



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1461 Vienna, 15 February 2024

EU Statement on recent developments in Kosovo^{*1}

1. The European Union has noted with great concern the recent Police operations at the offices of Serbia-run structures in four municipalities and the premises of the non-government organisation Center For Peace and Tolerance in Pristina. The sudden closure of these offices will have negative effects on the daily lives and living conditions of Kosovo Serb Communities, as it will restrict their access to basic social services in the absence of immediate alternatives. The EU underlines that the status of these structures needs to be resolved in the framework of the EU-facilitated Dialogue in connection with the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb majority municipalities.
2. The EU is also concerned about the consequences of the Regulation on Cash Operations by the Central Bank of Kosovo on the living conditions of Kosovo Serbs and other communities throughout Kosovo. Given the short transition period for the implementation of the regulation as well as the lack of prior information and of practical solutions for all communities affected, this decision is foreseen to impact negatively in particular on schools and hospitals. The EU urges Kosovo to ensure a sufficiently long transition period and to find a negotiated solution in the framework of the EU-facilitated Dialogue.
3. The EU recalls that new local elections in the north of Kosovo should be held as soon as possible with the participation of Kosovo Serbs. We take positive note that the process has started through the collection of signatures for recalling the current mayors, in line with the Administrative Instruction. The EU calls on Kosovo to ensure a smooth continuation of the process.

¹ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

4. We urge all stakeholders to avoid unilateral actions that could raise tensions and to engage in the EU-facilitated Dialogue in good faith and in the spirit of compromise. The EU regrets the lack of implementation by both sides of the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and its Implementation Annex adopted in February and March 2023, as well as other pending commitments reached in the EU-facilitated Dialogue. It calls on both sides to fully respect and implement them, without further delay and preconditions, including the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb Majority Municipalities. We underline that progress in the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina remains essential for both in order to advance on their respective European paths, in line with the European perspective of the region.

The Candidate Countries MONTENEGRO, UKRAINE, and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Montenegro continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.