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Zannier and Feith for talks on practical issues, not on status

KosovoCompromise Staff

Unmik chief Lamberto Zannier and Special EU envoy for Kosovo Pieter Feith are in favor of direct talks between Belgrade and Pristina on practical issues, while Belgrade is insisting that status talks first must be renewed.

Zannier has said that in the following period, he would like to initiate negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, but not on Kosovo status.

“In doing that, I do not want to encourage any new negotiations on important political issues, but I rather want the talks to help settle a number of practical issues in Kosovo”, he explained.

Zannier sees UNMIK's future role in the region first of all as a mediator between the ethnic Albanians and Serbs.

“The channels for political dialogue have to remain open, and since we are recognised by all the parties we can talk with everyone”, the Italian diplomat underlined.

“Since Kosovo institutions have now assumed responsibility, we will no longer have any role in the administration”, he said.

Zannier also added that although UN Security Council Resolution 1244 still granted him the executive authority in Kosovo, he lacked the instruments to realise it because Kosovo Albanians, as well as the countries that had recognised that new state, viewed the new Kosovo constitution as the grounds for the administration and legislature.

“We are a link with the countries that have not recognised Kosovo”, he assessed, admitting the fact that Pristina had no major interest in UNMIK.

EU's Feith said that it is not in his jurisdiction to renew the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina and that it is for Zannier to try to speed up the talks.

“He (Zannier) has had consultations with the two governments and it depends on the government of Kosovo and the government in Belgrade whether they can find joint grounds for talks”, Feith said.

“The role of UNMIK is to make these talks easier and I believe that all agree that direct talks would be the best solution”, he added.



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In Belgrade, Serbian President Boris Tadic reiterated, meanwhile, Serbia's position which insists on renewing status talks first before any direct talks between Belgrade and Pristina becomes possible.

Serbia is currently discussing practical issues with Unmik.