



KCSS
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

REASSESSING THE KOSOVO-SERBIA NORMALIZATION DIALOGUE:

IT IS TIME FOR A **RESET?**





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY TAKEAWAYS	1
INTRODUCTION	3
PATH TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KOSOVO AND SERBIA	5
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE PATH TO NORMALIZATION	8
CHALLENGES IN THE PATH	11
THE NEED TO RESET THE DIALOGUE	15
ANNEX 1: SOME OF KOSOVO'S COMMITMENTS FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH SERBIA	20
ANNEX 2: SERBIA'S COMMITMENTS FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH KOSOVO	23

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- This paper questions the effectiveness of the ongoing EU-led dialogue in normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia, despite various agreements made since 2011 when the process started.
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- This paper argues that the current process is leading towards a scenario where “no solution is a solution” could become the default stance of the international community, particularly within EU capitals. This is a result of Serbia playing the long game and Kosovo the waiting game. Such an outcome would potentially carry devastating consequences as it cements the status quo, risks regional stability, maintains Kosovo’s isolation, and deepens interethnic tensions within Kosovo.
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- The dialogue began following the International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) 2010 advisory opinion, which stated that Kosovo’s 2008 declaration of independence did not violate international law. This led to the UN General Assembly tasking the EU with facilitating the normalization dialogue. Logically, the dialogue for normalization of relations was about accommodating and normalizing Kosovo’s independence. Process of normalization of relations between parties, in the international relations, have been about, both parties accepting each other (i.e., Israel–Jordan agreement on normalization of their relations in 1994). Despite various efforts and agreements, significant issues remain unresolved between Kosovo and Serbia, and the process has not produced a legally binding normalization agreement, as it is planned by the European Union (EU).
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- Since 2011, Kosovo and Serbia reached around 38 agreements, with a notable addition in February 2023—the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations (APN). The APN is considered a crucial political-level agreement, as it introduces clearer terms and implies some level of recognition of Kosovo by Serbia, or a de-facto recognition.
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- The APN includes mutual recognition of documents and national symbols, commitments to peaceful dispute resolution, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. It prohibits either party from blocking the other’s EU integration progress, Kosovo’s right to become full member of the international community, and outlines cooperation across various sectors. It also ensures self-management for the Serbian community in Kosovo and the protection of Serbian cultural sites.
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- Despite the APN's significance, implementation has faced challenges. Serbia has formally refused to comply with the APN and even though the EU's position is that the "Agreement is binding in its entirety under international law". The EU has not taken any actions towards Serbia to reinforce its position that the APN is binding under international law. In addition to this there have been actions by the Kosovo government in the north of the country that were criticized as not coordinated and consulted by the international community, and that have resulted with heightened interethnic tensions, and undermined implementation of APN. These actions, however, are viewed as necessary for establishing the rule of law by the Kosovo government.
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- The terrorist attack of September 2023 in Banjska, turned the tables against the policy of appeasement followed by the EU and the US towards President Vucic of Serbia, however, Kosovo government failed to capitalize, by taking actions in the north of Kosovo that were not consulted with the key partners, which according to civil society organizations operating in the north it have hindered the everyday life of Serb community there.
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- The pressures from the international community towards President Vucic to bring the mastermind of Banjska terrorist attacks before justice, is perceived as too being soft. Both the EU and the US can do more to ensure that Milan Radoičić is held accountable.
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- The normalization dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia requires a reset. The current approach has reached its limits, particularly with the EU's strategy of constructive ambiguity. The European Council should clearly define the dialogue's end goal, making it explicit that Serbia's recognition of Kosovo is essential for EU membership. If a direct acknowledgment is not feasible, the EU must find alternative ways to clarify the end goal, leaving little room for misinterpretation.
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- A structured process with specific timelines, clear milestones, and regular public progress reports from the European External Action Service (EEAS) is necessary. Reducing the frequency of meetings and having more structured and periodic meetings will allow more time for internal discussions and strategy development. The European Commission should create a credible and public incentive package for both countries, highlighting the benefits of cooperation.
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- Both Kosovo and Serbia need to demonstrate good faith through practical measures, and civil society organizations should be involved to ensure broader support. Public awareness campaigns are also crucial to inform citizens about the benefits of normalization and counter disinformation.
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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the EU-led dialogue for the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. It is based on the assumption that the dialogue has not yet produced a credible path towards normalization. The paper proposes a set of recommendations to reset the dialogue, aiming to make the process more effective in achieving sustainable normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia and accelerating the European accession process for both countries.

In its Advisory Opinion delivered on July 22, 2010¹, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concluded that “the declaration of independence of Kosovo adopted on 17 February 2008 did not violate international law”. This followed the UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298² which acknowledged the content of the advisory opinion of the ICJ, and tasked the European Union (EU), to facilitate a process of dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. According to the EU, the purpose of the dialogue for normalization of relations is to “to achieve a comprehensive legally-binding normalisation agreement between Kosovo and Serbia addressing outstanding issues in order for both Parties to progress on their respective European path, create new opportunities and improve the lives of their citizens”.

Legally binding agreement means the provisions of the agreement would be enforceable under international law, and involve mutual recognition of sovereignty and borders, including the formal recognition of Kosovo's independence by Serbia. This implies that the agreement would be endorsed by international bodies, including the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), and other relevant stakeholders, providing legitimacy and backing for the agreement.

According to the EU, the EU-facilitated normalization dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia began in March 2011³. The initial phase, conducted at the level of senior officials from the respective governments, lasted until March 2012 and was facilitated by EEAS Councillor Robert Cooper. This was followed by a high-level political dialogue facilitated by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission. Catherine Ashton led this phase from October 2012 to November 2014, followed by Federica Mogherini from November 2014 to December 2019.

In April 2020, the Council of the European Union (EU) announced the appointment of Mr. Miroslav Lajčák as the EU Special Representative for the Belgrade–Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues. According to the announcement, Mr. Lajčák's tasks included: “achieving comprehensive normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, improving good neighborly relations and reconciliation between partners in the Western Balkans, helping them overcome the legacy of the past, and contributing to the consistency and effectiveness of EU action in the Western Balkans.”⁴ Initially appointed for a 12-month mandate, Mr. Lajčák's

1 For more information, please visit: <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/141>

2 For more information, please visit: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n09/479/71/pdf/n0947971.pdf?token=wn8iT6VImUvvhkerA3&fe=true>

3 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue_en

4 For more information, please visit: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/04/03/>

assignment was extended repeatedly, most recently until January, 2025. Despite his efforts, the goal of comprehensive normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia seems more distant in 2024 than it was in 2011 when the dialogue began.

