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KTC Discusses Legal Framework and KEK

PRISTINA--- The Chairman of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Legal framework Johan Van Lamoen, today briefed the Kosovo Transitional Council about the work of the group and the progress made so far.

PDSRSG Gary Matthews chaired the KTC. He briefed the members about the IAC meeting yesterday and the visit of SRSG Hans Haekkerup to New York and Washington and his meeting there. Among these was a meeting with the 'Friends of Kosovo' group. Mr. Matthew explained that this group is made up of 30 UN member states, including the five permanent members of the Security Council and most EU member states, who share a special interest and concern for the situation in the region. He said that the SRSG had urged the members of this group to maintain long-term commitment to Kosovo and, in particular, their financial support. In view of the developments in the region, Mr. Haekkerup's meetings have an added significance, Mr. Matthew said.

Mr. Van Lamoen said that the issue of the text of the title has been set aside for the time being, to be taken up again later. "UNMIK's view is that the word 'constitution' might be more appropriate when it comes to the final settlement", he said.

Mr. Van Lamoen said once the JWG has produced the text, it will be submitted to the SRSG who will conduct political consultations on the final wording before taking a final decision. In these consultations, the SRSG will, as announced earlier, consult with the international community and the countries in the region. "However, no one besides, the SRSG and the UN Secretary General will have a veto."

Mr. Van Lamoen regretted that the Kosovo Serb representative was not participating in the JWG's discussions and hoped that this would change soon. He urged other communities to coordinate with the Bosniac representative on the JWG, Mr. Abedin Ferovic, to make their points of view heard in the group meetings.

In response to a question, Mr. Van Lamoen said that 70 per cent of the responsibilities would be immediately transferred to the provisional institutions, while some will be shared by the JIAS structures and some will be the exclusive competencies of the SRSG. He said the JWG was presently discussing the preamble and the basic principles of the document.

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In the security briefing today, the KFOR representative expressed concern over the fighting on the Kosovo-FYROM border and its spread to the Tetovo area. He said KFOR would do everything to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. It had stepped up monitoring and surveillance activity on the border with increased manpower and specialised equipment. He warned the developments in FYROM would discredit all Albanians in the regions. “Force can’t achieve political agendas”, he added.

The acting co-head of the Department of Public Utilities Jo Trutschler, responded to the issues raised by the KTC Working Group on Economic Affairs in its report on the KEK. He pointed out several flaws and clarified issues raised in the report, saying it did contain all the available information. He said the World Bank had just begun a study to examine Kosovo’s energy needs over the next 15 years. He said KEK was in the middle of an overhaul. It was also in the process of reducing the workforce, which was a “tough and tight process”. He said there was corruption in the KEK and his department looks into every allegation of corruption.

Mr. Trutschler said the KEK was in the process of outsourcing the maintenance and revenue collection work in the minority enclaves to improve services. This work would also be extended to the majority areas.