Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture

AK IV

Unmasking Corruption:
Conference on Transparency, Accountability and Justice

25th of October 2024,
Hotel Sirius (Pristina)

AGENDA

PANELISTS

MODERATORS

FRIDAY

25 TH OCTOBER

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09:30 – 10:00

Arrival & registration of participants

10:00 – 10:15

Conference Opening

Opening speech:

Dušan Radakovič,
Executive Director of NGO Aktiv
Miodrag Milićević,
Executive Director at NGO AKTIV

10:15 – 11:30

FIRST PANEL

Between Law and Practice: How Institutions Stand Against Corruption

This panel delves into the critical role that key institutions play in combating corruption in Kosovo, focusing on the intersection between legislation and real-world enforcement. The discussion will address the complexities of implementing transparency, accountability, and ethical governance. The panel will examine how each institution contributes to the broader fight against corruption—whether through enforcing anti-corruption measures, ensuring citizens' access to information, or protecting human rights and ethical conduct in public administration. It will highlight the successes and challenges faced by these bodies in holding public officials accountable, exposing gaps between the legal framework and everyday practices, and fostering a culture of integrity within institutions.
Panelists will share insights on the obstacles they encounter, including political pressures, resource limitations, and the need for greater public awareness. They will also explore strategies for improving coordination among institutions and discuss necessary reforms that could strengthen the rule of law and restore public confidence in Kosovo's governance.

MODERATOR

Goran Avramović
Editor-in-Chief of Radio and Television KIM from Caglavica

PANELISTS

Yll Buleshkaj
Director of the Agency for prevention of Corruption
Krenare Sogojeva Dërmaku
Commissioner for Information and Privacy (IPA)
Naim Qelaj
Ombudsperson of Kosovo

11:30 – 11:45

Short break with light refreshments

11:45 – 13:00

SECOND PANEL

Voice Against Silence: The Role of Media in Uncovering Corruption

This panel highlights the crucial role of journalism in uncovering corruption and fostering transparency in Kosovo. Featuring experienced investigative journalists, the discussion will delve into how the media has brought hidden corruption cases to the public's attention and the challenges they face in doing so. Panelists will explore the impact of their reporting on accountability and governance, including the methods they use to gather and verify sensitive information. The conversation will also address the obstacles journalists encounter—such as limited access to public records, political pressures, and threats to press freedom—and how they navigate these challenges while maintaining integrity and objectivity. Ultimately, the panel will underscore the importance of a free and independent media as a pillar of democratic society.

MODERATOR

Ardita Zejnullahu
Executive Director of AMPEK

PANELISTS

Berat Buzhala
Executive Director of Media Group Publico LLC, Journalist, Nacionale.com
Budimir Ničić
Executive Director of Media Center Caglavica, Journalist
Kreshnik Gashi
Editor-in-chief at KALLXO.com
Serbeze Haxhiaj
Investigative journalist; awarded on corruption, human rights and crime reporting

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Lunch Break

13:00 – 14:00

14:00 – 15:15

THIRD PANEL

Can the Civil Society be a Leader in the Fight Against Corruption?

In this panel, representatives from civil society and the prosecution will discuss the unique role that grassroots movements and community organizations can play in combating corruption in Kosovo. The conversation will focus on how civil society can not only hold institutions to account but also drive cultural change towards greater transparency and integrity. Panelists will consider whether civil society can take the lead in shaping anti-corruption reforms and what it takes to build trust between citizens, NGOs, and law enforcement. By exploring the successes, setbacks, and potential partnerships between civil society and prosecutorial bodies, the panel aims to assess the impact of citizen-driven efforts in the broader struggle against corruption.