According to the assessments of the Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG), between 2011 and 2016, Kosovo and Serbia reached around 38 agreements within the framework of the EU-led dialogue for normalization.⁵ These agreements are generally categorized into primary agreements and sub-agreements. Adding to this, the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia from February 27, 2023⁶ (APN), which the EU states it was verbally accepted by both Kosovo and Serbia⁷ (though not signed or initialed), the total number of agreements potentially rises to 39.

[belgrade-pristina-dialogue-eu-appoints-a-new-special-representative/](#)

5 For more information, please visit: <https://dialogue-info.com/agreements/>

6 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue-agreement-path-normalisation-between-kosovo-and-serbia_en

7 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue-statement-high-representative-josep-borrell-after-high-level-meeting_en

PATH TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KOSOVO AND SERBIA

A decade after the 2013 “First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations” (the Brussels Agreement) between Kosovo and Serbia, which the EU hailed as historic⁸ the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations (APN)⁹ verbally agreed upon by Kosovo and Serbia on February 27, 2023, stands out as the most significant political-level agreement in the EU-led dialogue for normalizing relations between the two countries since the process began in 2011.

It is less ambiguous and affirmatively changes the situation, making it clearer that the dialogue process is leading to some level of recognition of Kosovo by Serbia, the fundamental obstacle for normalization of relations between the two countries. In a separate paper I co-authored in 2023, we termed this “functional recognition,” meaning that Serbia recognizes all state attributes of Kosovo, minus establishment of formal diplomatic relations¹⁰.

The APN includes the mutual recognition of documents and national symbols, commitment to peaceful dispute resolution, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. It prohibits either party from blocking the other’s progress towards EU integration and outlines a framework for continued cooperation across various sectors, including economy, law enforcement, and cultural heritage. The agreement also ensures some means of self-management for the Serbian community in Kosovo and the protection of Serbian religious and cultural sites. Additionally, it includes provisions for the establishment of Permanent Missions, a special investment and financial support package, and a joint committee to monitor implementation, reinforcing their commitment to past agreements and a future comprehensive normalization agreement.

In the first article, by agreeing to develop relations on the basis of equal rights and mutually recognize each other’s documents and national symbols, Serbia implicitly acknowledges Kosovo’s statehood attributes. The second article explicitly refers to principles of sovereign equality, independence, and territorial integrity as outlined in the United Nations Charter. By committing to these principles, Serbia is effectively recognizing Kosovo’s sovereignty and right to self-determination. This acknowledgment further cements the notion of Kosovo as a distinct and independent entity. The emphasis on the UN Charter underscores a commitment to international norms that govern relations between sovereign states. The third article emphasizes the commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes and the non-use of force, aligning with international norms governing state relations. Such a commitment reinforces the recognition of Kosovo as a separate party with which Serbia must engage diplomatically and peacefully, similar to any other sovereign state. Article four is particularly significant as

8.For more information, please visit: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_13_347

9 For more information, please visit: <https://dialogue-info.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/First-Agreement-of-Principles-Governing-the-Normalisation-of-Relations-19-April-2013-3.pdf>

10.For more information, please visit: <https://qkss.org/en/publikimet/si-i-ndryshon-marveshja-per-rrugen-e-normalizimit-nese-zbatohet-marredheniet-mes-kosoves-dhe-serbise>

it addresses international representation and membership in international organizations. By agreeing that neither party can represent the other and committing not to block Kosovo's membership in international organizations, Serbia is recognizing Kosovo's independent agency and legitimacy on the international stage. All of this, constitute a functional recognition or de-facto recognition.

Taken together, these four articles of the APN signify a de facto recognition of Kosovo by Serbia. They establish a framework for mutual recognition, peaceful coexistence, and respect for sovereignty and independence, aligning with international legal principles.

The APN is arguably the most important achievement of Mr. Lajčák's facilitation of the normalisation dialogue since he was appointed to the role in 2020.

Following the negotiations in February of 2023 and, what it is assumed as, verbal acceptance of the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations (APN), Prime Minister Kurti and President Vucic, met in Ohrid, North Macedonia, in March, to negotiate an implementation annex to the agreement. Following 12-hour negotiations, in what was clearly a highly contentious and not amicable atmosphere, High Representative Josep Borrell announced in late evening press conference, that Kosovo and Serbia agreed on the Implementation Annex of the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between them¹¹. However, what was published as an agreed implementation annex, was limited in ambitions, and not what allegedly the EU and the US wanted to achieve at Ohrid/North Macedonia, and they were disappointed at the outcome.

At one point during the negotiations in Ohrid/North Macedonia in March, the EU and the US were ready to blame Kosovo for the failure of the talks in Ohrid/North Macedonia. There were serious disagreements over the sequencing of measures to implement the APN. Such an announcement could have had serious consequences for Kosovo, weakening its position in ongoing negotiations. This move underscores the high stakes and the pressure on Kosovo to comply with international expectations.

The Annex includes a total of 12-points, starting with a proclamation that the annex is an integral part of the APN, with both parties committing to honor and implement all obligations promptly and in good faith¹². The APN and the Annex will be incorporated into the EU accession processes of both Kosovo and Serbia. The annex, notes that the EU Facilitator will begin the process to amend Chapter 35 benchmarks for Serbia to reflect its new obligations, while Kosovo's Special Group on Normalisation will be adjusted to include its new obligations as well.

Among the key commitments, both parties agreed to urgently endorse the Declaration on Missing Persons. Kosovo will immediately start negotiations within the EU-facilitated Dialogue to establish specific arrangements and guarantees for the Serbian community in Kosovo, ensuring an appropriate level of self-management in compliance with previous Dialogue agreements as determined by the EU Facilitator.

Additionally, Kosovo and Serbia will set up a Joint Monitoring Committee, chaired by the EU,

11 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue-press-remarks-high-representative-josep-borrell-after-ohrid-meeting_en

12 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue-implementation-annex-agreement-path-normalisation-relations-between_en

within 30 days to supervise the implementation of all provisions. The EU will organize a donor conference within 150 days to establish an investment and financial aid package for both countries. However, no funds will be disbursed until the EU confirms that all provisions of the Agreement have been fully implemented.

