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KTC Discusses Security, Joint Memorandum

The Kosovo Transitional Council today discussed the 29 June joint Memorandum of Understanding between UNMIK and the Serb community. They were also briefed on the security situation as well as the Kosovo Public Reconstruction Investment Program.

UNMIK Police Deputy Commissioner Michael Jorsbach introduced the KTC to the details of the UNMIK Police Special Security Task Force, which was created in response to the Joint Understanding of 29 June. The objectives of the Task Force, which is already in operation, are to develop a 'partnership for security' to strengthen the ties between UNMIK Police and KFOR on the one hand and the local communities on the other. The means to do this will include regular coordination at the neighbourhood level in planning and information flow through local community offices. The Task Force will also enhance investigations and patrolling strategies by means of pro-active identification of existing and probable crime areas; pro-active identification and analysis of crime patterns and modus operandi; the creation of joint operations enforcement plans based on those analyses; and identification of priorities for the application of security resources, including joint operations with KFOR.

Explaining the Understanding, discussions focused on the joint Memorandum signed between SRSG Bernard Kouchner and Bishop Artemije of the Serb National Council of Gracanica. Dr. Kouchner again stressed the need for the Memorandum, as well as for temporary Community Offices in minority areas as stipulated by the draft regulation on Self-governance for Municipalities. He said the next KTC meeting would be devoted to security and human rights for minorities and all communities.

Dr. Kouchner told media that the temporary offices would be under the control of the Municipal Assembly, with directors appointed by that Assembly. Thus they would be integrated into municipal structures and would not function as parallel systems.

"I tried to convince the Council that this is a partnership for security," Dr. Kouchner told media after today's meeting. "This is not a parallel structure ... The memorandum is a piece of paper. However, the reality is grave and difficult and felt by all in the international community who came here to help you.

"This is a tricky issue: If I tell the international community that you don't want us to build security for minorities, it will be the end of assistance. So let's work together. Let us offer new possibilities, proposals and projects for everyone's security, not only for the

minorities. However, unfortunately, the fact remains that the only community which is not able to walk in the streets are the Serbs. The international community will not forgive that."

"The whole society must protect people, with administrative and human measures and with personal involvement," he said.

Asked his reaction to threats of resignation by some administrative department co-heads over the new regulation, Dr. Kouchner said, "I am very sorry for them. But between one co-head threatening to resign and my understanding of human rights and the international community, there is no choice. And they will not resign. I hope not."

Dr. Kouchner said he needed to convince the Kosovo Albanians that they would never have to repeat the past and that preventing that possibility was the reason for the international community's ongoing involvement in Kosovo.

In other business, the co-heads of the Department of Reconstruction--Mehmet Hajrizi and Stephen Lewarne--described the core strategies of the reconstruction and development effort. These are the establishment of a ministry of finance and a banking and payments authority (already accomplished by the Central Fiscal Authority and Banking and Payments Bureau); establishing conditions for private sector development; and the organization of economic reconstruction within the Department of Reconstruction.

While the goal of the reconstruction effort is that it be funded by capital raised domestically, and directed by the 20 JIAS departments, it is currently almost entirely externally financed, the co-heads explained.

The current reconstruction program aims to firm up donor commitments of some DM 1.4 billion. Contributions are coming in, but some priority areas remain under-funded. The program articulates the most urgent needs for the rest of the year 2000 and 2001 and focuses donor support to the areas of highest priorities. Those areas are:

- Rehabilitation of courts, schools, hospitals and other public buildings, a DM 140 million effort.
- Development of multiple solid waste disposal facilities and environmental clean-up. (part of the DM 725 million needed for the utilities sector to which Japan, the EU, Germany and Italy have already contributed DM 25 million).
- Rehabilitation of the most serious deficiencies in the transport infrastructure. (EU, EU member states and World Bank have contributed DM 72 million of the 179 million needed this year.)
- Development of human resources for a modern Kosovo. (DM 47 million required).

The Department of Reconstruction is also taking up the housing effort begun by UNHCR, and will oversee the reconstruction of more than 20,000 homes this year, with 5,000 having been completed by the EU Task Force and bilateral donors. The private sector, however, has begun the majority of housing reconstruction.