



European Union Special Representative in Kosovo

Tuesday, 16 September 2008

EUSR Pieter Feith briefs Members of the European Parliament on situation in Kosovo

Today the European Union Special Representative in Kosovo, Mr Pieter Feith, briefed Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee in Brussels on recent political developments: "*The situation in Kosovo has generally remained stable and calm during the last seven months*". He underlined "*we have a good working relationship with the Kosovo government and with our international partners – which is of utmost importance facing the challenges ahead of us.*"

He welcomed in particular progress made by the government with legislation providing for a broad framework for the protection of minority communities, religious and cultural heritage and decentralisation.

"*Another important step ahead is that the reconfiguration of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continues and gains momentum. The EU rule of law mission, EULEX, will now be well positioned to deploy in the whole of Kosovo to support the development of a strengthened, impartial and multi-ethnic rule-of-law system*", Pieter Feith told Members of the European Parliament.

With regard to the relations with the Serb community Pieter Feith emphasised that: "*We will continue our efforts with Kosovo Serb political representatives and community leaders to raise awareness that we are in Kosovo to help build a society where everybody feels safe and the rights of all communities are respected and protected.*"

The EU Special Representative also pointed to the opportunities created by the successful Donors Conference in July this year. He said: "*Now it is vital that the financial assistance pledged is used wisely and transparently by the Kosovo Government. We are confident that the Government will continue to work on the necessary reforms and through it progress steadily on its way towards the EU.*"

(ends)

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Note to Editors:

Background on the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo:

The objective of the European Union in Kosovo is to support and assist the Kosovo authorities in developing a stable, viable, peaceful and multi-ethnic Kosovo, cooperating peacefully with its neighbours in the region. To promote these objectives, the Council of the European Union appointed Pieter Feith as EU Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo on 4 February 2008.

His mandate is to:

- Offer the European Union's advice and support to the Kosovo government in the political process of European integration
- Promote overall coordination of EU presences in Kosovo, e.g. the European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo and the EULEX rule of law mission (see www.euinkosovo.eu)
- Ensure consistency and coherence of EU action towards the public
- Provide local political guidance to the Head of the European Union Rule of Law Mission EULEX in Kosovo.
- Contribute to the development and consolidation of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Kosovo

Mr Feith holds a simultaneous, separate mandate as International Civilian Representative (ICR) in Kosovo.

For further information on the EUSR in the Donors Conference for Kosovo, please call EUSR spokesperson Julia Rueter + 377 509 760 or see www.eusrinkosovo.eu.