

European Parliament presentation

Strasbourg, 11 May 2016

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The criteria established by Copenhagen European Council on 1993 and later on confirmed by Thessaloniki Declaration 2003, paved the way for WB countries in their EU accession processes.

8 years after the independence of Kosovo, two very important processes sealed our future toward EU integration such as signature of the SAA and positive recommendation on visa lifting. Talking about visa, I will be happy to see my daughter soon traveling freely throughout Schengen zone, as I was able to travel as a student without visa, almost 30 years ago.

In addition membership to the UEFA, which we hope that this will open the door for FIFA membership, winning of golden and silver medal in Judo European championship, nomination of the Kosovo movie for Oscar, are few elements that marked the recent period of successes for Kosovo.

Kosovo and its people remain committed in their path toward EU integration processes no matter of their political affiliation, ethnicity or religion background. Kosovo is a potential candidate for European Union (EU) membership. In recent years, the country has accelerated its integration process into the EU, including through:

- **Negotiations and signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)**, which was signed last year in October 2015 and entered into force April 1, 2016; which I would like to thank the European Parliament for approving this agreement;
- **Deepening coordination with the European Commission (EC) on economic policies and governance issues** (including through the submission of the Economic Reform Programme);
- **Remaining a constructive partner with the EU through three lateral talks with Serbia on the normalization of bilateral relations.**
- **EU integration is not only our political aim to achieve but EU is our main partner in trade and economic exchange, 42% of Kosovo trade is with EU while 31% of Kosovo goods are exported to the EU member states. EU integration in WB terms means not only political stability but also security and economical prosperity for the whole region including Kosovo.**

We are in an early stage of alignments of the EU accession processes and many reforms supported mainly by EU through IPA (pre accession funds) are in a process to reach EU standards and comply with eu acquies.

SAA and visa lib. will offer a new dimension to the peoples life, especially to the students and businesses... who will be able to see from the close how their counterpart are and this will raise their awareness and competition which is so much lacking in Kosovo.

Beside the two above mentioned key elements, there are several sectors undergoing through reforms such as: economic reforms, public administration, rule of law, fight on organised crime and corruption, etc.

Regarding economical development, it is important to mention that Kosovo's economic growth was the highest in the region for the previous year, 3.5% GDP growth. It has been steady and generally at rates above those in neighbouring countries, all these years since 2008. The robust growth since independence has been largely attributable to public investments in infrastructure, donor assistance and remittances.

Economy is one of the key priorities of the Government, we have adopted the law on foreign investments and strategy on economic development and other following mechanisms. The Law (adopted in early January 2016) and the national development strategy are focused on attracting foreign investors and creation of additional (formal) jobs, a topic that is rather top priority for the government. In addition, the law on foreign investments aims to shorten the bureaucratic procedures for potential investors in Kosovo. In addition the law also entitles the Government of Kosovo to directly negotiate with investors and encourage investments in case they meet the criteria as stated by the Strategy.

Kosovo wants to shift its growth model from one driven by remittances and consumption to one driven by investment and the tradable sector. At the same time reforms aim at increasing domestic productivity and trade.

Reforms on Public administration remains in a focus of the government where there has been a progress in legal and strategic framework but of course accountability and efficiency need to improve.

On judicial system, Kosovo successfully adapted a substantial body of legislation in the area of rule of law. The setting up of Anti Corruption Task Force was the first step. Just recently police mission in Kosovo conducted a major operation against an Albanian-Serb organised crime ring.

The reforms are ongoing in judicial system and the Kosovo Institutions are committed to continue its work in order to bring concrete results, especially in developing further the track records in high level corruption and organised crime cases.

In regard to the public procurement, Kosovo has made important progress by amending the law and making the procurement process more transparent where as of January this year, all companies can register online and/or ask for information online and monitor all procurement process that are ongoing, as it is regulated with law on access to public information.

However, the focus of the Government will continue to be on economic development, agriculture, energy, rule of law, fight against corruption, and other sectors in parallel manner .

By this, I would like to end my presentation and leave some room for QA session.

At the same time, I would like to use this opportunity to ask for your support (EP Parliament) on visa issue as you were always supportive until now.

I will end up my presentation by quoting the HR Mogherini in Prishtina on May 5, “Kosovo is part and in the heart of the Europe, what remains to be done is to bring Kosovo to the EU”.

Freedom of media 5, from 1-7

Kosovo's ranking in the World Bank Doing Business 2016 Report shows that Kosovo is ranked 66th.

Krahasimi i pesë treguesve të përzgjedhur Treguesi Kosova Mesatarja e vendeve të Evropës Juglindore që nuk janë anëtare të BEsë

Bruto produkti vendor për kokë banori €2.935 €3.504

Përqindja e papunësisë 30,1% 20,8%

Pjesëmarrja në tregun e punës 40,5% 49,7%

Përqindja e popullsisë që jetojnë në varfëri 29,9% 19,7%

Raporti mes eksporteve dhe importeve 12% 46.5%