration marked Kosovo's first political step toward the path to independence.

Constitutional Declaration: Kosovo Declared an Equal Entity in Yugoslavia

The early 1990s marked the beginning of events in Kosovo that would lead to a struggle for the fundamental rights of the Kosovar people. This basic right was denied with the revocation of autonomy by the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) on March 23, 1989 (*Xheçovi et al*, 2008: 371). This revocation prompted the Albanians of Kosovo to take the step of declaring the Republic of Kosovo within the framework of the SFRY. Considering the created situation, the delegates of the Kosovo Assembly gathered to declare Kosovo a republic of the SFRY. (Malcolm, 2019: 399). However, this was obstructed by police forces, resulting in the assembly being held under extraordinary circumstances in the courtyard of the Kosovo Assembly, where Kosovo was declared a Republic (Vickers, 2004: 297).

The autonomy that was taken from Kosovo in 1989 reverted it to its political status prior to 1974. The revocation of autonomy marked the denial of Kosovo's fundamental rights within Yugoslavia. The 1974 Constitution granted Kosovo its political status and fundamental rights with its adoption on February 21, 1974. The adoption of the constitution provided Kosovo with autonomy, establishing it as a constitutive element within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Based on the constitution, institutions such as the Assembly of the Autonomous Socialist

Province of Kosovo, the Presidency of the Autonomous Socialist Province of Kosovo, the Council of the Autonomous Socialist Province of Kosovo, and the Executive Council were established. Additionally, the adoption of the constitution enabled Kosovo to create administrative bodies such as the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Unified Labor Court of Kosovo, and the Social Self-Governance Advocate. With the adoption of the SFRY and Autonomous Province constitutions, Kosovo was guaranteed equal rights with other entities within the Yugoslav Federation. (Imeraj, 2021: 109-111). The 1974 Constitution also stipulated that the Albanian language would be used equally alongside Serbo-Croatian. Furthermore, the judiciary operated independently of the Serbian Supreme Court. The People's Bank of Kosovo also held significant importance, symbolizing the special emphasis placed on the financial autonomy of the province. (Gjeçovi, 2008: 353).

The revocation of this autonomy in 1989 led the Albanians of Kosovo to begin their movement for a republic within the framework of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. (Statovci, 2023: 675-676).

After the revocation of Kosovo's autonomy¹, a new political situation emerged in the political landscape of Kosovo, as Serbia aimed for supremacy over all of Yugoslavia, which was now in decline. To oppose this constitution, the delegates convened on July 2, 1990, where agenda items were discussed as a step toward declaring Kosovo as an equal entity in the Yugoslav federation. Among other points, the agenda on July 2, 1990, in the meeting chaired by Bujar Gjurgjealo² included: “**Point 1: Review of the Draft Amendments from XLIX to LXXII for the Constitution of**

1 The abolition of Kosovo's autonomy occurred with the adoption of the new constitution on March 23, 1989. With the abolition of autonomy, Kosovo returned to the status it held before 1974, specifically to the position of the 1945 constitution, at which point Kosovo was recognized as a subject under Serbia. The delegates' opposition was for equality within Yugoslavia, where their demand was that Kosovo should be an equal unit within Yugoslavia.

2 Bujar Gjurgjealo was the leader of the meeting on July 2, 1990, regarding Kosovo's constitutional declaration and was part of the delegation for promoting the constitutional declaration, alongside Muharrem Shabani and Skënder Skenderi.

*the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. **Point 2:** Review of the proposal from the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to initiate amendments to the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with the enactment of the New Constitution, for approval. **Point 3:** Review of the proposal from the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for the enactment of a new Constitution for the Socialist Republic of Serbia, to give an opinion,... Further, Points 4 and 5 of the agenda continue with..., **Point 4:** Initiative for the enactment of a new Constitution for the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo. **Point 5:** Constitutional declaration on Kosovo as an independent and equal unit within the Federation (confederation) of Yugoslavia as a subject equal to other units in the Federation.” (ASHAK, 2.VII.1990/2 korrik 1990: 1). These agenda points were the first step taken by the delegates from Kosovo before the reading of the constitutional declaration, which would be read by Bujar Gjurgjealo.*

