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Greece: Eulex should operate under the status-neutral UN framework

KosovoCompromise Staff

Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Petros Doukas said it is important that the EU mission in Kosovo "operates within the status-neutral framework of the United Nations."

"There are diverging positions within the EU on the issue of recognition of Kosovo as an independent country. It is therefore important that EULEX operates within the status-neutral framework of the United Nations," Doukas said.

He also said that "cooperation with Belgrade is essential for the smooth and effective deployment of EULEX."

"We need to draw our attention on the explosive rates of unemployment and underdevelopment that currently prevail in Kosovo. Grey economy can also lead to grey politics," said Doukas who on Monday arrived in a two-day visit to Belgrade as the head of a large delegation of leading Greek businessmen and investors.

As for the possible recognition of Kosovo, Doukas said that "Greece, being a country of the region, follows developments on the ground very carefully."

"Our stance, vis-a-vis recognition, which remains a sovereign prerogative of each state, is shaped on the basis of our national interests, stability of the region as well as international legality," he said.

"Greece voted in favour of Serbia's proposed resolution (to request the International Court of Justice opinion about the legality of Kosovo's independence) at the UN General Assembly, Doukas said and added that this stand should not be interpreted only as a signal of support to friendly Serbia.

"It also constitutes a tangible proof of the consistency that characterises our foreign policy on issues of this nature," Doukas said.

Meanwhile, Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said in New York that the conditions under which the deployment of EULEX in Kosovo would be acceptable to Serbia are clear and that the mission will not get UN Security Council support without Serbia's acceptance.

Any international civilian presence in Kosovo must be in keeping with the UN SC Resolution 1244 and be status neutral and must not implement Marti Ahtisaari's plan, Jeremic said.



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He pointed to the importance of the six-point plan set out by UN Secretary General ban Ki-Moon in his letter to Serbian President Boris Tadic, including continuing presence of UN institutions in part of Kosovo with a majority Serb population.

The deployment of a civilian mission in Kosovo will not be legal if the UN SC does not agree on its neutrality regarding status and any mission in Kosovo must have UN SC approval, he said.

Jeremic said he was assured by Russia that it will support Serbia's stand.

If the mission were to endanger Serbia's sovereignty and territorial integrity in any way, even implicitly, and if it is not committed to neutrality regarding status and to compliance with Resolution 1244, Russia will not support it in the UN SC, he said.

If these principles are not accepted, there will be no room in Kosovo for any mission but UNMIK, he said.