MODERATOR

Zorica Vorgučić
Journalist and Editor of KIM Radio

PANELISTS

Ehat Miftaraj
Executive Director of Kosovo Law Institute (KLI)

Shqipdon Fazliu
Prosecutor in the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor

Sanja Vuković
Professor, Activist, Network for Civic Activism

Short break with light refreshments

15:15 – 15:30

15:30 – 16:30

FINAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- **Open Discussion with Participants**
- **Summary of Panel Conclusions**

Conference Closing

16:30 – 17:00

PANELISTS & MODERATORS

PANELISTS

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Yll Buleshkaj is an experienced professional with demonstrated over two decades of history working for national and international organizations and institutions. Buleshkaj professional experience varies from anti-corruption, financial oversight of political parties, good governance, electoral and political affairs, management to civil society mobilization. Buleshkaj in present is leading the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, previously the Office for Political Parties, earlier managed multi-million-dollar USAID financed projects with IFES, acted as specialist for UN missions in charge for organizing elections in Iraq and Afghanistan, lead OSCE project promoting good governance, women and youth participation, and was part of numerous civil society processes in Kosovo.

Krenare Sogojeva Dërmaku is the Commissioner for Information and Privacy. For more than a decade she has headed the Legal Department in the Ministry of Defense, while in the Office of the Prime Minister she has been the coordinator of the legislative roundtable at the Government Coordination Secretariat and Senior Legal Officer in the Legal Office. As a law graduate in the University of Prishtina, with postgraduate studies in European law at the European College of Parma in Italy, she has a long experience in drafting, interpretation of laws and in providing legal advices, including knowledge in the field of human rights and the field of defense and security. Mrs. Sogojeva-Dermaku is married and has two children.

Naim Qelaj graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Prishtina in 1998 and completed the bar exam in 2006. He is a lawyer by profession and practiced law in Prizren for many years. From 2001 to 2005, he worked as a legal advisor at the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (KMDLNJ), where he provided free legal aid to all community members living in Kosovo, regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity. Between 2006 and 2017, as a lawyer, he represented sensitive cases and highlighted discriminatory actions, advocating for gender equality and women's rights. From 2018 to 2020, he served as the National Coordinator against Domestic Violence during his term as Deputy Minister of Justice. In this role, he strengthened the role of institutions in efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality in the treatment of victims of violence. He led the project to create an electronic system for tracking domestic violence cases, called the "Integrated Database for Domestic Violence Cases." He also contributed as a member of the drafting group for the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and organized the conference "Access to Justice for Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence" held in 2019 in Prishtina. On September 28, 2020, Mr. Naim Qelaj was elected as the Public Defender by the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo for a five-year term.

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Kreshnik Gashi started working as a journalist in 2007 in the newspaper Kosova Sot. In 2012, Kreshnik Gashi joined Internews Kosovo, first in the position of Investigative Journalist and then in the position of Editor and Moderator of Justice in Kosovo. He studied at the University of Pristina at the Faculty of Law and is currently pursuing his Master's degree in Criminal Justice at the same university. During his career, he was noted for his investigations of corruption scandals in the judiciary, the prosecutor's office and the police. From the research findings published in Justice in Kosovo so far, dozens of indictments have been filed against state officials, including judges, prosecutors and police. During his career for his work in journalism, Gashi has been awarded with four prestigious awards from the UNDP Anti-Corruption Agency, the Association of Journalists and the European Union.

Berat Buzhala is a Kosovar journalist, publicist, and former politician. He is the founder and owner of the media portal Gazeta Express and the television channel T7, both of which are among the most influential media outlets in Kosovo. He is known for his critical views on political developments in Kosovo and the region, as well as for his analytical approach to media reporting. Buzhala also served as a member of the Kosovo Assembly with the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) before returning to journalism.

Budimir Ničić has been the director, editor and journalist of the Medija Centar in Čaglavica/ Çagllavicë since 2008. He started working as a journalist in 2002 at KIM Radio. Since 2010, he is the author and presenter of the show "Slobodno srpski", which is produced by the Medija Centar. He has been a correspondent for the Serbian Voice of America service from Kosovo since 2008. For seven years he was the president of the Association of Serbian Journalists in Kosovo.