After reviewing the agenda points, the assembly also debated the constitutional project amendments during a transitional period in the SFRY. The assembly made decisions, stating that: *“The Assembly supported amendments XLIX to LXXII for the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with the proposals, opinions, and suggestions contained in the Report of the Commission of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo on constitutional issues. The Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, supporting the Report of the Constitutional Commission of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, did not give approval for the Proposal of the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to amend the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with the introduction of a new Constitution [...]. The Assembly of the Socialist Province of Kosovo approved the Report of the Constitutional Commission of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo and did not support, thus giving a negative opinion on the proposal of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for the adoption of a new Constitution for the Socialist Republic of Serbia.” (ASHAK, 2.VII.1990/2 korrik 1990: 2).*

Thus, there was complete unanimity among the delegates from Kosovo, with 111 present, as four of the signatories among the total 115 signatories were part of the Assembly of Serbia. From this situation, the constitutional declaration was announced, which would be read by Bujar Gjurgjealo and subsequently continued by Muharrem Shabani.³ These two, along with Skënder Skenderi, would be part of the delegation to proclaim the constitutional declaration of Kosovo after July 2. According to reports from the daily newspaper “Rilindja,” it was emphasized that: *“The constitutional declaration of the delegates of the Kosovo Assembly is a declaration of the people for equality and full subjectivity of Kosovo and the Albanians in the Federation or Confederation of Yugoslavia; it is a victory, a historic act of expressing the democratic will of the entire population, and the beginning of the end of inequality and injustices.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 1.

After the discussion of the agenda and the approval of three amendments, the reading of the constitutional declaration began outside the assembly hall, as Serbian forces had prevented entry into the Kosovo Assembly. (Imeraj, 2021: 186). As a result, the delegates who arrived before 10:00 in the outdoor area of the assembly gathered, and delegate Muharrem Shabani read the declaration with the following text: *“Based on the resolute will expressed throughout Kosovo by the majority of the population of Kosovo, this will sublimated in the Declaration of the Assembly of Kosovo for the new constitutional position of Kosovo, and based on the reality and position of the Kosovo Assembly as the highest representative and constitutional authority of power and self-governance in Kosovo, the Assembly of Kosovo solemnly proclaims: The Constitutional Declaration on Kosovo as an independent and equal entity within the Federation of Yugoslavia as an equal subject with other units in the federation.”* (ASHAK, 2.VII.1990/2 korrik 1990: 3). After the reading of the declaration, five points were presented,

3 Muharrem Shabani was a delegate of the constitutional declaration of July 2, 1990, and the reader of the declaration. In addition, Muharrem Shabani also served as a deputy of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija (KSAK) during the years 1989-1990. As a result of being part of this significant legal act for Kosovo, he was forced to live abroad during the 1990s.

which defined the legal status of Kosovo, a status declared by the delegates as an equal entity in Yugoslavia, where the assembly held in Kaçanik would later declare Kosovo a Republic of Yugoslavia.⁴ Below are the five points of the constitutional declaration of July 2:

1. This declaration expresses and proclaims the original constitutional position of the population of Kosovo and of this Assembly as an act of political self-determination within Yugoslavia.
2. This Assembly, declaring Kosovo as an equal unit in Yugoslavia, based on the principles of authentic democracy respecting the will of people and human and national collectives, awaits the confirmation of this constitutional act in the Constitution of Yugoslavia with full support from democratic opinion in Yugoslavia and the international community.
3. This Assembly confirms Kosovo and its new constitutional position as a political-constitutional community and common political-constitutional position of the citizens and equal nationalities of Kosovo, where Albanians, as the majority of the population of Kosovo and one of the most numerous peoples in Yugoslavia, along with Serbs and others in Kosovo, are considered a people-nation and not a national minority.
4. Meanwhile, until the definitive legal application of this Constitutional Declaration, the Assembly and the governing bodies of Kosovo will base their relations in the constitutional order of Yugoslavia on the existing Constitution of Yugoslavia and not on the amendments to the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Serbia from 1989, thus also annulled is the decision of the Kosovo Assembly dated March 23, 1989, regarding the approval of these amendments.

⁴ The Assembly of Kaçanik was held on September 7, 1990, where the location of the meeting in Kaçanik was a result of the delegates being persecuted by Serbian forces. Thus, they decided that the meeting would take place in Kaçanik, due to its proximity to the border with Macedonia. The Assembly of Kaçanik adopted the new constitution of Kosovo, which would be known as the Constitution of Kaçanik.

