



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 1472
Vienna, 9 May 2024**

**EU Statement in Response to the Head by the OSCE Mission in
Kosovo, Ambassador Michael Davenport**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo^{*1}, Ambassador Michael Davenport and thanks him for his biannual report to the Permanent Council.
2. We reiterate our strong support for the valuable work carried out by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, which has proven itself as a trusted partner of all communities, and contributes to a safe and secure, democratic, prosperous and multi-ethnic Kosovo, based on respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The EU welcomes the Mission's balanced approach based on three programmatic pillars: human rights and communities, democratisation, and security and public safety.
3. The EU welcomes the Mission's activities on promoting inter-community relations and emphasises the importance of coordination with relevant stakeholders for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities and vulnerable groups. This includes ensuring their safety, protecting their property rights, including against contentious expropriations, and preserving their cultural and religious heritage, including the Special Protective Zones. We take positive note of Kosovo's decision on 14 March 2024 to implement the 2016 Constitutional Court ruling by registering 24 hectares of land in the ownership of the Visoki Dečani Monastery. We also welcome the Mission's support for the development and adoption of cultural heritage management plans in Kosovo,

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.

including the drafting of a Toolkit on Heritage Education, to ensure sustainability in the sector. We highlight the importance of engagement with civil society, including through youth-oriented activities, to enhance inter-ethnic relations and promote dialogue.

4. Improving the accountability and transparency of institutions remains equally important. We commend the Mission's continued assistance in strengthening Kosovo's democratic institutions and its focus on enhancing public safety, the rule of law, and transparent and inclusive good governance at both central and local levels. This includes support for the ongoing census to be completed with the assistance of the UN and the EU by 17th May. The EU highly values the Mission's contributions to enhancing Kosovo's inter-institutional co-operation in addressing security challenges and risks related to trafficking in human beings, terrorism leading to extremism, organised crime and corruption, as well as hate crimes and discrimination. We particularly appreciate the Mission's activities in support of Kosovo's legislative and policy agenda, notably its contribution for the review of twenty-nine draft legal and policy acts, and its continuous engagement in the implementation of the EU-funded OSCE Regional Trial Monitoring Project in the Western Balkans.
5. The EU appreciates the Mission's monitoring and early warning activities in light of the fragile and complex security environment in the north of Kosovo. We welcome its continued good cooperation and coordination with partners on the ground, including the EU in Kosovo, KFOR, and the UN in support of multilateral efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and implementing obligations under the EU-facilitated Dialogue.
6. Recalling its statements on 3 June and 19 September 2023, the EU closely monitors developments in the north of Kosovo and reiterates its strong condemnation of the violent attack against Kosovo Police on 24th September 2023. We expect Serbia to fully cooperate and take all necessary measures to apprehend and swiftly bring to justice the perpetrators of the attacks. In parallel to the investigations, it is important that both sides refrain from any action that could further escalate the situation.
7. We regret the statements by Kosovo Serb political parties calling for a boycott of the mayoral recall vote held on 21st April 2024 in the four northern municipalities of Leposavić/q, North Mitrovica/e, Zvečan/Zveçan and Zubin Potok. A sustainable political solution for these municipalities can only be achieved through the permanent return of Kosovo Serbs to the institutions and full participation in the election process.

8. The EU reiterates its concern about the consequences of the Regulation on Cash Operations by the Central Bank of Kosovo on the daily lives of Kosovo Serbs and other communities throughout Kosovo. The EU takes notes of the sides' engagement in the EU-facilitated Dialogue and urges Pristina and Belgrade to find a negotiated temporary compromise solution without delay.
9. The EU welcomes the decisions of Pristina and Belgrade to formally recognise each other's vehicle license plates and fully abolish the sticker regime. This decision is a positive step in implementing the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and past Dialogue commitments related to Freedom of Movement. We also acknowledge the important progress achieved by both sides in implementing the Energy Roadmap of June 2022.
10. We underline that there is no alternative to the EU-facilitated dialogue. The Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and its Implementation Annex, adopted in February and March 2023, offer a clear platform for advancing the normalisation of relations. The obligations stemming from this Agreement remain valid and binding, and have been incorporated in their respective European paths. Its implementation is urgent and crucial for the stability of the entire region and their respective European paths. We call on both sides to fully implement all obligations and past commitments without delay or preconditions, including the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities in Kosovo.
11. Finally, with a strong interest in political and security consolidation in the region, the EU remains determined to continue assisting Kosovo towards lasting stability and prosperity. We wish Ambassador Davenport and his dedicated team every success and assure them of the EU's resolute support in their important work.

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

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.