EU/Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement

2015/0094(NLE) - 12/02/2016 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude a Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and of Kosovo, of the other part.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2016/342 on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and Kosovo, of the other part.

CONTENT: under this Council Decision, **the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, and Kosovo**, is approved on behalf of the Union for the parts falling under the TEU and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Agreement was signed on behalf of the Union on 22 October 2015 subject to its conclusion at a later date.

It seeks to **strengthen the strong links and establish a close and lasting relationship based on reciprocity and mutual interest**, which should allow Kosovo to further strengthen and extend its relations with the Union

Objectives of the Association: the Agreement provides for the establishment of an association between the Union and Kosovo involving reciprocal rights and obligations, common actions and special procedure.

The aims of this association are:

- to support the efforts of Kosovo to **strengthen democracy** and the rule of law; respect for the democratic principles and human rights, international law principles, including full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) shall form the basis of the policies of the EU and of Kosovo and constitute essential elements of this Agreement;
- to contribute to **political, economic and institutional stability** in Kosovo, as well as to the stabilisation of the region;
- to provide an appropriate framework for **political dialogue**, allowing the development of close political relations between the Parties;
- to support the efforts of Kosovo to develop its **economic and international cooperation**, should objective circumstances so permit, including through the approximation of its legislation to that of the EU;
- to support the efforts of Kosovo to complete the **transition into a functioning market economy**;
- to promote harmonious economic relations and **gradually develop a free trade area** between the EU and Kosovo over a period lasting a maximum of 10 years starting from the entry into force of this Agreement in accordance with this Agreement and in conformity with the GATT 1994 and the provisions contained in the relevant WTO agreements;
- to foster **regional cooperation** in all the fields covered by this Agreement.

Kosovo’s international status: it is important to note that the conclusion of the future agreement is without prejudice to Member States' position on the status of Kosovo, which will be decided in accordance with their national practice and international law. In addition, **none of the terms**, wording or definitions used in this Decision and the attached text of the Agreement, nor any recourse to all the

necessary legal bases for the conclusion of the Agreement, **constitute recognition of Kosovo by the Union as an independent State** nor does it constitute recognition by individual Member States of Kosovo in that capacity where they have not previously taken such a step.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 12.2.2016.