Serbeze Haxhiaj is an investigative journalist and news editor based in Pristina, Kosovo, who focuses on corruption, human rights, security issues, religious extremism, terrorism, and war crimes. She is currently an editor at Radio Television of Kosovo and a journalist for the Balkaninsight.
Haxhiaj previously worked for the daily newspapers Rilindja, Zeri, Lajm, and Koha Ditore and was the correspondent in Pristina for Le Courrier des Balkans. She has recently been published in The Financial Times, Der Standard, Neue Zurcher Zeitung, Voice of America, World Politics Review, and Al Jazeera. She also has worked for five years as a researcher for Navanti, an American research, and analysis company.
For her reporting on war crimes, human rights, organized crime, corruption, and violence against women, she has received 19 awards from various local and international organizations, including European Union in 2020.

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Shqipdon Fazliu is a prosecutor in the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor of Kosovo, known for his candidacy for the position of Chief State Prosecutor in 2022. He has extensive experience in the Kosovo legal system and has been actively involved in important legal proceedings. Fazliu has contributed to the advancement of justice in Kosovo and is dedicated to upholding the rule of law, particularly in ensuring transparent and fair legal processes within the prosecutorial system. His career reflects a strong commitment to maintaining the integrity of Kosovo's judiciary.

Ehat Miftaraj has finished the Law School at the Pristina University, while he finished the Master of Laws in Intercultural Human Rights at Saint Thomas University School of Law, Miami, Florida. He has attended numerous professional training courses provided by various Law Enforcement Agencies regarding the justice reform, criminal justice, human rights, organized crime, corruption, money laundering, etc. Between 2005 and 2011, he was Head/Director of the Ministry of Justice Legal Office Department and Director of the Department for International Legal Cooperation. Since 2005 until 2020, Mr. Miftaraj continuously was member of the working groups established by the MOJ in drafting rule of law sector legislation. Mr. Miftaraj from 2011 to 2015, has worked previously as Director of the Unit for Evaluation of the Prosecution Performance at the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council. Since 2015, he joined civil sector in Kosovo.

Sanja Vuković is a primary school teacher and a prominent civil society activist, dedicated to building a just, open, and transparent society in Kosovo. As a member of the Civic Activism Network, she actively advocates for the enhancement of social values and the rights of all citizens, especially focusing on empowering members of all non-majority communities in Kosovo through education, legal protection, and the advocacy of their rights. She is the author of several reports and publications in the field of protection and promotion of the rights of non-majority communities in Kosovo, language rights, the fight against corruption, and youth policy

MODERATORS

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Goran Avramović born in 1972 in Kragujevac, began his journalism career in the mid-1990s. He first worked in his hometown and then moved to Athens, Greece, where he continued his work. After that, Goran continued his career in Kosovo. Throughout his career, he has written for various newspapers and online portals, as well as radio and television stations. He has been the long-time editor-in-chief of Radio Kim, formerly RTV Kim, located in Čaglavica, a municipality in Gračanica. Additionally, Goran is the author and co-author of several award-winning documentaries and television series. In his personal life, he is married and a father of two daughters.

Ardita Zejnullahu is the Executive Director of the Association of Broadcast Media in Kosovo. Ardita is an accomplished media professional with over 15 years extensive experience across the full spectrum of media freedom and communications laws from both the regulatory and private commercial perspective as well as public sector perspective.
Ardita holds a BA degree in Economics & Management from the University of Pristina; LLM in Comparative European and International Law from the European University Institute in Florence; M.St research degree from the University of Oxford - Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (Program in Comparative Media Law and Policy) and MSx in Leadership from the Stanford University (Stanford Graduate School of Business). Ardita currently serves as the President of the Board of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation.

SECOND PANEL
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THIRD PANEL
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Zorica Krstić Vorgučić is an experienced journalist and editor at Radio Kim, engaged in journalism since 2003, with a special focus on political and social issues. For many years, she was the host of the political program “Dogovor?!”. Since August of last year, Zorica has been reporting for Al Jazeera Balkans, providing in-depth analysis of current events and topics of significance for the region. Additionally, since March of this year, she has actively been writing for Nedeljnik NIN, contributing to critical thinking on social and political issues. Her commitment to journalism and objective reporting makes her a significant figure in the media landscape of Kosovo.