Furthermore, the annex states that Kosovo and Serbia agree that all Articles of the Agreement will be implemented independently of each other and will not block the implementation of any Articles. All discussions related to the implementation of the Agreement will take place under the EU-facilitated Dialogue. Both parties recognize that any failure to meet their obligations from the APN, the Annex, or past Dialogue Agreements may have direct negative consequences for their respective EU accession processes and the financial aid they receive from the EU.

The European Council welcomed the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia and its Implementation Annex, in their meeting on March 23, 2023¹³. In their meeting on February 9, 2023, the European Council, had welcomed already the proposal for the APN, and argued that the agreement “put the relationship between both parties on a new and sustainable basis as a historic chance that should be seized by both parties, including with a view to realising their European perspective”¹⁴.

Despite the proclamation that each point of the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations (APN) should be implemented independently, in practice, the primary focus of the international community – from Kosovo’s perspective – has been on the establishment of the Association of Serb-majority Municipalities (ASM). This emphasis has placed continuous pressure on the Kosovar side to take steps toward implementing the ASM agreement, without necessarily holding the other side, Serbia, to the same standard regarding the implementation of other points of the agreement, such as not objecting to Kosovo’s membership in international organization, as the case of Kosovo’s membership in the Council of Europe (CoE), illustrates.

The negotiating and facilitating process for the APN and implementation annex, appeared aimed at saving face for multiple stakeholders involved in the normalization process, including the Kosovar side, which likely insisted that the sequencing of the ASM implementation be last rather than first.

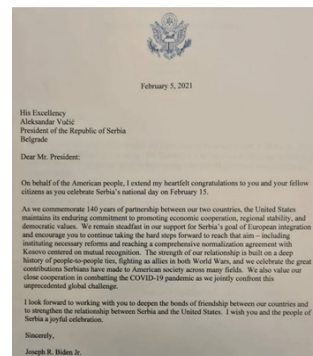
13 For more information, please visit: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/23/european-council-conclusions-23-march-2023/>

14 For more information, please visit: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE PATH TO NORMALIZATION

In February 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden sent letters to the leaders of Kosovo and Serbia, urging both countries to normalize relations based on mutual recognition. This emphasis on mutual recognition was particularly significant for Kosovo. However, in the following months, actions by the Kosovo government, especially in the north of the country, led to strained relations with the Biden administration. It is unclear if these actions contributed to a subtle shift in the US discourse, from a focus on mutual recognition to “eventual recognition.”¹⁵ This shift, while not necessarily indicating a change in the official US position, underscores the deteriorating relations between the Kosovo government and the US government over the process of normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, and government’s approach towards the Kosovo Serbs. Additionally, other factors must be considered, including the perception in Kosovo, and other parts of the Western Balkans that the United States and the European Union (EU) are appeasing President Vucic.

Figure 1: Letter of President Biden to President Vucic, where normalization based on mutual recognition is stated.



Serbia’s involvement in providing or selling weapons to Ukraine plays a crucial role in the context of its relationship with the EU and the US. The United States has been actively working to reduce Serbia’s dependency on Russia and to counter China’s increasing influence in the region. By offering economic incentives, security cooperation, and political support, the US aims to pivot Serbia towards a more pro-Western stance. The economic potential of Serbia’s mineral resources, particularly lithium, is another critical factor. Serbia holds approximately 1.3% of the world’s known lithium reserves, which is estimated around €4 billion, and it is a crucial component in the production of batteries for electric vehicles¹⁶. The strategic importance of lithium in the context of the global shift towards renewable energy and electric vehicles cannot be overstated. The West’s appeasement of President Vucic of Serbia can be better understood when considering these factors that shape the geopolitical landscape in the region. In other words, the West’s appeasement of President Vucic is not merely a diplomatic gesture but a

15 For more information, please visit: <https://www.state.gov/kosovo-independence-day/>

16 For more information, please visit: <https://www.eiu.com/n/serbia-revives-lithium-mining-plans-with-eu-agreement/>

calculated strategy.

Over the course of several years, European leaders have engaged with Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti and President Vucic through a series of letters, reflecting an evolving strategy and shifting priorities in an effort to move the normalization dialogue between the two countries in the right direction.

On September, 2022, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron wrote to Kurti, emphasizing the need for difficult decisions to advance the dialogue¹⁷. They informed him of their decision to assign their foreign policy and security advisors to support Miroslav Lajcak in facilitating the process. This letter underscored the critical importance of achieving full normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia for the stability of the Western Balkans.

By February 26, 2023, the tone of communication had evolved. President Macron, Chancellor Scholz, and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni jointly wrote to Kurti ahead of the meeting in Brussels on February 27 (at this meeting the Agreement on the Path to Normalization of Relations was verbally accepted by Prime Minister Kurti and President Vucic)¹⁸. They welcomed Kurti's public support for what was at the time the proposal for the APN, and stressed its fundamental importance for the welfare of Kosovo's citizens, regional peace, and the country's European integration. This letter marked a shift towards a more cooperative and encouraging approach, highlighting the benefits of what became APN.

However, by May 16, 2024, the urgency in the leaders' communications had intensified. In another joint letter, Scholz, Macron, and Meloni addressed Kosovo's membership path to the Council of Europe. They warned that without progress on establishing the Association of the Serb-majority Municipalities (ASM), Kosovo's application might lack sufficient support. The leaders expressed strong backing for the draft statute proposed by Mr. Lajcak, emphasizing its careful design and alignment with Kosovo's legal framework. They also clarified that the Association is not comparable to Republika Srpska and stressed the necessity of decisive steps to advance the dialogue.

Throughout these correspondences, there is a clear evolution in the European leaders' strategy. The initial emphasis on the need for difficult decisions gave way to positive reinforcement of Kurti's public support for the European proposal, and ultimately shifted to urgent and specific demands tied to Kosovo's international aspirations.

From Kosovo's perspective, the European Union (EU) is increasingly seen as an asymmetric actor in the normalization dialogue. The EU appears more interested in managing the process and relations between Kosovo and Serbia to prevent escalation rather than pursuing a sustainable solution. For instance, the EU's reluctance to insist on Serbia signing or formally endorsing the Agreement on the Path to Normalization of Relations, despite its endorsement by the European Council and its consideration by High Representative Borrell as an obligation under international

17 For more information, please visit: <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/en/blog/prime-minister-kurti-receives-a-letter-from-chancellor-scholz-and-president-macron/>

18 For more information, please visit: <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/en/blog/prime-minister-kurti-receives-a-letter-from-president-macron-chancellor-scholz-and-prime-minister-meloni/>

law, is viewed by Kosovo as an appeasement to President Vučić. This stance is perceived as an unprincipled position by the EU, as it fails to insist that Serbia formalize acceptance of an agreement EU sponsored itself. If it were the other way around, Kosovo would have faced significant consequences.

