

# UNMIK PRESS RELEASE



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## **New Judges and Prosecutors Appointed**

PRISTINA—SRSG Dr. Bernard Kouchner yesterday appointed an additional 139 judges and prosecutors and 309 lay-judges in Kosovo. With these appointments, the number of local judges and prosecutors in Kosovo is now 405. Several members of minority communities have been also been appointed yesterday.

Dr. Kouchner made the appointments taking into consideration recommendations made to him by the Advisory Judicial Commission about a month ago. He said he had consulted widely in order to make a proper assessment of the need for professional, qualified judges and prosecutors to assist in reestablishing the rule of law in Kosovo. He said these appointments were part of UNMIK's continuous effort to improve the functioning of the judicial system in Kosovo.

Dr. Kouchner said a number of excellent candidates were recommended for appointment but due to budgetary constraints in the administration of judiciary in Kosovo, it was not possible to appoint all of them.

The new appointments will be valid until the end of this year, due to the fact that the budget for next year has not been authorized and UN rules do not allow appointments to be made without an authorized budget to support them.

The first swearing in ceremony of the judges took place today at Gnjilane, to be followed by Mitrovica on 11 August, Pristina on 15 August, Pec/Peja on 16 August and Prizren on 17 August, 2000.

The appointments were made to the Supreme Court, the District, Municipal and Minor Offences Courts in each region, the Commercial Court in Pristina and the High Court of Minor Offences also in Pristina.

The list of the judges, prosecutors and lay-judges will be made available in the Supreme Court, the District and Municipal Courts in each region and UNMIK and the OSCE offices in the region and municipalities.

Dr. Kouchner complimented the co-heads of the Department of Justice, Ms. Nekibe Kelmendi and Ms. Sylvie Pantz, for working tirelessly and cooperatively together to try and achieve the goal of reestablishing the rule of law in Kosovo.