5. The Assembly of Kosovo, until the new Constitution of Kosovo is adopted, will communicate publicly with this name, simultaneously referring to the social-political community of which it is the organ, only as Kosovo. (ASHAK, 2 korrik 1990, Dokumenti Nr. 010-22/90: 1-2).

As a result of the situation created by the constitutional declaration, we see significant opposition from Serbian authorities to obstruct the work of the delegates. This is also evident from the president of the Kosovo Assembly, Gjorgje Bozhoviç⁵, who attempted to hinder the work of the delegates, even preventing them from entering the internal premises of the Kosovo Assembly. Reports from the newspaper Rilindja emphasized the following regarding the created situation: *“Yesterday, in the courtyard in front of the building of the Kosovo Assembly, the joint meeting of the three chambers of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo concluded. With the decision of 114 delegates, later also signed by Ali Shabani, chairman of the Federation of the Municipalities of Kosovo, this meeting was chaired by delegate Bujar Gjurgjealo..., and the declarations were made around the four points of the agenda from the previous meeting that had also been interrupted under extraordinary conditions and based on the arbitrariness of the chairman of the assembly, Gjorgje Bozhoviç.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 1). This kind of treatment was also observed after July 2, where the majority of delegates would be forced to flee due to persecution by Serbian forces.

Anti-Constitutional and Anti-Democratic Measures of Serbia Against Kosovo Delegates

With the constitutional declaration, we also have the abolition of the suppression of autonomy, where regarding this event, the newspaper

5 Gjorgje Brozhoviç was the chairman of the Assembly of Kosovo. He attempted to obstruct the work of the delegates from Kosovo, as observed on June 20, when he interrupted the Assembly meeting twice in succession in a non-democratic manner. He also tried to prevent the meeting on July 2, declaring that the meeting should be held on July 5, since July 2 was the date of the Serbian referendum. Nevertheless, the delegates unanimously rejected the decision of the chairman of the Assembly of Kosovo and held the meeting on July 2, 1990, outside the hall of the Assembly of Kosovo.

Rilindja emphasized that: *“Muharrem Shabani read the constitutional declaration of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo..., Kosovo is declared an independent and equal subject of the future Yugoslav federation or confederation, and dialogue is accepted only on the basis of equality with all other peoples of Yugoslavia. With this, the decisions of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo of March 23, 1989, are annulled.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 2). However, despite this, the decisions of July 2 would not be recognized, marking the beginning of a new period in the political sphere in Kosovo.⁶ This led Serbia to act with anti-democratic measures against the democratic decisions of the delegates from Kosovo.

The created situation also resulted in measures against delegates from Kosovo. This led to anti-constitutional and anti-democratic measures from Serbia. As a result, the Assembly of Kosovo was suspended, and measures were taken to suppress the Albanian-language education. Thus, we see that: *“Following the declaration of the constitutional declaration by the 114 delegates of Kosovo on July 2, 1990, anti-constitutional and illegal measures continued that have no support or legitimacy in any legal act of Serbia or Yugoslavia. The measures for the suspension of the Assembly of Kosovo, the Executive Council as the legitimate government of Kosovo, and other provincial bodies, as well as the takeover of media in the Albanian language, are a scandalous act that cannot be done in any legal state in the world, much less in a European state that is also a signatory of the United Nations Charter and international declarations that guarantee the rights of people and nations. Yet, as you all know, the Assembly of Serbia undertook these measures, and what is even worse, it was supported by the Presidency of Yugoslavia, thus committing a shameful act that should cause embarrassment not only to the legal circles of the Federation but also to all its residents, even the*

⁶ After the decisions of July 2, measures against the Albanians in Kosovo began. As a result, this constitutional declaration would not be recognized, and Serbia would occupy Kosovo. This led Serbia to implement further measures in Kosovo, such as ethnic cleansing, involving the killing and expulsion of Albanians from Kosovo. Additionally, expulsions from schools began, with classes being held in private homes. This period would also be known as the period of the parallel system in Kosovo.

