

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union**  
**on the signature of an agreement**  
**to implement the 1996 Education Agreement in Kosovo**

The European Union welcomes news of the signature of an agreement to implement the 1996 Education Agreement, thereby starting the process of normalisation of higher and university education in Kosovo by allowing for the return of Kosovar Albanian students to university and other premises.

The Union commends the unstinting efforts of the Sant'Egidio community to secure implementation of the Education Agreement and to foster trust between the authorities in Belgrade and the Kosovar Albanian community.

The Union has long urged the speedy implementation of the Education Agreement as an important step to promote stability. The Union will study the arrangements which have been negotiated, and remains willing to provide support to a fair agreement acceptable to both sides.

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The Union emphasises that what matters now is translating commitments made by the two parties into action and concrete results, and building on what has been achieved so as to foster other confidence building measures and to open, without preconditions and as soon as possible, a wider genuine dialogue between the authorities in Belgrade and the Kosovar Albanian leadership so as to resolve the situation peacefully.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

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