

Beat: News

## Go ahead with the Process of Berlin and the regional market

### Merkel in Tirana

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**USPA NEWS** - German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Albanian Premier Edi Rama gave a joint press conference today in Tirana. The German Chancellor highlighted the importance of continuing with the initiative of the regional market.

“(Germany’s) relationship with Albania is very good. We can improve it further. I’d like to compliment Albania for the initiative of the judiciary reform”, Merkel said. “The opening of the negotiations with EU did not happen during the German presidency due to the Bulgarian veto, but we have invested a lot of energies. The cooperation has strengthened in many dimensions. We have talked about the start of work for the Freeway of Peace. I’d like to commend the initiative of the regional market. Not everyone has joined the initiative. Some have started, some are thinking to join the Process of Berlin. I’d like to underline that the Process of Berlin is not a replacement of EU membership”, Merkel said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel defended the achievements of the Berlin Process during a visit to Tirana, in one of her last tours abroad before she leaves office this Fall.

Merkel visited Serbia on Monday, while today she was hosted in Tirana by Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama. Bilateral meetings between the Chancellor and the leaders of other Western Balkan (WB) countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia – also took place in Tirana today.

In a press conference with Rama, Merkel refuted a journalist’s suggestion that the Berlin Process, initiated by her in 2014, might be considered a failure.

She stressed the main achievements of the initiative: meetings between leaders in the WB have become more common and are seen as normal, several infrastructure projects have started, including a highway connecting Kosovo with Serbia that will begin construction soon, youth and scholar exchanges and cooperation among civil societies in the region has increased.

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