Kosovo faces a crisis of confidence, and to some extent paranoia, fearing that any move towards establishing the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities (ASM) will not lead to the fulfillment of commitments from the international community regarding Kosovo's international integration. The Kosovo government lacks confidence that making irreversible moves towards the ASM will result in tangible benefits, such as EU candidate status and recognition from the five EU member states that have not yet recognized its independence (Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain). Meanwhile, Serbia appears intent on perpetuating the status quo, making just enough progress to keep the dialogue ongoing without fully committing to a lasting resolution.

To break this deadlock, we need actions of good faith. An absolute necessity right now is for both parties to adopt de-escalation actions and rhetoric as a prerequisite for good faith actions. For Kosovo, these actions could include: Sending the draft statute of the ASM to the Constitutional Court for review or adopting a concept document on the establishment of the ASM in the government. Re-establishing relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and reconvening the Implementation and Monitoring Council (IMC). Initiating the process for new elections for Mayors and Municipal Assemblies in the four municipalities in the north. Continuing with the accelerated process of recruiting new Kosovo Police officers coming from Kosovo Serb community and at the same time developing a proposal that would allow the return of those resigned, but this time through a strict vetting process. In turn, this would reduce the needs for extensive presence of specialized police units and check points in the north. Addressing complaints about expropriation of property in north of Kosovo.

Serbia, in turn, needs to take reciprocal steps to show commitment to normalization. These steps could include Arresting and prosecuting the ringleader of the Banjska terrorist attack Milan Radoičić; Supporting or not objecting to Kosovo's membership in the Council of Europe. Facilitating the reopening of the Ibër/Ibar bridge for traffic; Implementing the IBM agreement and building crossing points in Jarinjë/Jarinje, Dheu i Bardhë/Konqul, and Mucibabë/Dëpce; Implementing the agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance Cooperation; Supporting the integration or legitimization of the education and healthcare systems in accordance with the provisions proposed in the Ahtisaari Plan and integrated in the Kosovo Constitution; Encouraging Kosovo Serbs to integrate into Kosovo public institutions, including returning to the judiciary, police, and local government.

Considering this context, Kosovo government should focus on deepening the consensus with the quint countries (France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom) and the EU, on the Euro-Atlantic future of Kosovo, rather than continue to be a reason for discord. By aligning more closely with these countries, Kosovo can ensure it remains a crucial part of the regional strategy and secures support. Furthermore, the Kosovo government should commit more to regional cooperation and integration. It is imperative that Kosovo amplifies its voice in regional matters, and it constructively contributes to regional cooperation and integration.

CHALLENGES IN THE PATH

On the first anniversary of the verbal agreement on the Implementation Annex to the APN, the High Representative Josep Borrell issued a public statement, noting that APN was a landmark achievement during a time of unprecedented conflict on the continent, promising peace, stability, and good neighborly relations¹⁹. However, the statement, notes that despite extensive efforts by the EU and the international community, there has been very limited progress by Kosovo and Serbia in implementing their obligations under the Agreement. Very importantly, especially from the Kosovo's perspective, the statement notes that the "Agreement is binding in its entirety under international law".

In addition to this, what has complicated the implementation of the APN is that despite being accepted verbally by both parties, formally endorsed by all 27 EU member states in the European Council conclusions in February and March of 2023, and being considered binding under international law according to the EU, Serbia has formally refused to comply with these interpretations and with the APN in general. In December 2023, Prime Minister Ana Brnabić sent a letter, marred by serious spelling mistakes, to the European External Action Service expressing this refusal²⁰. Furthermore, President Vucic has repeatedly refused to sign the APN²¹, while Prime Minister Kurti expressed his willingness to do so.

The situation in the north of Kosovo has been complicated by several factors. The current crisis, which began in November 2022, was triggered by the coordinated mass resignations of the Serbian community from Kosovo institutions. These resignations included mayors of Serb-majority municipalities, councillors, MPs, judges, prosecutors, judicial staff, and Kosovo Police officers. The Belgrade-backed Serb party, Srpska Lista, justified these actions as retaliation against the Kosovo government's decision requiring all car owners to switch to official Kosovo-issued license plates, known as RKS plates²². However, the underlying reason for the resignations was likely the perception among local Serbs that these government actions represented an extension of Kosovo state authority in the north.

The government decision on October 28, 2022 (No. 05/103), mandated that all car owners with license plates "PR," "KM," "PZ," "GL," "UR," "PE," "DA," or "DA," issued between June 10, 1999, and April 21, 2022, must register with RKS license plates by April 21, 2023²³. This decision included a transitory phase and fines for non-compliance.

19 For more information, please visit: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/belgrade-pristina-dialogue-statement-high-representative-anniversary-agreement-path-normalisation_en

20 For more information, please visit: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/serbia-formally-refuses-to-abide-by-eu-brokered-agreements-with-kosovo/>

21 For more information, please visit: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/vucic-refuses-to-sign-eu-agreements-with-kosovo-during-showdown-at-un-security-council/>

22 For more information, please visit: <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/11/05/serbs-stage-mass-resignation-from-kosovo-state-institutions/>

23 For more information, please visit: <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Vendimet-e-Mbledhjes-se-103-te-te-Qeverise-se-Republikes-se-Kosoves.pdf> p. 6

The decision was in line with the agreements reached by both governments in the framework of the EU-led dialogue for normalization of relations. The Agreed Conclusions on Freedom of Movement from July 2, 2011, stated that “all car owners residing in Kosovo will use either RKS or KS vehicle license plates” (point 7 of the agreement)²⁴. It also specified that Kosovo institutions would extend the validity of KS license plates for five years (point 6 of the agreement). Consequently, on September 14, 2016, Kosovo and Serbia agreed to extend the validity of KS plates for another five years until 2021, with the expectation that all vehicles would register with Kosovo-issued plates starting in 2017²⁵.

It is important to note that while the government was implementing agreed arrangements within the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue, it failed to consider transitional periods and did not make the necessary technical and policy preparations for the implementation of the decisions. For instance, registering a car in Kosovo requires a driver’s license, but there were no driving schools offering instruction in Serbian in the north of Kosovo. Additionally, other technical and practical aspects related to civil registration made it difficult for local Serbs to comply with the government’s decisions.

