



# KOSOVO

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### **Kosovo NGO: Corruption is blatant**

KosovoCompromise Staff

The absence of the rule of law and the lack of a coordinated effort between local and international officials has made corruption in Kosovo very elusive and difficult to tackle, says Avni Zogiani, head of the anti-corruption NGO "Cohu" ("Rise Up").

Zogiani said the people of Kosovo were witnessing blatant and severe violations of the law continuously by high officials, none of whom is ever punished.

"There was an open violation of law in significant tenders, such as the bid for the second mobile operator, where the work of the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) was flawed and no measures were undertaken by anyone," Zogiani told the Balkan Insight portal.

He said his agency had established all these violations with factual evidence, but no one had been taken to court because strong independent institutions did not exist.

"Kosovo is clearly not a country where one can talk about checks and balances because you do not have the necessary institutions to make sure central institutions and high officials will obey the law", added Zogiani.

In a November 2008 progress report, the European Union said "corruption is still widespread and remains a major problem in Kosovo," mainly "due to insufficient legislative and implementing measures and a lack of determination and the weakness of the judicial system."

Even Pristina's main backer, the United States, admitted that "corruption is widespread and anti-corruption efforts suffer from a lack of cohesive, forceful action and follow-through with punitive measures."