Our humane approach was recognised by the international community which started a 78 days military campaign to drive out of Kosovo the Serb paramilitary and security forces of Serbia.

It has to be stated that we are not a war mongering nation, and such we engaged seriously in all aspects of dialogue that were initiated and at times held during the war. To this aim, under my leadership, we participated in the Raboullet talks and signed the agreement for peace and self government in Kosovo. Serbia, contrary to signing it, increased the level of attacks towards the civilians. After the war was over in 1999, the UN took over Kosovo and was in charge for the administration of Kosovo until 17 February 2008 when Kosovo declared its independence.

International negotiations began in 2006 to determine the final status of Kosovo, as envisaged under UN Security Council Resolution 1244. After the talks were exhausted in February 2007, Ahtisaari delivered a draft status settlement proposal to leaders in Kosovo and Serbia, the basis for a draft UN Security Council Resolution which proposed 'supervised independence' for the Kosovo. A draft resolution, backed by the United States, the United Kingdom and other European members of the Security Council, was presented and rewritten several times to try to accommodate Russian concerns.

After many weeks of discussions at the UN, the United States, United Kingdom and other European members of the Security Council formally 'discarded' a draft resolution backing Ahtisaari's proposal on 20 July 2007, having failed to secure Russian backing. Beginning in August, a "Troika" consisting of negotiators from the European Union, the United States and Russia launched a new effort to reach a status outcome acceptable to both Kosovo and Serbia. Yet again, Russia did not approve the outcome of the talks about the supervised independence for Kosovo. These long processes of talks ended on 17 February 2008 when the freely elected Kosovo Parliament declared the Independence of Kosovo.



Hashim Thaçi, Prime Minister of Kosovo.

> "I remain confident that in the future Serbia will be amongst the countries to recognise Kosovo."

The Star: **We know that during the Kosovo war hundreds died and around 800,000 people were displaced. Please tell us about the war crimes committed during the war.**

Hashim Thaçi: The systematic repression of Kosovo Albanians from Serbian regime was not a new element, and was characterised by different forms in different times. However the mass scale offensive involving brutality, destruction of whole villages, terror, execution, ethnic cleansing and crimes started in the beginning of 1998. The situation continued to deteriorate where entire families where murdered and massacred by Serbian security forces, and entire villages destroyed and burned. As a consequence of these actions, approximately one million Kosovo Albanians were forced to leave Kosovo and take shelter in neigh-