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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
relating to the trial of Kosovo Albanians
sentenced for acts of terrorism**

The European Union is continuing to monitor closely the situation in Kosovo. The instability in Kosovo and the underlying risk of violence have serious implications for regional stability. The European Union reaffirms that it cannot tolerate the use of force, by any party whatsoever, for political ends.

Following the recent trial in Pristina of Kosovo Albanians sentenced for acts of terrorism, the European Union would strongly emphasize once more the importance it attaches to respect for the rule of law and human rights.

It is seriously concerned at allegations that the individuals just sentenced made their confessions under torture.

The European Union trusts the appeal brought against the judgment of 16 December by the lawyers for the defence attached to the Serbian Supreme Court, will be conducted completely independently and with due regard for the requirements of the rule of law.

The associated countries Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, the associated country Cyprus and the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.
