



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1039 Vienna, 12 February 2015

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#### **EU Statement in Response to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Jean-Claude Schlumberger**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome H.E. Ambassador Jean-Claude Schlumberger, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>, to the Permanent Council, and thank him for his comprehensive report. We appreciate the valuable work carried out by the Mission through its headquarters and its broad field presence throughout Kosovo.

The EU has welcomed the end of the protracted political stalemate following the elections on June 8 with the formation of new institutions on 12 December 2014 and reiterates its call upon the authorities in Pristina to engage swiftly on the reforms agenda. Recent demonstrations in Pristina and the rise in irregular migration from Kosovo to the EU show that much remains to be done in order to address the root causes of popular discontent.

The EU welcomes the resumption of the high-level Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. We commend the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the 19 April 2013 Agreement between Belgrade and Pristina in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue, in particular the latest agreement on justice and judiciary in Kosovo reached at the high-level meeting between the two Prime Ministers facilitated by the High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini on 9 February 2015 in Brussels. Moreover, the Association of Serbian Majority Municipalities in Kosovo will need to be established urgently.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

In line with the relevant Council conclusions, we also recall the EU's willingness to assist in the economic and political development of Kosovo through a clear European perspective, in line with the European perspective of the region. We reiterate the call of the Council on Kosovo to focus on the comprehensive reforms necessary to meet its obligations under the proposed Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) that has been initialled by the chief negotiators on 25 July 2014.

Also in this perspective, the EU emphasizes the importance of continuing efforts in the areas of rule of law, judiciary, electoral reform, organized crime and corruption and commends the Mission for its valuable support to these efforts.

We also commend OMiK for its activities in the area of democratisation and human rights. We attach particular importance to functioning independent institutions. In the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms key legislation, such as the anti-discrimination package, needs to be approved.

In the context of the reconfiguration of EULEX, Pristina has agreed to the establishment of a Specialist Court to follow-up the findings of the Special Investigative Task Force. We consider the adoption of all necessary legal changes to allow for this establishment a key priority.

We welcome the active engagement of Pristina to prevent radicalisation and extremism and to stem the flow of foreign fighters as highlighted in the report. In this context, the EU also supports the activities of the Mission in the areas of tolerance and inter-faith dialogue.

With regard to the municipalities of northern Kosovo, we support OMiK's approach of targeted and tailor-made activities in those areas of the Brussels Agreement that fall under Mission's mandate such as local governance, police and judiciary, in close coordination with international partners.

On a general level, it is important that OMiK continues to review its programmes, resources, and operating model to identify and implement further streamlining, and to ensure it can continue to play an effective role in the years ahead. We underline that

for all field operations effective evaluation is essential to ensure efficient use of resources and aids the development of best practices and the process of lesson learning. We would be grateful if Ambassador Schlumberger could highlight some of the key impacts made by the mission through its programmatic work in this reporting period.

Finally, we are looking forward to continued fruitful co-operation with OMiK, under the able leadership of Ambassador Schlumberger, and will support it in its crucial tasks. We wish you every success in your future endeavours.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.