

Troika Press Statement

Brussels, October 14, 2007

On October 14, delegations from Belgrade and Pristina continued their direct dialogue under Troika auspices to discuss Kosovo's future status. The Troika facilitated several hours of direct face-to-face talks between the parties. After the direct dialogue, the Troika met separately with each side to discuss possible areas of agreement in the parties' positions.

Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic and the Minister for Kosovo and Metohija Slobodan Samardzic led the Belgrade delegation. It also included Feodor Starcevic, Branislava Alendar, Aleksandar Simic, Gaso Kenezevic, Thomas Fleiner, Milos Jovanovic, Zoran Soljaga, Valdimir Jovicic, Marko Jaksic and Goran Bogdanovic.

Pristina was represented by the Unity Team led by President Fatmir Sejdiu, Prime Minister Agim Ceku, President of the Assembly Kole Berisha, Hashim Thaci, Veton Surroi, Blerim Shala and Skender Hyseni.

During the face-to-face talks both parties expanded on the discussions in New York on September 28 by presenting their respective proposals on Kosovo's future status to one another in greater detail. Belgrade further described its proposal of autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia. Pristina elaborated its proposal of friendship and cooperation between two independent states and full implementation of minority rights. Both parties asked questions and responded to each others' proposals.

Both parties stated that they would continue to abide by their commitment made in Vienna on August 30 and reaffirmed in New York on September 28 to refrain from any provocative acts or statements that might jeopardize the security and stability of the region or the Troika process.

The Troika, reminding the parties of the Contact Group Ministerial Statement of 27 September, expressed the hope that elections, due in Kosovo on 17 November, would take place with full participation of all communities and against a calm and orderly background.

The Troika intends to be vigorous and proactive in helping the parties reach an agreement on Kosovo's status; in particular, the Troika will work with the parties to identify areas of common perspective that might open a path to a solution. The Troika will next meet with the parties in Vienna on October 22, followed by an intensive schedule of face-to-face meetings in the following weeks.

The Troika reminded both parties that the Troika process will be concluded by the Contact Group reporting to the UN Secretary General by 10 December.