The spat between Kosovo and Serbia over the car plates, was largely resolved with EU mediation and an agreement reached by both countries on November 23, 2022 in Brussels. Based on the agreement, Serbia no longer required vehicles crossing its border from Kosovo to bear Serbian-issued stickers on their Kosovo plates. Kosovo delayed the start of fining drivers for 48 hours. Serbia also agreed to stop issuing license plates with Kosovo city denominations, and Kosovo will halt further actions related to vehicle re-registration²⁶.

After the car plates crisis, new crisis emerged in the north of Kosovo in May of 2023, when as a result of the boycott by the local Kosovo Serbs of the municipal elections in the four north municipalities to elect new mayors, following the resignations in November of 2022, Albanian mayors were elected, some with less than 1% of the vote. Kosovo government utilized special units of the Kosovo police – in lieu of regular police forces – to install the mayors amid fierce opposition from the local Kosovo Serbs. The situation escalated further on May 29, 2023, with KFOR members deployed to prevent violence. They faced unprovoked attacks, leading to injuries of at least 30 peacekeeping soldiers and 52 civilians²⁷.

The United States responded to the deteriorating situation in northern Kosovo by announcing measures against Kosovo for ignoring its advice to avoid escalating tensions. The US criticized Kosovo’s decision to install ethnic Albanian mayors in the north using what it described as “forcible means.”²⁸ As a consequence, Kosovo was expelled from participating in an ongoing

24 For more information, please visit: <https://dialogue-info.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Agreement-on-the-Freedom-of-Movement-2-July-2011.pdf>

25 For more information, please visit: <https://dialogue-info.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Arrangements-concerning-the-finalisation-of-implementation-of-FoM-14-September-2016.pdf>

26 For more information, please visit: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/kosovo-serbia-reach-deal-to-end-dispute-over-car-plates-under-eu-dialogue/>

27 The Civil Society Report on Human Rights, 2023, <https://newsocialinitiative.org/civil-society-report-on-human-rights-in-kosovo-in-2023/>

28 For more information, please visit: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65759214>

American-led military exercise in Europe.

From the government's perspective, these measures are necessary to assert control and ensure the rule of law in an area that has long resisted integration into the Kosovo state. Government of Kosovo perceives the primary issue in the north as stemming from "illegality and criminal structures."²⁹

However, these actions are seen by the local Kosovo Serbs who have not been used to presence of the Kosovo Police forces in this part of Kosovo as provocative, detrimental to their rights and everyday life³⁰. International community too raised similar concerns towards Kosovo Government's supported Police actions in the North considering them as heavy-handed³¹.

Nevertheless, the 2023 Human Rights report by the U.S. State Department also notes that "the identities and photos of newly commissioned ethnic Serb police officers were posted online with threatening messages from ethnic Serb individuals and groups on social media,"³² complicating potential efforts to increase the number of Kosovo Serb police officers from the south, in the north, as a transitory phase. Furthermore, the report criticizes the Kosovo government for not adhering to its own expropriation laws and procedures when planning the expropriation of 118 parcels of land in northern Kosovo, most of which were owned by Kosovan Serbs. Although the government later adjusted its actions, representatives of the Kosovan Serb community continued to criticize the government for not being transparent about the intended use of the land.

It is important to note that despite the criticisms directed at the actions of the Kosovo government in the north of Kosovo—both from local Kosovo Serbs and the international community—there has been at least one significant positive outcome. The government's efforts have led to a dramatic change in the north concerning the ability of organized crime groups to operate. The actions taken have completely disrupted these networks, making it impossible for figures like Milan Radoicic and other notorious members of organized crime to use the north of Kosovo as a safe haven. This achievement should be duly recognized as a substantial contribution to the rule of law.

However, the lack of consultation and coordination with international partners has exacerbated tensions and led to criticisms of the Kosovo government as lacking constructiveness and rationality in the normalization dialogue.

This perception has contrasted with a relatively more favorable view of President Vučić of Serbia, despite his country's failure to align with the EU's common foreign and security policy and its pro-Russia and pro-China stance. Vučić's political maneuvering and the portrayal of

29 For more information, please visit: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/kurti-problem-in-north-kosovo-is-rule-of-law-criminal-structures/>

30 The Civil Society Report on Human Rights, 2023, <https://newsocialinitiative.org/civil-society-report-on-human-rights-in-kosovo-in-2023/>

31 For more information, please visit: <https://balkaninsight.com/2024/06/06/western-powers-condemn-kosovo-land-expropriation-in-serb-populated-north/>

32 Mersiha Gadzo. (2023, June 8). "Fears simmer as an interethnic conflict brews in Kosovo". Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/8/serbia-kosovo-9>

Serbia as a victim of Kosovo's actions have bolstered his position. However, it should not be assumed that the Kosovo government's actions have justified Serbia's stance to the international community. The dynamics at play are different.

The situation shifted significantly after the September 24, 2023, terrorist attack in Banjska, in the north of Kosovo. A group of around thirty Serb militants attacked Kosovo police, resulting in the death of one officer and several injuries³³. The subsequent standoff at the Banjska Monastery led to the deaths of three heavily armed Serbian gunmen, the detention of several more individuals, and the seizure of a large weapons cache³⁴. The remaining militants retreated into Serbia. Kosovo government maintains that Serbian government is behind the Banjska terrorist attack³⁵.

The Banjska terrorist attack shifted some international perceptions, as it underscored the ongoing security challenges, potential Russian involvement in destabilizing the Western Balkans, and the need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to the normalization dialogue and relations between Kosovo and Serbia. This resulted with NATO bolstering capacities and increasing troops in Kosovo³⁶. Dimitar Bechev argued that Banjska incident, the most serious violence in Kosovo in years, turned the tables on Vučić³⁷. Astonishingly, Milan Radoicic, who publicly accepted responsibility for the attack, remains free in Serbia³⁸. This, arguably, demonstrates that Radoicic did not operate without the knowledge of Serbian state structures. His potential indictment could open a Pandora's box, potentially exposing the involvement of senior Serbian officials in planning the terrorist attack, but perhaps also the involvement of Russian elements. Kosovo government has repeatedly asked for his extradition to Kosovo to face justice, but this has not been successful so far.

