**Promoting cooperation among civil society in Kosovo and Serbia**

**Joint Statement of Kosovo and Serbia Civil Society Actors**

Witnessing that Kosovo-Serbia relations are not improving despite the ongoing dialogue process, we express our deep concern for the deterioration of the situation on the ground and in the daily lives of citizens. There is a need to safeguard and protect the human rights of minority groups in Serbia and Kosovo.

Concerned that the dialogue is being used to distract from important issues such as the deterioration of the rule of law, corruption, and human rights challenges.

Recognizing contextual differences regarding the levels of democracy, the rule of law, and separation of power, which influence the process of normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo:

We call on the governments of Serbia and Kosovo to:

* continue the dialogue in a substantial and sustainable manner;
* promptly implement already reached agreements;
* refrain from inflammatory rhetoric against minority communities and populist narratives regarding mutual relations and history;
* commit to transparency and ensure civic participation;
* take prompt measures to develop internal processes of integration;
* respect the rights of minorities; and,
* work on confidence-building measures to bring communities together.

We call on the International Community*:*

* to support dialogue and the normalisation agreements that not are not at the expense of democracy in Kosovo and Serbia;
* to focus on substantial solutions instead of resolving daily disputes among the parties in dialogue;
* to support civil society in the wider sense (CSOs, academia, cultural institutions, media, trade unions, etc.);
* to work on normalization and sustainable relations between two parties;
* to foster a wider inter and intra-societal debate on possible solutions and priorities in the dialogue.

We commit to:

* further impel substantial and continuous debate between civil society in Serbia and Kosovo;
* exchange information about issues, context and developments in both societies in a timely manner;
* have joint reactions on the alarming issues that deteriorate the situation on the ground and have a detrimental impact on relations between communities;
* keep in focus on-going challenges not being resolved, which are marginalized due to current issues or incidents;
* maintain a space for civil society proactive leadership in creating better relations and improvements in human rights and the everyday lives of citizens;
* recognize differences among processes in Serbia and Kosovo and react in line with those processes asking for steps in the right direction;
* involve other civil society actors for a continuing dialogue among civil societies actors and enable substantial involvement for each and everyone.

**Signatories:**

1. **Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture (ACDC)**
2. **Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC)**
3. **Assist Kosovo Center - ASSIST, Prishtinë**
4. **Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE)**
5. **Belgrade Centre for Security Policy**
6. **Balkan Policy Research Group**
7. **Crno-beli svet, Mitrovica North**
8. **Center for Advocacy and Democratic Development (CADD)**
9. **Center for Peace and Tolerance (CPT)**
10. **Centar za regionalizam, Novi Sad**
11. **Civic Initiatives**
12. **Council for Human Rights - Bujanovac**
13. **Democracy Plus (D+)**
14. **Drita Dibrani, civil society activist**
15. **European Fund for the Balkans**
16. **Forum for Development and Multiethnic Collaboration (FDMC)**
17. **HANDIKOS, Kosovo**
18. **Independent Initiative for Blind People, Kosovo**
19. **Institute for Development and Integration (IZHI)**
20. **Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER)**
21. **Jelena Lončar, Academic, University of Belgrade**
22. **Kosovo Law Institute (KLI)**
23. **Kosovo Center for Security Studies (KCSS)**
24. **Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI)**
25. **Leadership and Development (LAD)**
26. **Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM)**
27. **Mitrovica Women Association for Human Rights (MWAHR)**
28. **NGO Advocacy for Society Development (AFSD)**
29. **NVO "PLEJADA" Prizren**
30. **NVO Communication for the development of society CSD, Gračanica**
31. **NGO Aktiv**
32. **New Social Initiative (Mitrovica)**
33. **OJQ "Drugëza"**
34. **OJQ "VISION 02" Istog**
35. **OJQ Aureola**
36. **OJQ Qendra e Gruas "ATO" Vushtrri**
37. **OJQ Roma in Action Gjakovë**
38. **Open Society Foundation, Novi Sad-Beograd**
39. **Rahim Salihi, civil society activist, Bujanovac.**
40. **The Balkan Forum**
41. **Unioni i Punëtorëve Social të Kosovës**
42. **Valon Arifi, civil society activist**
43. **Vjollca Krasniqi, Academic, University of Prishtina**
44. **Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (VoRAE)**
45. **Xhejrane Lokaj, civil society activist**
46. **Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Kosovo**
47. **Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Serbia**