



# KOSOVO

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## **Serbia to continue spreading its functions in Kosovo**

KosovoCompromise Staff

Serbian minister for Kosovo Slobodan Samardzic said that Belgrade would continue strengthening and spreading its functions in the province, at the same time defending its citizens, despite the unilateral secession declared by Pristina.

Two weeks after the unilaterally declared independence of Kosovo, Samardzic said that "this act of violation of the international and domestic laws was backed by some countries which recognized, to their historic disgrace, the independence of Kosovo."

"In such a situation, for Serbia there is no other option but to defend its state and national interests. Serbia, via its state documents and state policy, has definitively opted for that," Samardzic stated.

He said that Serbia's fundamental position is to defend its citizens in Kosovo.

"This is why Serbia will continue strengthening and spreading its functions in Kosmet in all parts populated by its loyal citizens," Samardzic pointed out.

He added that for such a policy in Kosovo, Serbia expects the understanding and help of countries and international organizations which advocate the salvation and preservation of international law.

"In the future, this will be Serbia's basic criteria for its relations with countries and international organizations in Europe and worldwide," Samardzic stated.

In Pristina, the EU Special representative and self-appointed "International Representative" Pieter Feith said that Serbs in northern Kosovo will not get "either cantons nor autonomy".

"That is not envisaged, and I have never discussed it with the Kosovo government. That is not the aim of the International Steering Group for Kosovo, and it is not a part of our plan", Feith said.

But Samardzic refuted Feith's authority.

"Feith's mission has no legal basis in the international law and he is well aware of that. His statements have a private character and, in any case, they have no binding power either for Serbia, or for the Serbs living in Kosovo and Metohia," Samardzic said.



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Samardzic said that Feith's statements are groundless and cannot be taken seriously.

"This is how matters stand at present and how they will remain until Feith and his mission withdraw from Kosovo," Samardzic set out.

A prominent leader of the Kosovo Serbs in northern Kosovska Mitrovica, Marko Jaksic, added that not a single Serb leader in Kosovo would cooperate with Feith.

The EU mission's status remains in limbo, as the UN refuses to "transfer its authority" as Brussels and Washington had hoped for.

"There is, and will be a power vacuum simply because UNMIK was psychologically prepared to leave the province and leave the administration to the EU. However, UNMIK chief (Joachim Ruecker) did not receive new instructions," a Western diplomat told KosovoCompromise.com.