future generations." (AKK, BFI e Deklaratës Kushtetuese: 1). This created situation led to a new period, a period manifested by political destabilization in Kosovo, as well as in other spheres such as education, health, and generally in all social strata in Kosovo. This destabilizing situation would last until 1999. However, despite the anti-constitutional measures, the delegates gathered again in Kaçanik, drafted the constitution of Kosovo, which adopted the decisions of the constitutional declaration of Kosovo and declared Kosovo a republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Situation Created After the Decisions of July 2

After the decisions of July 2, we have the support for the constitutional declaration from political movements or parties in Kosovo, which were established at the end of 1989 and the beginning of 1990. This is also observed in the Democratic Movement of Kosovo and the Peasant Party, which welcomed the constitutional declaration. Reports from the newspaper Rilindja emphasized that: "The LDK⁷ and PF⁸ of Kosovo support the constitutional declaration for Kosovo as an independent and equal unit within Yugoslavia, as an expression of the will of the people of Kosovo and an act of its political self-determination." Furthermore, it was stated: "*We salute the historic decisions of the Kosovo delegates. With this phrase, the LDK of the village of Xerxe, the PR of the village of Besi, the leadership of the LDK of the Muhaxher neighborhood in Pristina, the workers of the SP of the Museum of the Revolution of Nations and nationalities of Kosovo, the SP of OEA «Ivo Lola Ribar» in Pristina, the SP of NP of KBI of Peja, and many individuals extended their congratulations.*" (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 4, 1990, 4-5). As a result, we see a coordination of political ideas among political structures in Kosovo.

7 **LDK:** was founded on December 23, 1989, initially as the Democratic Movement of Kosovo and later as the Democratic League of Kosovo. Ibrahim Rugova was elected its president, coming from a group of writers from Kosovo.

8 **PF:** The Peasant Party of Kosovo (PP in Albanian short meaning PF – Partia Fshatare) was a party formed in 1990, during the period of the establishment of democratic parties in Kosovo.

Support for the decisions of July 2⁹ is also evident among the independent journalist unions. From this, we see that: *“The Independent Union of Journalism NSHG Rilindja accepts the constitutional declaration of the Assembly of Kosovo, proclaimed on 2.07.1990, in Pristina,... we consider this constitutional declaration the best solution for the status of Kosovo in the Yugoslav Federation or Confederation.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 5). However, we will see a counter-reaction from Serbia, which decides to close the newspaper Rilindja, as a result of its positions regarding the issue of Kosovo, where Rilindja supports the decisions of July 2 and all national aspects. On the other hand, we also have the Student Union of Pristina, which supports the decision of the constitutional declaration, stating: *“The Independent Union of Students of UP warmly welcomes the historic decision of the delegates of the Assembly of Kosovo, who, respecting the legitimate demands and will of the People, annulled the constitution of tanks and simultaneously declared Kosovo an independent community equal to other units in the federation and confederation of Yugoslavia.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 1). The same can be observed from the Islamic Community¹⁰, which was fully in agreement with the constitutional declaration, as seen in a report from the Imam of Prizren, stating: *“The Imams of Prizren of Albanian, Turkish, and Muslim nationality support the popular demands for full subjectivity of Kosovo in the Yugoslav Federation (Confederation) and for the recognition of the status of the Albanian nation in Yugoslavia.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 4, 1990, 1). Thus, the agreement among political structures, society, education, and religious communities was an ideal coordination of Kosovo’s steps toward realizing their aspirations.

On the other hand, there were also oppositions to the constitutional declaration of July 2 in Kosovo from the LSPP of Kosovo, which stated: *“The*

9 Support for the constitutional declaration of Kosovo was evident in almost all municipalities of Kosovo. This declaration was seen as democratic and equitable, and citizens sent various telegrams to the delegates after July 2. This was observed in municipalities such as: Deçan, Shtime, Glogovc, Dragash, Podujevë, Serbicë, Prishtinë, Kaçanik, Lipjan, Ferizaj, Klinë, Rahovec, Vushtrri, and Mitrovicë.

10 The role of the Islamic Community, in addition to supporting the constitutional declaration of July 2, would also be for Albanian education. This is evident as mosques were opened for classes for students whose schools had been closed by Serbian forces.

