



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Council appoints EU Special Representative in Kosovo

The Council today appointed Mr Samuel Žbogar as EU Special Representative in Kosovo. Mr Žbogar is to be double-hatted as head of the EU office in Kosovo, a position to which he was designated on 21 December 2011. This will significantly reinforce the EU presence in Kosovo.

The EU Special Representative will work to promote a stable, viable, peaceful, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo while contributing to stability and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. His tasks will include offering the Union's advice in the political process, strengthening the EU presence in Kosovo and ensuring its coherence and effectiveness. He will support Kosovo's progress towards the EU, in line with the European perspective of the region. The EU Special Representative will further contribute to the development and consolidation of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Kosovo.

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, commented: *"I look forward to working closely with Samuel Žbogar, whose deep knowledge of the region and extensive diplomatic experience make him an excellent choice for this vital role. The appointment of Mr Žbogar and the double-hatting as head of the EU office in Kosovo is a clear sign of the importance the EU is giving to the European future of the region."*

Mr. Samuel Žbogar is a former Slovenian Minister for Foreign Affairs and diplomat with 24 years experience in key strategic postings, including China, the UN in New York, and Washington DC. In the capacity of state secretary at the ministry of foreign affairs and EU political director, he led the preparation of Slovenia's OSCE presidency, headed Slovenia's negotiating team for NATO accession, and was a member of Slovenia's EU negotiating team.

Mr Žbogar will take office on 1 February 2012 and his mandate initially runs until 30 June 2013.

P R E S S
