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SRSG visits Kosovo B Power Plant

Pristina-- SRSG Bernard Kouchner yesterday visited Kosovo B Power Plant to see the progress made in the overhaul of the unit B2, and to assess the power situation in Kosovo before winter.

Dr. Kouchner was briefed on work done so far and on that which remains to enable Kosovo B to restart on 30 November as scheduled. SRSG thanked European Union for its generous contribution to repair the power plant, and the EDF Consortium, which is in charge of the overhaul of Kosovo B.

"I am particularly happy to see the changes from my visit last winter. I am confident that this time people of Kosovo are not going to cope with power cuts in a harsh winter with a temperature of 30 degrees below zero", said SRSG, Bernard Kouchner.

There are many reasons to expect improvement this coming winter, according to the management of the Kosovo Electricity Company (KEK). Kosovo B2, which normally generates 220 Megawatts, has been under repair since August this year. After the overhaul, B2 will be capable of generating 270 Megawatts. It will also be significantly more reliable than in the past. Units 3 and 4 of Kosovo A Power Plant have become more reliable thanks to extensive repairs and maintenance work. The three main transmission lines are also operational now and will increase Kosovo's capacity to import electricity.

The refurbishment of the heating system in Kosovo will help in decreasing electricity demands this winter. Emergency repairs have been carried out on the district heating plants in Pristina, Gjakova and Mitrovica to enable them to function during the coming heating season. A year's contract was signed with the Macedonian Oil Company OKTA, which will provide continuous fuel oil to the district heating plants. The heating system will begin functioning on 1 November.

SRSG took the opportunity to congratulate managers and workers of KEK, and all the people of Kosovo for the first free and democratic elections in the history of Kosovo to be held on 28 October. "The peaceful and non-violent manner in which the campaign was conducted proved that the elections are going to be a success for the people of Kosovo and the international community", said Dr. Kouchner.