



# KOSOVO

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## Troika in London to set up stage for New York talks

Kosovo Compromise Staff, Sept 17, 2007

The Contact group troika is set to meet in London on Tuesday and Wednesday with the representatives of Belgrade and Pristina in a bid to prepare the stage for the upcoming beginning of direct talks between Belgrade and Pristina, scheduled for September 28 in New York.

The Belgrade delegation – led by the ministers for Kosovo Slobodan Samardzic and Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic – is due to meet the EU-Russia-US troika on Tuesday evening, while Pristina's meeting is scheduled on Wednesday.

The meetings are expected to sum up the results of the Vienna talks held on August 30 and to resolve open procedural questions linked to the holding of direct talks.

The precise agenda of the direct talks will be one of the core issues.

The Pristina delegation agreed on direct talks, but refuses to talk on the status of the southern Serbian province, arguing it had been resolved by the proposal of former UN envoy Martti Ahtisaari on the "supervised independence".

The government of Serbia, on the other side, insists on direct talks on status, recalling that the Ahtisaari plan was rejected in the UN Security Council in July.

The London meetings will also be an opportunity to discuss the breaching of the agreement made in Vienna to avoid provocative statements.

Belgrade has accused Pristina of not respecting the agreement as Kosovo's Prime minister Agim Ceku – who will be leading his delegation in London – made clear his intention to proclaim the independence of the province after December 10.

It has also criticized the US for statements suggesting Washington would recognize a unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo.

Kosovo will also be one of the key topics of the Tuesday meeting in Moscow between Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov and his French counterpart Bernard Kouchner.