

Request for Meeting in State Department

What: 30 minute meeting for leader of the leading Albanian opposition party to discuss upcoming elections in Albania with State Department *Political Appointee*.
When: Thursday, April 27 or Friday, April 28.
Why: Seeking statement of concern that Albanian elections be conducted only in a free and fair manner. The opposition coalition is concerned about election fraud.
Who: Lulzim Basha, leader of the Democratic Party of Albania and Fatmir Mediu, leader of the Republican Party of Albania.

The Democratic Party of Albania (DPA) is Albania's leading conservative party and leader of the opposition. The DPA is led by Lulzim Basha, a former mayor of Albania's capital city, Tirana. Mr. Basha also served as Interior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Public Works, Transport, and Telecommunications.

The DPA stands for free and a fair election, open markets, zero tolerance for corruption, and views the United States as Albania's number one friend and strategic ally. If the DPA is victorious, they will seek to develop strong ties with the Trump Administration. Mr. Basha praised President Trump's victory as an "act of love for the champions of freedom," attended his inauguration, and led an effort to name a street after President Trump in a suburb of the capital city. The DPA seeks to defeat the current Socialist Party-led government, run by Prime Minister Edi Rama, in June 18 elections. Under the leadership of the Socialist Party, the DPA says Albania's government and institutions have been degraded by corrupt officials and negative influence from far left entities allied with George Soros and his Open Society Foundations.

Upcoming Elections and Concerns about Electoral Integrity. Elections in Albania are currently scheduled for June 18. Mr. Basha has called for a caretaker government to oversee the elections, out of concern that money and influence from Soros-allied entities that support the Prime Minister and his Socialist party-led government will compromise the integrity of the elections. Furthermore, Albania has long served as a base from which criminal entities smuggle illicit substances to the rest of Europe. According to the DPA, the Rama government has brought drug lords and crime bosses into the Parliament and ministries to rig elections. The DPA and opposition coalition may choose to boycott the June 18 elections, resulting in the election being delayed. Rama's supporters are pressing for elections to be held regardless of the concerns.

State Was Visited by Rama's Foreign Minister on 4/2. Under Secretary Tom Shannon effectively assisted the Rama's re-election effort by stating the elections should go forward as scheduled without mentioning election fraud difficulties: "Ambassador Thomas A. Shannon, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, met today with Albanian Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati to address common interests in our bilateral relationship and the region. The Under Secretary reaffirmed the close partnership between the United States and Albania, our strong support for Albania's judicial reform efforts, and our shared commitment to democratic values, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. *Ambassador Shannon also emphasized the importance of all political parties in Albania participating in the upcoming parliamentary elections [emphasis supplied].* This unqualified endorsement of the current election process by Shannon does not take into account election fraud difficulties which will be detailed by the visitors.

This material is distributed by Barnes & Thornburg LLP on behalf of the Democratic Party of Albania. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Request for Meeting in State Department

What: 30 minute meeting for leader of the leading Albanian opposition party to discuss upcoming elections in Albania with State Department *Political Appointee*.
When: Thursday, April 27 or Friday, April 28.
Why: Seeking statement of concern that Albanian elections be conducted only in a free and fair manner. The opposition coalition is concerned about election fraud.
Who: Lulzim Basha, leader of the Democratic Party of Albania and Fatmir Mediu, leader of the Republican Party of Albania.

The Democratic Party of Albania (DPA) is Albania's leading conservative party and leader of the opposition. The DPA is led by Lulzim Basha, a former mayor of Albania's capital city, Tirana. Mr. Basha also served as Interior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Public Works, Transport, and Telecommunications.

The DPA stands for free and a fair election, open markets, zero tolerance for corruption, and views the United States as Albania's number one friend and strategic ally. If the DPA is victorious, they will seek to develop strong ties with the Trump Administration. Mr. Basha praised President Trump's victory as an "act of love for the champions of freedom," attended his inauguration, and led an effort to name a street after President Trump in a suburb of the capital city. The DPA seeks to defeat the current Socialist Party-led government, run by Prime Minister Edi Rama, in June 18 elections. Under the leadership of the Socialist Party, the DPA says Albania's government and institutions have been degraded by corrupt officials and negative influence from far left entities allied with George Soros and his Open Society Foundations.

Upcoming Elections and Concerns about Electoral Integrity. Elections in Albania are currently scheduled for June 18. Mr. Basha has called for a caretaker government to oversee the elections, out of concern that money and influence from Soros-allied entities that support the Prime Minister and his Socialist party-led government will compromise the integrity of the elections. Furthermore, Albania has long served as a base from which criminal entities smuggle illicit substances to the rest of Europe. According to the DPA, the Rama government has brought drug lords and crime bosses into the Parliament and ministries to rig elections. The DPA and opposition coalition may choose to boycott the June 18 elections, resulting in the election being delayed. Rama's supporters are pressing for elections to be held regardless of the concerns.

State Was Visited by Rama's Foreign Minister on 4/2. Under Secretary Tom Shannon effectively assisted the Rama's re-election effort by stating the elections should go forward as scheduled without mentioning election fraud difficulties: "Ambassador Thomas A. Shannon, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, met today with Albanian Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati to address common interests in our bilateral relationship and the region. The Under Secretary reaffirmed the close partnership between the United States and Albania, our strong support for Albania's judicial reform efforts, and our shared commitment to democratic values, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. *Ambassador Shannon also emphasized the importance of all political parties in Albania participating in the upcoming parliamentary elections [emphasis supplied].* This unqualified endorsement of the current election process by Shannon does not take into account election fraud difficulties which will be detailed by the visitors.

This material is distributed by Barnes & Thornburg LLP on behalf of the Democratic Party of Albania. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.