
EU INSISTS ON SERBIA-KOSOVO DIALOGUE, NORMALISATION

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Tajani said it was important for the Union to see a legally binding agreement reached before admission to the EU and all is clear there.

He did not use the term full recognition, a concept many in Serbia reject outright. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008 and Belgrade has vowed it would never recognise it.

The Parliament president insisted that the EU wants a resumption of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, stressing that Belgrade is extremely important for the stability of the Balkans.

The EU-mediated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue has been stalled for more than a year. The technical dialogue was due to resume earlier in January but the Serbian team returned from Brussels after the news of the assassination of Oliver Ivanović, a Serb leader of the opposition Freedom, Democracy, Justice civic initiative in Kosovska Mitrovica.

A legally binding agreement with Kosovo, whose independence is not recognised by Belgrade and five EU member states, is the key requisite for Serbias EU membership. Serbia is a candidate country and has so far opened 12 of the 35 negotiating chapters.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić told a joint press conference with Tajani on 31 January that Tajani gave no warnings but spoke the truth.

The EU expects from Serbia a legally binding agreement with Pristina, after which it may join the Union, he said.

Vučić admitted that the issue of Kosovo □ a sensitive issue for many Serbs, who see it as the cradle of Serbian statehood – was the hardest part of the work left for Serbia to do on the road to the EU.

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/eu-insists-on-serbia-kosovo-dialogue-normalisation/>

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