Provincial Conference of the LSPP of Kosovo condemned today the yesterday's attempt by a group of delegates from the Provincial Assembly to proclaim Kosovo's independence on the streets. In a special statement from the conference, transmitted by Tanjug, it is stated that this is a shameful act, a betrayal, and an attempt of an unusual parliamentary coup and an assault against the constitutional order of the country and its integrity and sovereignty. Such an attempt is illegitimate and should be annulled, as it is directed against the integrity of Serbia, Yugoslavia, and against the common life in Kosovo," the statement says. (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 1). Thus, we see that the Serbian mobilization was organized against the constitutional declaration of July 2, through its loyal factions in Kosovo, which proclaimed that this declaration was a violation of the Yugoslav constitution, while in fact, Serbia had distanced itself from the principles of the Yugoslav constitution, which it abandoned on March 23, 1989.

Expectations After the Decisions of July 2 in Yugoslavia and the International Sphere

The created situation brought about a new scenario, as the Balkans began to destabilize and Yugoslavia started to disintegrate. As a result of this, we would later see the secession from Yugoslavia of countries like Croatia and Slovenia. However, how this act was viewed by foreign countries can be seen in reports from Reuters, which stated:

"In the declaration of the provincial assembly, it is stated that Kosovo will be independent and equal within the framework of the Yugoslav Federation (Reuters),... This step toward independence represents a provocation to Serbia's efforts. However, the legal status of this document is unclear since it was adopted after the delegates were not allowed to enter the building of the Assembly of Kosovo." (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 4, 1990, 1). It is noted that Kosovo's legal status¹¹

11 The legal and constitutional status of Kosovo has undergone numerous changes since 1945. In the 1945 Yugoslav Constitution, Kosovo was a subject within Serbia, known as Kosmet. In the period of the 1963 Constitution, the name Kosmet was removed, and it was designated as a province without autonomous rights, remaining under Serbia. With the start of constitutional changes in 1967, following the overthrow of Ranković

was still unclear as a result of the legal transitions it was undergoing during the period of legal-constitutional changes in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

On the other hand, on July 2, 1990, the situation in Kosovo was also discussed in Slovenia regarding Kosovo's constitutional declaration, where it was noted: *“Exactly half of the deputies of the Slovenian Assembly, 120 of them, decided that, with 55 votes against and 16 abstentions, the agenda of today's meeting should include the debate on the proposal of the declaration of complete sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia, a proposal from a group of delegates from DEMOS.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 3, 1990, 4). This situation was a point of discussion as it was a situation created within the SFRY, where Slovenia was also present.

The created situation also led to a new political stance in other republics of the SFRY. Republics such as Macedonia and Montenegro welcomed the decision of the constitutional declaration of July 2, noting:

“Congratulations and best wishes for the decisions of the delegates of the three chambers of the Assembly of Kosovo are coming from all sides of Kosovo, from Montenegro, Macedonia, and many countries around the world, besides the warm words they had, they contained a message: Kosovo should move cautiously toward complete sovereignty in the Yugoslav federation-confederation, and the path should be democracy.” (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 5, 1990, 1). This is an important element that demonstrates that Kosovo was on the right path toward democracy and constitutionalism, and the decision to suppress autonomy was unconstitutional and anti-democratic from the leadership of Slobodan Milošević.

Support for the decisions of the constitutional declaration is also evident among Albanians who were in exile. This was observed in the city of Wetingen in Switzerland, where Albanians organized a meeting in

in Brioni in 1966, the policy of homogeneous Yugoslavism began, during which Kosovo became part of the constitutional changes, receiving autonomy in 1974. Finally, on March 23, 1989, autonomy was revoked, and Kosovo lost the autonomy it had gained in 1974.

support of the decisions of the constitutional declaration. Among other things, it was noted: *“The day before yesterday in Wentingen, Switzerland, a gathering of our compatriots, who are temporarily working in this canton, was held, where about 500 people gathered [...] In their gathering, which lasted four hours, they signed a supportive letter to the Assembly of Kosovo, which among other things states: 1. We boycott the referendum proclaimed by Serbia on July 1 and 2 of this year to begin drafting the constitution of the RSS, which takes away even the little autonomy from Kosovo, 2. We support the ASHA Declaration of Kosovo, 3. We strongly condemn the blocking of the work of the delegates of the KK by Serbia, 4. We invite the delegates of the KK to approve the decision for drafting the constitution of Kosovo at the decisive meeting of July 2.”* (ASHAK, Rilindja, July 4, 1990, 5). The determination in the three points, such as the rejection of the Serbian referendum, the support of the declaration, and the condemnation of the blocking of the delegates work, was evidence of the social organization of Albanians in exile for the interest of the national cause.

