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Obama Falsely Claims Kosovo Secession Involved UN-Backed Referendum

By Jason Ditz

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President Obama's recent speeches condemning the Crimean secession as much worse than anything else in recent history have raised a lot of eyebrows, as yesterday he bizarrely tried to portray the bloody US occupation of Iraq as much less of a deal.

But Obama appears now to be inventing events wholesale to try to rebrand them, claiming that in contrast to the Crimean secession, Kosovo seceded from Serbia after a referendum organized "in careful cooperation with the United Nations."

While Iraq may have been a bizarrely skewed interpretation of what happened, Kosovo is just a flat out lie. There was no referendum, UN organized or not, at any point around the 1999 NATO invasion of Kosovo through the 2001 imposition of secession and the 2008 declaration of independence.

Kosovo's provincial assembly did hold a referendum on the possibility of secession in 1991, but it was not done with UN backing, nor did the US or anyone else even recognize the result. Albania was the long state to recognize the vote, and it was never cited as justification in NATO's 1999 war.

The only other referendum to take place in Kosovo came in 2012, under Obama's watch. In that vote, 99% of Kosovar Serbs in several northern districts voted against being part of an independent Kosovo. As with the 1991 vote, the US rejected its validity.