



**Second meeting of the Accession Conference with Serbia  
at Ministerial level - First two chapters opened  
Brussels, 14 December 2015**

The second meeting of the Accession Conference with Serbia at Ministerial level was held today in Brussels to open negotiations on Chapter 32 - Financial control and Chapter 35 - Other business: Item 1: Normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo\*.

Today's meeting marked the start of substantial accession negotiations with Serbia, following the opening of negotiations on 21 January 2014, and good progress achieved in the analytical examination (screening) of the EU *acquis*.

The European Union delegation was led by Mr Jean Asselborn, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg, on behalf of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The European Commission was represented by Mr Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood policy and Enlargement negotiations. The Serbian delegation was led by Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić and included First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, the Minister without portfolio responsible for European integration, Jadranka Joksimović and the Minister of Finance, Dušan Vujović.

Further Accession Conferences will be planned, as appropriate, in order to take the process forward in the first half of 2016.

**Chapters opened**

**Chapter 32 - Financial control**

Regarding the opening of negotiations on Chapter 32 - Financial control, the Union has closely examined Serbia's present state of preparations. On the understanding that Serbia has to continue to make progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* in this chapters, the EU noted that there are benchmarks that need to be met for provisional closure of this chapter.

In addition, the EU underlined that it would devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common position. Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The EU will, if necessary, return to this chapter at an appropriate moment.

---

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

The main issues regarding the closing benchmarks to be met by Serbia include:

- Serbia amends its legal framework to ensure coherent PIFC legislation.
- The State Audit Institution (SAI) of Serbia complies with the standards of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).
- Serbia ensures an effective and efficient coordination of anti-fraud activities and cooperation with the Commission to guarantee the fulfilment of future obligations arising from the relevant EU *acquis*, and,
- Serbia ratifies and implements the 1929 Geneva International Convention for the suppression of counterfeiting currency, aligns its legislation with the EU *acquis* on authentication of euro coins and on authentication of euro banknotes.

### **Chapter 35 - Other business: Item 1: Normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo\***

In view of the present state of Serbia's preparations, the EU noted that, on the understanding that Serbia, while acting in good faith, has to continue to make progress in the implementation work and make further progress in the normalisation process, Serbia can be considered to be sufficiently prepared at this stage for negotiations on this Chapter.

Serbia should ensure that it completes its part of the work on implementation of 25 August 2015 agreements, in particular on the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo as well as the other elements of the First Agreement of April 2013 (police, justice, civil protection). In addition, Serbia will complete its residual commitments under the previous Technical Agreements. Finally, Serbia should engage in reaching further agreements, furthering the normalisation in good faith, with a view to gradually lead to the comprehensive normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, in line with the negotiating framework.

The Commission and the High Representative will monitor closely and continuously Serbia's fulfilment of the first set of interim benchmarks included in the EU common position and report "at least twice yearly", on this issue, to the Council.

To take into account future developments in the Dialogue, this first set of interim benchmarks will be updated, as appropriate.

The full list of interim benchmarks is included in the EU common position [AD 12/15](#).

---

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.