33 For more information, please visit: <https://www.ft.com/content/2a99e631-dc6e-4788-b1f0-d021c9694add>

34 For more information, please visit: <https://www.gazetaexpress.com/policia-tregon-sa-armatim-ka-konfiskuar-ne-veri/>

35 Prime Minister Kurti's complete address at the press conference, December 23, 2023, <https://kryeminstri.rks-gov.net/en/blog/prime-minister-kurtis-complete-address-at-the-press-conference/>

36 For more information, please visit: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/nato-looking-into-permanent-increase-troop-numbers-kosovo-stoltenberg-2023-11-20/>

37 For more information, please visit: <https://carnegieendowment.org/europe/strategic-europe/2023/09/the-eu-cannot-give-up-on-serbia-and-kosovo?lang=en¢er=europe>

38 For more information, please visit: <https://www.rferl.org/a/serbia-release-monastery-attack-radoicic/32622767.html>

THE NEED TO RESET THE DIALOGUE

The current state of the dialogue for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia indicates a pressing need for a reset in the approach led by the European Union. This reset is essential for several reasons:

UNEVEN FOCUS AND SELECTIVE PRESSURE

The international community, particularly the EU, has primarily focused on the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-majority Municipalities (ASM), which should happen, but it has done so while neglecting other critical issues prioritized by Kosovo. This selective pressure has created a sense of imbalance and has contributed to Kosovo's crisis of confidence. Kosovo fears that making irreversible moves towards the ASM will not lead to the fulfillment of commitments from the international community, such as EU candidate status and recognition from the five EU member states that do not recognize its independence. The EU needs to ensure a balanced approach that addresses all aspects of the agreements equally, providing assurances that commitments will be honored.

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The EU must support and facilitate a more transparent dialogue process, ensuring that both parties are held accountable for their commitments and actions. Kosovo government needs to establish a clear and transparent structure, as outlined in Kosovo's Regulation (GRK) - NO. 13/2016, responsible for the normalization dialogue and urgently improve transparency of the dialogue process.

GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

The EU's lenient approach towards Serbia is partly influenced by broader geopolitical considerations, such as the desire to distance Serbia from Russia and China and to leverage Serbia's role in supporting Ukraine. While these strategic interests are important, they should not come at the expense of a fair and balanced dialogue process. The EU needs to recalibrate its approach to ensure that these external influences do not undermine the integrity of the normalization dialogue.

ESCALATING TENSIONS AND VIOLENCE

Recent events, such as the mass resignations of the Kosovo Serbs in the north, from public institutions, the violent clashes involving KFOR members, and the Banjska terrorist attack, highlight the urgent need for de-escalation and a more constructive engagement. The current approach in the normalization dialogue has failed to prevent these escalations. The EU must insist that Serbia and Kosovo, adopt de-escalation measures and engage in good-faith actions, supported by a more proactive and balanced EU facilitation.

RECOGNITION OF GROUND REALITIES

The Kosovo–Serbia normalization dialogue must also acknowledge the practical realities on the ground. The Kosovo government has legitimate concerns about the implementation of agreements and the lack of reciprocity from Serbia. At the same time, Serbia appears to perpetuate the status quo, making just enough progress to keep the dialogue alive without committing to a lasting resolution. The EU must address these dynamics by fostering an environment where both parties are incentivized to make meaningful progress, but also clearly outline and deliver on consequences for parties that fail to comply.

CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

The rising influence of far-right movements in the EU and elsewhere adds a new dimension to the geopolitical context. These movements often foster nationalism and oppose European integration within EU itself, complicating the EU's efforts to foster stability in the Western Balkans. Without a sustainable solution to the Kosovo–Serbia dispute, the entire Western Balkans region remains embroiled in this unresolved conflict, hampering progress towards European integration, and risking instability across the region. A more effective dialogue process is crucial to counteract these destabilizing forces and support the aspirations of Western Balkan countries to join the European Union.

COUNTERING RUSSIAN AND CHINESE INFLUENCE

The presence and influence of Russia and China in the Western Balkans add another layer of complexity to the situation. Circumstantial evidence, suggest Russia was involved in planning the Banjska terrorist attack of September, 2024³. Both countries have strategic interests in the region and can exploit instability to their advantage. If the EU fails to be effective in resolving the Kosovo–Serbia dispute, it undermines its credibility as a serious actor both in the Western Balkans and in the eyes of actor like China and Russia. A successful EU-led normalization process is crucial not only for regional stability but also for countering the influence of Russia and China, thereby reinforcing the EU's position as a dominant and reliable force in the Western Balkans.

Accordingly, based on all of the above, some ideas on what can be done differently are outlined below.

1. THE FIRST CHANGE NEEDED IS CLARITY REGARDING THE GOAL OR THE ENDGAME OF THE NORMALIZATION DIALOGUE

Numerous arguments across various research indicate that the EU has reached the limits of constructive ambiguity in addressing the Kosovo–Serbia dispute. Therefore, the European Council should explicitly state in their conclusions the main goal of the dialogue and define what a legally binding agreement means. Specifically, it needs to be made clear that Serbia’s recognition of Kosovo is not optional if Serbia wants to join the EU. While this statement might risk Serbia’s participation in the process from the EU’s perspective, it is an inevitable step that should be taken sooner rather than later. If direct acknowledgment is not feasible, the EU must find alternative ways to clarify the end goal of the normalization process to both parties, that does not leave a lot of room for interpretations.

2. BOTH KOSOVO AND SERBIA MUST FORMALLY ACCEPT THE AGREEMENT ON THE PATH TO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS

The most straightforward method is for the leaders of Kosovo and Serbia to sign the agreement. If this proves unattainable, the EU should ensure that Serbia formally accepts the APN, emphasizing that it constitutes an obligation under international law, as publicly stated by the HR Borell.

3. THE PROCESS SHOULD BE STRUCTURED WITH A CLEAR AND DETAILED FRAMEWORK, INCLUDING SPECIFIC TIMELINES FOR EACH PHASE

This framework should establish clear milestones and deliverables, sequenced and transparent. The European External Action Service (EEAS) should develop and publish regular Progress Report on Normalization of Relations. These reports should clearly outline the current status of implementation, highlight what remains unimplemented, and assign responsibility accordingly.

4. INCREASE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE NORMALIZATION DIALOGUE

The Kosovo government must urgently enhance transparency and accountability in the normalization dialogue. This can be achieved by regularly publishing implementation reports, agreements, conclusions, and arrangements reached in Brussels with Serbia. Additionally, the government should provide timely and accurate information to the media and the public about meetings related to the normalization dialogue in Brussels.