This event would also be commemorated a year later by the newspaper Bujku, as a result of the closure of the newspaper Rilindja, where among other things Bujku noted the points declared in the constitutional declaration, which it referred to as: *“The document that opened the way for the declaration of the Republic of Kosovo.”* (ASHAK, Bujku, September 7, 1991, 2).

This event would be remembered even years later by the newspaper Bota Sot, where it was noted: *“On July 2, 1990, by adopting the Constitutional Declaration, the sublime act, constitutional for the independence of Kosovo, which was carried out with commitment and high political responsibility, and with skill, bravery, and patriotism, I would like to congratulate you once again for the work you did through this letter.”* (ASHAK, Bota Sot, June 25, 2002, 25). This led to the commemoration of this event even years later in the Albanian press.

Conclusion

In addressing the topic “ **The Political Movement for the Republic of Kosovo – July 2, 1990**” the essential element was the establishment of archival sources for interpretation concerning the mentioned topic, as a result of which the event of July 2 stands out as one of the most significant events in the 1990s in the history of Kosovo. Thus, we arrive at several conclusions about July 2:

1. The event of July 2 resulted from the new constitution adopted by the Assembly of Serbia, and subsequently by the Assembly of Kosovo, which revoked the autonomy granted to Kosovo in 1974. This meant that Kosovo’s autonomy was suppressed, and this was voted on in the Assembly of Kosovo with the approval of the Assembly’s president, Gjorgje Brozhović.
2. July 2 marked the beginning of the movement for independence, resulting in the political mobilization of delegates from Kosovo, who unanimously decided that Kosovo should be an equal unit within Yugoslavia. Out of 111 delegates present, all signed the constitutional declaration read by Muharrem Shabani. This meeting was chaired by Bujar Gjurgjalo, who, along with Muharrem Shabani and Skënder Skenderi, would be part of the delegation to promote the constitutional declaration.
3. The Constitutional Declaration of July 2 contained five points, declaring the constitutional status of the population of Kosovo, proclaiming Kosovo as an equal unit within Yugoslavia, confirming Kosovo as a political-constitutional community with a political-constitutional status, while also being based on the 1974 Constitution of the SFRY, rejecting the decisions of March 23, 1989, and recognizing these decisions and names until the announcement of the new constitution.
4. The holding of the Assembly meeting was obstructed by the mayor, who did not allow delegates from Kosovo to enter the assembly. He declared the assembly meeting for July 5, on the pretext that on

July 1 and 2, 1990, a Serbian referendum was taking place, which was boycotted in Kosovo. In these circumstances, the Assembly was held in external premises, where, in the presence of 111 delegates, chaired by Bujar Gjurgjalo, the constitutional declaration of July 2 was read, declaring Kosovo as an equal unit within Yugoslavia. After the reading of the constitutional declaration, the signing by the 111 delegates followed, and later four others, who were part of the Assembly of Serbia, would also sign. The last signatory of the constitutional declaration was Ali Shabani, who became the 115th delegate to sign the declaration. This made the actions of the delegates constitutional and democratic, as out of 186 seats in the Assembly of Kosovo during the time of the SFRY, 115 voted in favor of Kosovo being an equal unit within Yugoslavia, while rejecting the constitution of March 1989, which was proclaimed by Slobodan Milošević.

5. The proclamation of the constitutional declaration was welcomed by the LDK and the Peasant Party, which, in a joint statement, congratulated the delegates of the Assembly of Kosovo for the act of the constitutional declaration. In addition, the merger of the SP and the newspaper Rilindja supported such an event, and as a result of this stance, the closure of Rilindja occurred, certainly influenced by the internal centralization of Serbian politics, including newspapers and televisions. Support for the decisions of July 2 also came from the Student Union of the University of Pristina, which welcomed the event of July 2 as a culminating act in the realization of the legal-constitutional rights of Kosovo. The event was also supported by expatriates, as evidenced by a case in Switzerland, as well as by states like Macedonia and Montenegro. Additionally, it was discussed in the Assembly by Slovenia and reported on by international media, such as Reuters.
6. The act of July 2 was strongly opposed by Serbia, which viewed it as an unconstitutional decision. The LSPP of Kosovo emphasized that the constitutional declaration of Kosovo was an act that undermined

the integrity of Serbia and Yugoslavia, and the people of Kosovo should distance themselves from such a decision.

