

VOA's Albanian-language TV Program Celebrates 10th Anniversary

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Voice of America

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Ditari, the Voice of America's (VOA) popular Albanian-language TV news program, is celebrating its 10th anniversary, with leaders of Albania and Kosovo praising the daily show for its comprehensive news and information.

"I watch VOA Albanian because it is the only media that reports on all the Albanians, whether in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia or the Diaspora," said Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha in a statement. "This is very useful to me. No other media does it ... I watch the show whenever I can."

"Kosovo citizens have lived with VOA," said Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu in an interview at his office in Pristina, Kosovo. "VOA has become their voice ... VOA's message has always been one of peace and freedom."

VOA Director Danforth W. Austin said *Ditari* "is an example of how VOA continues to play a critical function of informing people around the world with the fact-based news they need."

Ditari debuted on November 9, 1999, shortly after NATO intervened to halt Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosovo. Today, VOA Albanian, with radio, television and Internet, leads other international broadcasters in the region, with an estimated 63.8 percent of adults in Kosovo and 45.6 percent of adults in Albania tuning in weekly.

About 88 percent of Kosovo's 1.8 million population are ethnic Albanian. Albania's population is about 3.6 million.

Ditari is a daily, 30-minute show. VOA Albanian also broadcasts one hour a day on radio; all programs are available on the Internet at www.VOANews.com/Albanian. VOA Albanian began on May 13, 1943. The broadcasts were discontinued in 1945 and then reestablished in 1951.

About The Voice of America

The Voice of America, which first went on the air in 1942, is a multimedia international broadcasting service funded by the U.S. Government through the Broadcasting Board of Governors. VOA broadcasts approximately 1,500 hours of news, information, educational, and cultural programming every week to an estimated worldwide audience of more than 125 million people. Programs are produced in 45 languages.

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Voice of America. The Voice of America, which first went on the air in 1942, is a multimedia international broadcasting service funded by the U.S. Government through the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

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