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Ms Igballe Rogova
Kosovo Women's Network
Ms Vetone Veliu
Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights
Ms Stanislavka Zajović
Woman in Black Belgrade
Ms Lena Ag
The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

Dear Mrs Ag

Thank you for your letter dated 4 December 2013 and your interest in contributing to the process of normalising relations between Belgrade and Pristina.

As you have seen, 2013 was a landmark year for the Dialogue and I am proud of the results achieved by the two leaderships. I very much hope that the process of normalisation will not only be limited to talks between the authorities, but will also become a fact of life for the people in the region. The recent signature of agreements between the two Chambers of Commerce on 13 December provides a good example of such a development. Your contribution to normalising relations in everyday life is essential.

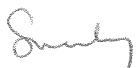
I would like to reassure you about the EU's firm commitment in advocating and promoting women's rights, including in implementing UNSCR1325, globally as well as in the Balkans. Particularly in Kosovo and Serbia, this translates into women's rights constituting a very important element of the EU's activities, and one of the priorities of the mandates of the EUSR/HoO in Pristina and the Head of Delegation in Belgrade.

The EU Enlargement policy places a strong emphasis on human rights protection, including women's rights. This is reflected in the Stabilisation and Association Process, in the annual Commission Progress Reports, the recent Feasibility Study on Kosovo and, of course, in the respective programming of assistance.

As for the EU facilitated dialogue and the EU agenda of both Serbia and Kosovo, I am proud to be able to say that women play key roles in this process. Deputy Prime Minister Edita Tahiri heads the Kosovo dialogue implementation team, Europe Minister Vlora Citaku is the Chief Negotiator for the Stabilization and Association agreement and Tanja Miscevic is the Chief Negotiator for Serbia's accession negotiations.

It was a pleasure for me and the US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton to meet female politicians and leaders in Pristina, during our joint visit to the region on 31 October 2012 and I very much hope to continue my discussions with them when visiting Kosovo and Serbia in the future.

I look forward to meeting you in the course of my next visit to Pristina and Belgrade.



Catherine Ashton