7. The situation created after July 2 led to harsh measures from Serbian forces, which halted the work of the Assembly of Kosovo and its Executive Council, and began persecuting the delegates who signed the constitutional declaration.

Overall, the constitutional declaration of July 2, 1990, was one of the most significant events in the last years of the 20th century in Kosovo and marked the initiative for the independence of Kosovo.

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Appendix

Table 1: Delegates of the Constitutional Declaration of July 2nd.
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1. Bujar Gjurgjealo	23.Shemsedin Bytyqi	45. Hysni Salihu	67.Hanife Elshani	89.Skender Aliu
2. Refik Raka	24. Adem Vitia	46.Valentin Domniku	68.Kadrije Ismajli	90.Ethem Bekeri
3. Zymer Lulaj	25.Adem Mikullovc	47. Xhevat Pllana	69.Leonora Zajmi	91.Gani Vula
4. Osman Nuhiu	26.Hilmi Muhaxheri	48.Jusuf Konjufca	70.Besa Basha	92.Xhemajli Bajra
5.Muhamet Shabani	27. Halim Demaj	49. Rifat Rifati	71.Gjyljeta Mulla	93.Nezir Prokshi
6. Halit Kryeziu	28. Naser Gashi	50.Selim Krasniqi	72.Selvije Xhinaj	94.Veton Shala
7. Nazmi Kelmendi	29.Raif Ramabaja	51. Tafil Salihu	73.Gjemajl Dirdari	95.Nikoll Shabani
8. Milazim Vitia	30.Burim Muhaxheri	52.Ramadan Kelmendi	74.Nijazi Hoxha	96.Halil Maxhari
9. Nazif Berisha	31. Fetije Shala	53. Remzi Maliqi	75.Kadrija Dajqi Gashi	97. Isa Shefkriu
10. Maliqe Bajoki	32. Ilirjana Jusufi	54.Avdi Grajqevci	76. Imer Gashi	98.Zijadin Salihu
11. Agush Balaj	33. Adem Ademi	55. Isak Restelica	77. Mikereme Nishliu	99. Ali Shahini
12. Daut Jashanica	34. Veli Haxha	56.Fehmi Nallbani	78. Enver Pula	100.Gëzim Haklaj
13. Ismail Sahiti	35. Azem Neziri	57.Ruzhdi Bakalli	79.Sanije Çitaku	101.Jakup Bullatovci
14. Selami Gashi	36.Qamil Bajraktari	58. Bajram Arifi	80.Gani Miftari	102.Adnan Zhelta
15. Agim Morina	37. Ramiz Bacaj	59. Flamur Xhina	81.Jahir Bekteshi	103.Tafil Berisha

16. Ukë Gashi	38. Sabit Berisha	60.Gëzim Lipoveci	82.Maxhun Shala	104.Basri Bajrami
17. Feti Broçi	39. Lucia Laçi	61.Shemsi Hajdini	83.Gafur Kiseri	105.Mehmet Sahatçiu
18. Baki Krasniqi	40.Muharem Shabani	62.Feride Hyseni	84.Ilaz Ramajli	106.Bahri Abazi
19. Nezir Sallahu	41.Mehmet Ibrahimaj	63.Qefsere Boshnjaku	85.Sabri Hashani	107.Muhamet Ahmeti
20. Nazif Matoshi	42.Sokol Prokshi	64.Afijete Azizi	86.Skender Skenderi	108.Xhevat Zejnullahu
21.Nebih Abdullahu	43.Hysen Bashota	65.Refika Belegu	87.Qemajl Sahatçiu	109.Shaban Hashani
22. Islam Gashi	44.Murtez Rrahmani	66.Binaze Jashari	88.Qazim Kelmendi	110. Fatos Pula 111.Nazmi Fejzullahu