5. STREAMLINE THE STRUCTURE OF THE NORMALIZATION DIALOGUE

The Kosovo government must address the chaotic structure currently related to the normalization dialogue. The existing structure lacks transparency, and it is unclear who the members of the team or advisors to Deputy Prime Minister Besnik Bislimi, Kosovo's chief negotiator, are. To improve this, the government should implement its obligations under Regulation (GRK) - NO. 13/2016, which mandates the establishment of a Special Group on Normalization (Chapter IV) . Article 28 of the Regulation specifies the composition and mandate of the Group. The government should establish and functionalize this Special Group, making it the primary body for institutional accountability regarding the normalization of relations with Serbia. The Regulation can be amended to designate the Deputy Prime Minister as the chair of the Group. The government should also invite representatives from the opposition and civil society to participate in this Group. This Group should meet periodically to review the process, issue reports and positions, and when possible convene before and after significant dialogue meetings in Brussels.

6. REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Currently, there are too many meetings involving negotiators from Kosovo and Serbia, not necessarily only in Brussels, but also other events and meetings where they are invited to from think-tanks and other stakeholders. Moving from one meeting to another is not allowing for room for agreements to take hold, be subject of public discussions, and more importantly does not allow room for accountability and a conversation on implementation. To enhance the effectiveness of the dialogue, it is crucial to reduce the frequency of formal meetings in Brussels, have them more structured and regular, such as every second month. In each of the meetings there should be a standard item in the agenda to discuss the EEAS Progress Report on Normalization of Relations. Allowing more time between meetings will provide space for internal discussions and reflections on implementation. This approach will enable both parties to thoroughly consider the agreements, address any challenges, and develop well-thought-out strategies for successful implementation.

7. THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION SHOULD DEVISE A CONCRETE AND CREDIBLE PACKAGE OF INCENTIVES FOR BOTH SERBIA AND KOSOVO

This package can be built on existing programs and mechanisms, but it should clearly demonstrate the benefits of implementing agreements and normalizing relations between the two countries. This is important to facilitate a conversation in Kosovo and Serbia of opportunities lost in the normalization dialogue, because of the failure of governments to cooperate.

8. BOTH KOSOVO AND SERBIA NEED TO MAKE GESTURES OF GOOD FAITH

The Kosovo government should request the mayors and assembly members of the four municipalities in the north of the country to resign and organize new mayoral elections as soon as possible. Additionally, the government should prepare a proposal to address policing in the north and employ new Kosovo Serb police officers from the north of Kosovo. Serbia, needs to stop impeding Kosovo's membership in international organization, and encourage Kosovo Serbs to participate in Kosovo institutions, and publicly endorse Agreement on the Path to Normalization of Relations.

9. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FROM BOTH KOSOVO AND SERBIA SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE DIALOGUE PROCESS TO ENSURE BROADER SOCIETAL SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE AGREEMENTS REACHED

Involving these organizations can help incorporate the concerns and perspectives of communities, especially in Serb-populated areas, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the agreements. The EU envoy should hold consultative meetings with civil society organizations before official meetings with senior leaders from Kosovo and Serbia, or at least have some structures process in place on how civil society is involved.

10. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN BOTH COUNTRIES TO INFORM CITIZENS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF NORMALIZATION AND THE SPECIFIC TERMS OF THE AGREEMENTS REACHED

Cooperation with civil society is crucial to address disinformation that fuels distrust. This includes providing transparent and accurate information about the dialogue process and its outcomes.

ANNEX 1:

SOME OF KOSOVO'S COMMITMENTS FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH SERBIA

The following obligations largely stem from the different agreements that Kosovo has reached with Serbia in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue

1. Establish a fully reliable civil registry in Kosovo
2. Establish a fully reliable cadaster in Kosovo
3. Recognize university diplomas issued by accredited higher education institutions
4. The European University Association (EUA) supported by SPARK; a Dutch NGO certify the university diplomas
5. Kosovo establishes an association of ten Serb-majority municipalities
6. Kosovo Serb police officers serving in Serbian system in the four Serb-majority north municipalities will be integrated into the Kosovo police
7. Liaison officer in Belgrade, Serbia
8. Delineation of cadastral zones between South and North Mitrovica
9. Residents in the Kosovo's north can register their cars in Kosovo's system without paying extra duties
10. Recognize ID cards
11. Building the IBM border crossing points (Kosovo part of the obligation)
12. Exchange information to prevent criminal activities
13. Kosovo with the footnote (*)' participates on its own account and speaks for itself at all regional meetings
14. Members of Civil Protection (533) will be offered a place in equivalent Kosovo structures. Integration of civil protection members will be done in line with the Kosovo Law on Civil Service
15. A police regional commander for the four north Serb-majority municipalities will be selected. The commander shall be a Kosovo Serb

-
- 16.** Companies in the four north municipalities will be able to use the existing registration documents (Serbian) as proof to register in Kosovo
-
- 17.** A Development Fund for the north will be established
-
- 18.** The composition of the police force in the north will reflect the ethnic composition of the population
-
- 19.** Kosovo customs officers should have unrestricted access to the border crossings in the north
-
- 20.** The judicial authorities in Kosovo's north will be integrated into and operate within Kosovo's legal framework
-
- 21.** There will be one Basic Court and one Basic Prosecution Office for the Mitrovica region and multiple premises for the Mitrovica Basic Court
-
- 22.** The President of the Mitrovica Basic Court is a Kosovo Serb from Kosovo's north
-
- 23.** A Kosovo Serb will head the division of the Court of Appeals sitting in Mitrovica North
-
- 24.** Municipal elections shall be organized in the north municipalities in accordance with Kosovo law
-
- 25.** Neither side will block, or encourage others to block, the other side's progress in their respective EU path
-
- 26.** A full license for fixed telecommunications services will be issued to a new company, which will be a subsidiary of a Serbian company registered in accordance with the Kosovo regulatory framework
-
- 27.** Exchange liaison officers
-
- 28.** Establish cooperation between the two Chambers of Commerce through exchange of representatives
-
- 29.** Harmonization of certificates
-
- 30.** Kosovo Transmission Operator (KOSTT) becomes member of the European Network of Transmission System Operators (ENTSO-E)
-
- 31.** Removal of Barricades and Revitalization of the Bridge in Mitrovicë/a
-
- 32.** Recognize motor vehicle insurances
-
- 33.** Reciprocal recognition of ADR certificates for dangerous products
-

-
- 34.** Promote arbitration, mediation, and other forms of alternative dispute resolution as a tool to settle commercial disputes
-
- 35.** A new electricity company will be established under the Kosovo legal and regulatory framework to supply electricity and provide distribution services (such as billing, collection, maintenance and physical connection of new customers) to customers in the four Serb majority municipalities in the north and will be able to buy and sell power on the open market
-

ANNEX 2:

SERBIA'S COMMITMENTS FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH KOSOVO

The following commitments have been largely extracted directly from Chapter 35: Other Issues - Item 1: Normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, as well as agreements reached in the EU-led dialogue for normalization of relations. This list should not be taken as comprehensive account of all the obligations Serbia has undertaken in the process of normalization of relations with Kosovo.

