

# COMMITTED TO KOSOVO'S EUROPEAN FUTURE

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## EU in Kosovo

The best way for Kosovo to move closer to the European Union as part of the Western Balkans region, is to build a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo in which the rule of law is further strengthened. Kosovo must be able to co-operate peacefully with its neighbours and contribute to regional and European stability. Measures need to be taken in order to provide sustainable economic and political development and offer a better future for all communities.

The EU is in Kosovo to promote peace and stability and to support the Kosovo authorities as they undertake necessary reforms. All 27 EU Member States reconfirmed their continued support to the European perspective of the region when their Heads of State and Government met in December 2008. As a result, Kosovo as part of the region, is firmly anchored in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP).

The EU acts in accordance with the principle of local ownership. The Kosovo authorities have the responsibility to assume leadership and to work on the necessary reforms. The EU stands ready to provide political, technical and financial support to help Kosovo to move closer to the European Union.

## The European Union after the Lisbon Treaty

The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on 1 December 2009 and brought with it a list of reforms for the institutional framework of the European Union. In the field of foreign policy the position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was created. The High Representative (HR) exercises, in foreign affairs, the functions which, so far, were exercised by the six-monthly rotating Presidency, the High Representative for CFSP and the Commissioner for External Relations. Catherine Ashton was appointed to this post in November 2009. All EU-led missions outside the EU, including in Kosovo, report to her. The European Commission steers the enlargement process and Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle attaches great importance to the Western Balkans, including Kosovo.

Ms Ashton has the responsibility to establish the External Action Service which will help the HR to ensure the consistency and co-ordination of the Union's external actions as well as prepare policy proposals and implement them after their approval by the Council. Until future reforms are agreed, the current EU presences in Kosovo will remain in place.



## “The political commitment”

The mandate of the EUSR is based on the policy objectives of the EU in Kosovo. These include playing a leading role in strengthening stability in the region with the aim of a viable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo cooperating peacefully with its neighbours. It is the task of the EUSR to offer the EU's advice and support to the Kosovo Authorities in the political process and to promote overall coordination of EU presences in Kosovo. The EUSR also provides local political guidance to the Head of the European Union Rule of Law Mission EULEX and contributes to the development and consolidation of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Kosovo. Pieter Feith holds a separate, simultaneous mandate as International Civilian Representative: [www.ico-kos.org](http://www.ico-kos.org)



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## “The reform-driving commitment”

The European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo plays the pivotal role in realising the European agenda in Kosovo with the aim to promote Kosovo's approximation to the European Union. It is responsible for driving the reforms through regular policy and technical dialogue and monitoring Kosovo's progress.

The EC Liaison Office works closely with all the stakeholders, helping Kosovo on its way to EU integration. The role of the EC Liaison Office includes deployment of enlargement tools under the Stabilisation and Association Process and fostering Kosovo's regional and European integration. It manages significant assistance in order to strengthen institutions, develop the economy and realize European standards. In 2010, the European Commission launched a process that should lead to eventual visa-free travel for Kosovo citizens and began preparations for a comprehensive trade agreement.

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## “The operational commitment”

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is the largest civilian mission ever launched under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The central aim is to assist and support the Kosovo rule of law institutions in their progress towards sustainability and accountability and in further developing and strengthening an independent multi-ethnic justice system, multi-ethnic police and customs service. Some executive powers are retained.

EULEX became operational on 9th December 2008 and has a unified chain of command to the EU in Brussels and works within the general framework of UN Security Council Resolution 1244. EULEX have approximately 1,650 international and 1,170 local staff.



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