

Eleventh meeting of the International Steering Group for Kosovo

14 June 2010, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo

1. The International Steering Group (ISG) congratulates the people of the Republic of Kosovo on the second anniversary of Kosovo's Constitution entering into force. In the last two years, Kosovo has made significant progress in strengthening state institutions. The completion of this work, and the full functionality of these institutions in spirit as well as structure, remains essential to a sustainable, democratic, multi-ethnic Kosovo.
2. The ISG thanks the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Mr. Hashim Thaci, for his contribution to its meeting today. The ISG welcomes the continued commitment of the Kosovo authorities, reiterated by Prime Minister Thaci, to implement the Comprehensive Status Proposal (CSP) fully and promptly.
3. The ISG reaffirms its commitment to Kosovo's territorial integrity. Kosovo's independence is irreversible and the ISG will continue to support Kosovo in achieving further recognitions. The ISG believes that the forthcoming International Court of Justice advisory opinion on Kosovo's Declaration of Independence represents an opportunity for Kosovo and Serbia to move forward in direct communication on areas where co-operation will improve the lives of their citizens.
4. Regional cooperation, good neighbourly relations and dialogue are the key to stability, economic development and EU integration. The ISG congratulates the Spanish Presidency of the EU on the high-level meeting in Sarajevo held on 2nd June (and prefigured by Italy at the 2009 Ministerial meeting in Prague), where all countries in the region participated. The meeting demonstrated that pragmatic solutions for participation in regional fora benefit the entire region.
5. The ISG calls on Kosovo's government and institutions to accelerate progress in the fight against corruption and organized crime, and in the significant improvement of administrative capacity and the permanent and unequivocal establishment of the rule of law. The ISG welcomes Prime Minister Thaci's 8th June statement of the fundamental importance of this effort and his personal commitment to lead it. Significant progress on governance will be critical to ensuring that the forthcoming European Commission Progress Report sends a positive signal about the European perspective of the people of Kosovo. The ISG welcomes the actions of EULEX in this field, and underlines the importance of full co-operation between the Government and people of Kosovo and the European Rule of Law mission.
6. The ISG encourages a continued dynamic effort to bring Kosovo's Serbs and other communities into active participation in public life, and is heartened by the progress being made in Graçanicë/Gračanica, Klllokot-Vërboc/Klokot-Vrbovac, Ranillug/Ranilug, Novobërdë/Novo Brdo and Shtërpçë/Štrpce. It welcomes, and encourages participation in, the 20th June elections in Parteš/Partesh, whose citizens can thereby make their voices heard in Kosovo's democracy. The ISG reiterates the importance of continued progress in decentralisation – in line with the CSP and Kosovo's Constitution – which is bringing government closer to all of Kosovo's communities. It welcomes the Government's intention, in partnership with the ICO and European institutions, to deliver meaningful improvements in the quality of democratic and economic life of the people of northern Kosovo.
7. The ISG reiterates its full support for the International Civilian Representative, including his affirmative and corrective powers, and the International Civilian Office. It welcomes the ICR's continued drive to rebalance the ICO to reflect progress in the implementation of CSP tasks.

8. The ISG welcomes the EU's intention to establish a full, functioning presence under the Lisbon arrangements in order to advance Kosovo's longer-term development and European future.