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The situation in Kosovo* and the role of the Council of Europe

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2006 (2013)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the Parliamentary Assembly's continuing attention to the situation in Kosovo. It shares the Assembly's opinion that irrespective of the status of Kosovo, all the people living there should have a European perspective and benefit of European standards for democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance.
2. On 12 December 2012, the Committee of Ministers took note of the Secretary General's decision regarding direct interaction of the Council of Europe officials involved in Council of Europe activities in Kosovo with officials from relevant and competent authorities in Kosovo based on the principle of "functional capacity". Such contacts are now possible on account and within the limits of the functional responsibilities exercised by the relevant Kosovo officials. At the same time, such interaction cannot be understood as implying, in any manner, that the Council of Europe takes any position with regard to the status of Kosovo.
3. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the enhanced action by the Secretariat, as decided by the Secretary General, with regard to Kosovo in the interest of all the people living there. In this regard, Council of Europe activities aimed at strengthening democracy, the rule of law, human rights (including minority protection) and at protecting cultural heritage are of particular interest and value. The Committee of Ministers encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts in helping to enshrine and implement Council of Europe standards in Kosovo.
4. These developments have led the Secretariat to launch a process of assessing and updating its co-operation and assistance strategy to further enhance the Council of Europe action in Kosovo, mainly regarding the implementation of human rights and rule of law standards. New projects are under consideration and will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers, notably in the fields of anti-discrimination, support to the judiciary, as well as action aimed to support the fight against trafficking in human beings. As far as the fight against corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism is concerned, a Joint European Union/Council of Europe Programme against Economic Crime in Kosovo (PECK) has been implemented since February 2012. In the area of human rights, a Joint European Union/Council of Europe Programme on Enhancing Human Rights has been implemented since February 2012. Concerning the situation of the Roma in Kosovo, a Joint European Union/Council of Europe Programme on support measures in the field of education to forced returnees and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is about to start. At the regional level, a Joint European Union/Council of Europe Programme on Intercultural mediation for Roma communities (ROMED) in which Kosovo is involved has been implemented since 2011 and other regional Joint European Union/Council of Europe Programmes on CyberCrime; on Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage (Ljubljana Process II); on promotion of Human Rights and Minority Protection; on Inclusive Education are currently running. It should be also noted that Phase 2 of a Joint Programme "Europe Union/Council of Europe support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo (PDCK II)" began in October 2012.

1. Adopted at the 1174th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (19 June 2013).

* Any references to Kosovo in this text, whether to the territory, institutions or population, shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.



5. The Committee of Ministers reiterates its position that a meaningful monitoring process – including the follow-up to the recommendations made by the monitoring bodies – implies the involvement of the relevant and competent authorities in Kosovo. In addition to the work of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Kosovo, the Committee of Ministers will look into possibilities for other Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms to work in Kosovo.
6. In carrying out its action in Kosovo, the Council of Europe will continue to closely co-operate with the European Union, the OSCE and United Nations agencies in view of an enhanced co-ordination.