



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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President of the European Commission

**Statement by President Barroso following his meeting
with Ms Atifete Jahjaga, President of Kosovo**

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Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome President Jahjaga to the European Commission today. I am happy that the President accepted the invitation I had extended to her to visit Brussels when we last met in Pristina in May 2011.

I see this visit as a clear sign of the President's strong commitment to Kosovo's European path.

We just had an open and fruitful exchange of views on the state of play of Kosovo's European perspective.

We, at the European Commission, are deeply committed to Kosovo's European future and I have reiterated our determination to support Kosovo in this endeavour.

The truth is that, together, we are making good progress. Kosovo has set up a National Council on European Integration and I commended the President's leadership in establishing this Council – it sends the right message about Kosovo's engagement.

The European Commission is also living up to its commitments. We have launched the visa liberalisation process for Kosovo and we had our first meeting of the Structured Dialogue on the Rule of Law.

Furthermore, we are also preparing a feasibility study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo, which will be ready this autumn.

Despite having made an important journey together already, we can go much further and we can do more.

In my discussions with President Jahjaga, I emphasised the need to continue focusing and engaging on the key priorities that are of immediate relevance to the feasibility study, such as public administration, electoral reform, the rule of law, integration of minorities and trade.

In this regard, it is also important for Kosovo to ensure that our European rule of law mission – EULEX – can continue to carry out its mandate and that its achievements are sustainable now and in the future.

I also reaffirmed the importance of Kosovo's constructive re-engagement in its EU-facilitated dialogue with Serbia. We all have an interest to find sustainable solutions to practical issues that will determine both Pristina's and Belgrade's further progress towards the European Union.

As you know, I have encouraged President Nikolić to follow the same path when he visited me recently.

We also discussed Kosovo's ideas to reach out to the local community in the north. It is essential that all political forces in Kosovo take steps to build confidence there in an inclusive manner.

In a nutshell, the pace of Kosovo's movement towards its European future rests with Kosovo, its people and its leaders.

From our part, Madam President, you can count with a steadfast partner and friend – we want Kosovo to move closer to our large and diverse European family. It is in your hands to do, with our support, what is necessary to seize a better future for Kosovo and its people.

I thank you for your attention.