- 1.** Serbia discontinues funding and support of Serbian structures (i.e., interim municipal councils, municipal staff) in order to finalize and consolidate municipal administrations in line with Kosovo law
- 2.** Neither side will block, or encourage others to block, the other side's progress in their respective EU path
- 3.** Serbia encourages the full respect of Kosovo legislation by the northern Kosovo municipal authorities, particularly on procurement and on the remaining open issues from the municipal Statutes (i.e., the use of municipal stamps and insignia in line with the applicable Kosovo legislation)
- 4.** Establish cooperation between the two Chambers of Commerce through exchange of representatives
- 5.** Serbia contributes to the continuation of the process (drafting of the Statute), within the timelines agreed and in line with Kosovo law, the First Agreement and the 25 August 2015 Agreement
- 6.** Serbia ensures transparency of its funding to the Association/Community of Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo
- 7.** Serbia provides quarterly information on the payment of pension benefits to its former police officers now integrated into the Kosovo Police, as appropriate, to the Kosovo competent authorities
- 8.** Serbia continues to engage constructively in reaching an agreement on the judicial support staff and the premises
- 9.** Serbia confirms the end of tenure for all its to-be integrated judicial personnel
- 10.** Serbia enacts a special legislation with regard to Serbian judicial institution in Kosovo as foreseen in the Serbian Law on seats and territorial jurisdictions of Courts and Prosecutors Offices

- 11.** Serbia provides quarterly information on the payment of pension's benefits for the integrated judicial personnel to the Kosovo judicial and prosecutorial councils, as appropriate
- 12.** Serbia adopts the necessary regulations on the discontinuation of payment of salaries and provision of financial means to the civil protection in Kosovo
- 13.** Serbia continues to consistently respect the provisions for the exchange of the official visits
- 14.** Serbia provides the Serb Liaison Officer in Pristina with all necessary administrative support (for example by paying his rent for the official premises)
- 15.** Serbia agrees on the visual appearance on official correspondence that is still not determined (stamps, symbols and letter-heads)
- 16.** Serbia continues to provide security support and access to Serbian interlocutors to the Kosovo Liaison Officers in Belgrade
- 17.** Serbia continues to engage in the process of normalisation between the Kosovan Transmission System Operator (KOSTT) and the Serbian transmission company (EMS), including by signing an interconnection agreement, and supporting KOSTT's membership of the European organisation, European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E). This agreement should cover the entire territory of Kosovo in line with the Energy Agreement
- 18.** Recognize motor vehicle insurances
- 19.** Serbia establishes the supply company (called "ElektroSever") in Kosovo, and fulfils the conditions under Kosovo legal and regulatory framework for the company to be granted a supply license
- 20.** Serbia contributes to reaching commercial arrangements for ElektroSever with the existing distribution company, if it is to be able to carry out distribution services
- 21.** Serbia solves the issue of the Serbian-appointed management of the Gazivode/Ujmani plant
- 22.** Serbia establishes the telecommunications company as a subsidiary of Srbija Telekom, and fulfils the conditions under the Kosovo legal and regulatory framework for the company to be granted a fixed telephony license
- 23.** Serbia respects the calendar and each of the steps agreed which establishes a parallel process between allocating a 3-digit dial code to Kosovo with granting a temporary authorisation for existing mobile operations in Kosovo
- 24.** Serbia engages in the co-operation process between telecommunication regulatory authorities

-
- 25.** Serbia gives its consent, as required, to the ITU allocating the 3-digit code to Kosovo, as well as the text of the ITU bulletin agreed in the Action Plan
-
- 26.** Serbia addresses the issue of the existence of re-located Serbian administrative customs structures with Kosovo denomination
-
- 27.** Serbia ceases the issuance of documentation or affixing of stamps with denominations that contravenes Serbian obligations under the 17 January 2013 agreement
-
- 28.** Serbia completes the establishment of all crossing points (IBM)
-
- 29.** Serbia processes requests for Mutual Legal Assistance
-
- 30.** Serbia improves control and/or closes alternative roads and by-passes to ensure exclusive use of official crossing points for goods and persons entering into or leaving Kosovo
-
- 31.** Serbia allows third states' nationals entry into Serbia from Kosovo
-
- 32.** Serbia implements the licence plates' arrangements in northern Kosovo for Kosovo residents
-
- 33.** Serbia publicly supports the implementation of the Agreement concluded on 25 August 2015, in particular its timetable leading up to the opening of the Mitrovica bridge for all traffic by summer/not later than end of June 2016
-
- 34.** Serbia respects the timelines agreed in the arrangements of 25 August 2015
-
- 35.** Serbia enables, from their side, Kosovo's effective participation in remaining regional initiatives, in line with the jointly agreed terms
-
- 36.** Serbia supports the inclusion of Kosovo's representatives in the management and administrative structures of regional organisations, provided that the merit principle, comparative analysis and the specific Terms of Reference are observed
-
- 37.** On the recognition of University Diplomas, Serbia engages constructively with Kosovo on a consistent procedure in order to achieve the results intended by the 2011 Agreement
-
- 38.** Serbia provides public support for the judicial process led by EULEX, including the Specialist Chambers and Prosecution Office
-
- 39.** Serbia remains committed to the EU-facilitated Dialogue, engages in reaching further agreements in new subjects/areas, furthering the normalisation in good faith, with a view to gradually lead to the comprehensive normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, in line with the negotiating framework
-
- 40.** Reciprocal recognition of ADR certificates for dangerous products
-

41. Return cadastral records to Kosovo institutions

42. Return civil registry books to Kosovo institutions

43. Removal of Barricades and Revitalization of the Bridge in Mitrovicë/a

Katalogimi në botim – **(CIP)**

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KCSS
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

ABOUT KCSS

Established in April 2008, the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) is a specialized, independent, and non-governmental organization. The primary goal of KCSS is to promote the democratization of the security sector in Kosovo and to improve research and advocacy work related to security, the rule of law, and regional and international cooperation in the field of security.

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