EUROPEAN UNION
- BACKGROUND-

The EU in Kosovo

February 2008

Kosovo is a key priority for the European Union (EU) and the future of the Western Balkans lies firmly in its European perspective. In Kosovo the best way to move towards European integration is by creating a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo with full respect for the rule of law, cooperating peacefully with its neighbors and contributing to regional and European stability. This includes extensive measures to safeguard the future of all communities in Kosovo, thereby creating a basis for Kosovo's sustainable economic and political development. For that reason, the EU is taking a leading role in the international presence in Kosovo, in close coordination with local and other international actors.

The EU's presence in Kosovo is made up of three components with the same overall objective: to support the Kosovo authorities at all levels to meet European standards.

1) A *political* entity in the European Union Special Representative (EUSR), that is supporting the Kosovo authorities to meet its obligations and promoting European values (also foreseen to be double-hatted as International Civilian Representative);
2) An *operational* entity in the EULEX mission, that will support the Kosovo authorities in the wider area of Rule of Law;
3) A *reform driving* entity in the European Commission office that assists Kosovo in its long-term reform efforts, economic development, fosters Kosovo's regional integration and helps it realise its EU perspective.

The EU's efforts in Kosovo build on the significant support it has been providing over the past years. The EU is already the largest donor to Kosovo (nearly EUR 2 billion to date) and in the coming years (2007-2010) it will allocate more resources to Kosovo per capita than to any other place in the world (nearly EUR 330 million).

The EU is working in Kosovo on the understanding that there will be a major shift from international governance towards Kosovo governance. However, the international presence continues to provide strong guarantees and safeguards concerning community rights, cultural and religious heritage and the principles of the rule of law.

The international presence in Kosovo also includes an international military presence provided by NATO (KFOR), an OSCE mission, and major capacity building efforts by the World Bank, UNDP, the Council of Europe and other partners.

For more information:
www.consilium.europa.eu/kosovo

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EULEX KOSOVO

February 2008

In the framework of its comprehensive approach towards Kosovo the EU decided to launch, on 16 February 2008, an EU Rule of Law mission in Kosovo (EULEX KOSOVO). The objective of EULEX KOSOVO is to support the Kosovo authorities by monitoring, mentoring and advising on all areas related to the rule of law, in particular in the police, judiciary, customs and correctional services. This means that the mission will assist the Kosovo institutions, judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies in their progress towards sustainability and accountability and in further developing and strengthening an independent multi-ethnic justice system and multi-ethnic police and customs service. The key priorities of the mission are to address immediate concerns regarding protection of minority communities, corruption and the fight against organised crime.

The mission is conceived as a joint effort with local authorities, in line with the local ownership principle, with a view to foster a self sustainable judicial and administrative system in Kosovo, based on the rule of law and European standards. However, EULEX KOSOVO will have some limited correctional powers in the broader field of rule of law, in particular to investigate and prosecute serious and sensitive crimes.

EULEX KOSOVO will only assume its responsibilities after a build-up period foreseen for 120 days after its launch. This means that the United Nations mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will remain fully in charge until the end of this transition period, when the EU will step in to support the Kosovo authorities in their efforts to create a sustainable rule of law system.

Once it reaches full operational capability the mission will have around 1900 international police officers, judges, prosecutors and customs officials and approximately 1100 local staff and will be based in headquarters in Pristina or located throughout the judicial and police system in Kosovo. A contingency of around 300 police and border officials is foreseen but will only be deployed if deemed necessary. Yves de KERMABON (France) has been appointed Head of Mission of EULEX KOSOVO.

The EU Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo will provide local political guidance to EULEX KOSOVO Head of Mission, who will report to the Civilian Operations Commander in Brussels. The EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) will exercise, under the responsibility of the Council of the EU, political control and strategic direction of the mission.

The initial mandate is for 2 years but the mission is foreseen to be terminated when the Kosovo authorities have gained enough experience to guarantee that all members of society benefit from the rule of law. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to a period of sixteen months will be EUR 205 million.

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www.consilium.europa.eu/kosovo
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EUSR in KOSOVO

February 2008

Pieter Feith was appointed European Union Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo on 4 February 2008. His mandate, which runs until 28 February 2009, includes offering the EU's advice and support in the political process and promoting overall EU political coordination in Kosovo. The EUSR will be in the lead for implementing the policy objectives of the EU in Kosovo. These include implementing a settlement defining Kosovo's future status, with the aim of a stable, viable, peaceful democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo.

In Kosovo, the EUSR will work in close cooperation with the EU rule of law mission, EULEX KOSOVO and in this context the EUSR will provide political guidance to the EULEX Head of the Mission, including on the political aspects of issues relating to executive responsibilities.

The EUSR will further contribute to the development and consolidation of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Kosovo, including with regard to woman and children, in accordance with EU human rights policy and EU guidelines on Human Rights.

The EU Council foresees that the powers and authorities of the future International Civilian Representative will be vested in the same person as the EUSR.

When fully established the ICO/EUSR in Kosovo will have an office of around 75 international staff and 200 locals, based primarily in Pristina. There will also be a permanent sub-office in Mitrovica.

EU Special Representatives support the work of Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in the regions concerned. They play an important role in the development of a stronger and more effective CFSP and in the EU's efforts to become a more active, more coherent and more capable actor on the world stage. They provide the EU with an active political presence in key countries and regions, acting as a "voice" and "face" for the EU and its policies.

For more information:
www.consilium.europa.eu/kosovo
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