

**Structured Dialogue on the Rule of Law with Kosovo**  
**Brussels, 30 May 2012**  
**Conclusions**

1. Today, the inaugural meeting of the Structured Dialogue on the Rule of Law was held in Brussels. The European Commission was represented by Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström, as well as Director-General for Justice Françoise Le Bail. EEAS Civilian Operations Commander Hansjoerg Haber, EEAS Director Fernando Gentilini, EUSR Samuel Žbogar and EULEX Head of Mission Xavier Bout de Marnhac were present too. The Kosovo government was represented by Deputy Prime Minister Hajredin Kuçi, Minister for Internal Affairs Bajram Rexhepi and Minister for European Integration Vlora Çitaku.
2. The Structured Dialogue will provide a high-level forum to regularly assess Kosovo's progress on three issues in particular: the judiciary, the fight against organised crime and the fight against corruption. The Commission underlined that the aim of the Structured Dialogue is to help Kosovo tackle any challenges in these areas at an early stage in the enlargement process. Kosovo reiterated its commitment towards consolidating the rule of law and welcomed the Commission's efforts to work on these issues.
3. As regards the fight against organised crime, the Commission emphasised the importance of improving Kosovo's capacity to effectively investigate and prosecute cases of cross-border organised crime, notably drug trafficking and trafficking in human beings. The need for stepping up efforts to prevent, investigate and prosecute corruption was underlined, as was the need for deploying asset recovery to disrupt the economic foundations of these serious crimes. Kosovo emphasized the current and upcoming changes in the judiciary, internal affairs and justice system that are aimed to address these issues more rapidly and effectively.
4. Concerning the judiciary, the Commission highlighted the importance of an efficient and independent judiciary. Following progress achieved in adopting key legislation, Kosovo is encouraged to pursue judicial reform to further strengthen independence, impartiality and transparency. Challenges remain in further reducing the backlog of cases, ensuring a sufficient budget for the proper functioning of the courts, the restructuring of prosecutorial offices, as well as filling in vacant positions for minorities. To this regard, Kosovo introduced its plans to be taken in the very near future that will address the issue of backlog and the other concerns that relate directly to the judiciary.
5. The Kosovo government confirmed that the rule of law remains a top priority and that Kosovo is strongly committed to achieving results. The Commission emphasised the importance of Kosovo's long-term political commitment to delivering the much needed results and important reforms.
6. The Commission and the Kosovo government agreed that Kosovo needs to further build on the work that government of Kosovo has done towards the reform of rule of law in Kosovo, with support from the European Union Rule of Law Mission, EULEX. The government of Kosovo informed the Commission on recent work in reforming the judiciary system, namely on the work towards finalizing the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure as well as its work towards the amendment of the legislation on the

Judiciary and Prosecution. On the fight against corruption, the government delegation presented the steps taken under the National Council against Corruption as well informed the Commission on the drafting of new legislation aimed at renewing effort to combat the organized crime and corruption.

7. In the context of the gradual transition from EULEX to the Kosovo authorities, the Structured Dialogue on the Rule of Law will play an increasingly important role in confirming priorities and ensuring the necessary close coordination between the key actors. Benchmarks for the transition will be prepared in the context of the Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board and will be regularly discussed in meetings of the Structured Dialogue on the Rule of Law, including with regard to timing and progress achieved.
8. This forum will meet twice a year and set priorities for reform in the rule of law area and monitor results. The next meeting will be held shortly after the publication of the Feasibility Study. In between meetings of this high-level forum work is being taken forward, notably through the annual Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue sub-committee on Justice and Home Affairs as well as in the regular meetings of the Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board. The European Union, acting through the Commission, the EEAS and the EULEX mission, will continue to support Kosovo in advancing rule of law reforms through its ongoing and future assistance and through dialogue.