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Solana: Negotiated agreement possible before December 10

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The EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana stated on Wednesday that prospects exist for a negotiated agreement on the status of Kosovo before December 10, and said that the EU would be ready to send its mission to Kosovo when the UN decides to withdraw UNMIK.

Speaking before the Foreign Political Committee of the European Parliament, Solana said that, after December 10, the three envoys of the Contact Group will submit and report to the UN Security Council, adding that it was still not known whether a new UN resolution on Kosovo will be adopted.

He pointed out that the EU must be "prepared for any outcome," and for deploying its judicial and police mission in Kosovo, which is supported by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU.

"We have to br prepared, we Europeans, to remain in the driving seat," he said.

Solana said that he did not know "what will be the legal foundation for the EU mission," but that it was clear that the EU, when the UN decides that it is time for UNMIK to be replaced by an EU mission, would be prepared to respond "properly and on time"

The EU mission would number some 1,800 personnel -1,400 of them police officers - and cost around 150 million euros a year.

The EU High representative said it was very good that the new negotiations were initiated with the mediation of the three Contact Group's envoys, although he estimated that the meeting between Belgrade and Pristina, held in New York at the top level on September 28, had brought "nothing dramatic."

However, Solana cited as a good sign the adoption of the New York Declaration and the fact that this was the first direct meeting between Belgrade and Pristina.

The EU enlargement commissioner Olli Rehn said the EU and the Contact Group are resolved to find a solution for Kosovo.



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He said that the bloc and the Contact Group would "leave no stone unturned" in efforts to find a solution through negotiations and an "active approach."

Asked whether the EU was considering a "plan B" to set the legal basis for the EU to take over administration without a new UN resolution in place, the enlargement commissioner reiterated the EU's commitment to the negotiating process.

"The EU fully supports the work of the Contact Group mediating Troika," he underscored.