



KOSOVO

COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

June 13, 2008

Spain refuses to participate in NATO training of Kosovo security force

KosovoCompromise Staff

Spain will not take part in the training of the Kosovo Security Forces (KSF), to be formed by Pristina after the constitution of an "independent Kosovo" comes into force on June 15, Spanish State Secretary for the Defence Policy Luis Cuesta announced in Brussels on Friday.

"We will not participate in the training of these forces", Cuesta told a meeting of the NATO defence ministers, who decided on Thursday that NATO should train KSF.

Spanish diplomatic sources said Madrid believes that their participation would mean an "implicit recognition of Kosovo" – which it refuses.

On Thursday, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced the possibility that certain NATO countries, which do not recognize the independence of Kosovo, will not take part in the training of KSF, because this "could be viewed as the recognition" of the independence of the province.

Scheffer said that KSF would be a professional, multiethnic and lightl- armed force, but that it would "not be an army."

The 2,500-strong KSF will initially focus primarily on crisis response, explosives removal and civil emergency response, Scheffer said.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the NATO decision was "much awaited", while Belgrade harshly criticized the move.

In a first reaction, Serbian chief of staff, general Zdravko Ponoss, cancelled his Friday meeting with the Kfor commander Xavier de Marhnac.