



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Permanent Council Nr 969 Vienna, 31 October 2013**

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#### **EU statement on the municipal elections in Kosovo\***

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The European Union would like to draw the attention of the OSCE Permanent Council to the Statement by EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, ahead of the Kosovo elections, issued on 31 October:

“The November 3 elections are a key moment in Kosovo's future and are an important element in the implementation of the April Agreement and the process of normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

A lot of people have worked very hard to prepare these elections, both in Pristina and in Belgrade, and I commend their efforts. My special thanks go to the OSCE whose dedication to their facilitation role has been instrumental to getting us where we are today.

At the beginning of the Dialogue process there were two courageous Prime Ministers. They had the vision and the courage to reach the April Agreement and implement it. I call on them today to show the same vision and courage in order to ensure fair and inclusive elections.

The EU will be following closely the conduct of the elections. I urge both leaders to address any remaining challenges on election day.

Aside from the particular nature of the elections as part of the April Agreement implementation, this electoral process must also be a step forward in the consolidation of Kosovo's democracy.

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On November 3 - just a few days after the opening of the negotiations on Stabilisation and Association Agreement - the EU expects free and fair electoral process from Kosovo.

My message to the people throughout Kosovo is: participate in the elections on Sunday. This is especially true for the Kosovo Serb community. I understand the concerns, particularly in the north, but participation is the best way to ensure that your voice is heard."

\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ICELAND+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates ALBANIA and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

\* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

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