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By: Prof. Dr. Lisen Bashkurti

Albania's chief negotiator who secured consensus for a judicial reform

For almost twenty five years I have dealt with negotiations, its history, theoretical base and its various practices and scenarios. To this diplomatic instrument I have dedicated a scientific monograph that has been re-published a few times in Albania and abroad.

Based on this knowledge, experience acquired over the years I have to say with a full conviction that Mr. Ilir Meta has recently been revealed as the best Albanian negotiator in his role as one of the leading negotiators in the process that led to the approval of Albania's Judicial Reform.

Healthy equilibrium levels in the Assembly

Mr. Ilir Meta as Chairman of the National Assembly maintained his neutral posture and remained above all parties. He avoided with great intelligence and persistence every idea, behavior and conflictive action that came from both political parties. He allowed a space for ideas, expressions and suggestions from all of them, as he avoided taking into account individuals and their political label. As a genuine and effective equilibrium tsar, Meta kept the debates within the walls of National Assembly, with admirable silence, maturity, self-control, high level of ethics and admired communication skills. Meta did not make enemies in the National Assembly. He earned the trust and confidence of all sides. The parliamentary environment has proved to be fundamental in order to generate a favorable negotiations' atmosphere.

The President's substitute

Throughout the long debates that led to the approval of Judicial Reform, Ilir Meta has replaced admirably, the constitutional role of the President of Albania. He replaced without any shadow of a doubt the role of the President of Republic, with his actions that stand above any particular political group. Meanwhile the president without any political party often fell in the traps of particularities, meaning his preferences and political sides. Mr. Meta, although he is a party chairman, kept a subtle balance and stayed away from political and ideological preferences with a great sense of self control. Therefore Mr. Ilir Meta, among all negotiating parties, became: the symbol of national unity and not of national divide; the icon of cooperation and not of confrontation; the emblem of cohesion and not of clashes; the source of dialogue and not conflict; the assurance of trust and not of skepticism.

Respectful with the Press

Meta has been present in the media as much as it was necessary to inform the public, without creating an informational blackout or taking an advantage to become a media speculations' maniac. On many times Meta became a point of reference to Albania media. While appearing on key moments Meta emerged as the most trusted ally of the news media. With effective media appearances, transparent, brief statements, official language, Mr. Meta is more than anyone else very close to western leaders when it comes to his appropriate relations with the media.

A public ally

The weight of Ilir Meta in the negotiations process of Judicial Reform relied upon his relations with the public. It appears that Meta's performance is highly interconnected with public issues, with public relations and with public communications. For a master negotiator his relations with the public are fundamental, they keep a leading negotiator at the game and raise his trust on every situation or condition. The public is a compass of negotiations; Meta has all heartedly secured such an alliance with the public.

Cooperative with International Community

Throughout the history of Albania's democracy in transition, International presence has been highly present. However in the case of the recent Justice Reform the international players have been co-authors and at times acquired an irreplaceable priority. These reasons are well known. Mr. Meta has understood really well how to mend bridges of communications among international actors and national factors as well as his intermediary role among many diverse factors. Meta emerges as a balanced guardian of sovereignty and integration. He did not fall prey of sovereignty advocates or a victim of universality advocates. Meta was neither a snobby

politician nor a public leader engulfed into xenophobia. A well balanced integrity without any complexity kept Mr. Meta very active with all international actors.

A master of the code

Able negotiators create a code that eliminates lack of confidence, hate and animosity. This code is substance and method at the same time. Meta shaped a special code of content for the Justice Reform. He was the only one that emphasized that Justice Reform cannot be sacrificed for particular individuals; however all are equal before the law. With this approach Meta softly imposed a psycho-emotional relaxation during this process. Meanwhile with the projection that such a reform is for thirty years and has no electoral aims Meta has wide opened the views of negotiating parties, to the public opinion and international community.

Trustworthy to the cause

A negotiator is a man with a clear cause. Mr. Meta is a leader that has constantly maintained the original political cause that encouraged him to establish the Socialist Integration Movement (SIM) - the Euro Atlantic and European Integration of Albania. Meta became a symbol of persistent efforts of integration. The philosophy, programs, wishes and needs for Albania's Integration have found in Mr. Meta the best representative and spokesperson; not only making promises but he is also someone who keeps promises. For a negotiator of a country such as Albania, today an integration philosophy is vital. This has given to Mr. Meta the leverage of a public figure that stands between Tirana, Washington and Brussels.

Initiator of ethics

A negotiator must have a high level of ethics and to initiate it among the negotiating parties, in the media and public opinion. Meta established these principles of ethics during the Judicial Reform process while safeguarding: self control, communication ethics, confidence for success; and refused to support party rhetoric, avoided being a political protagonist, refused media provocations, refrained from making hypothetical analysis and made no comments on the attitude of civil society. In the history of Albanian Democracy in transition justice reform closes the gate of transition. As this period comes to an end, Ilir Meta emerges as Albania's Chief negotiator.