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# Press Release

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# UNMIK



United Nations Mission in Kosovo

UNMIK/PR/1523  
Monday, 3 April 2006

## Members of newly established Kosovo Judicial Council sworn-in

PRISTINA – Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) Søren Jessen-Petersen today officiated at a ceremony for the swearing-in of nine (9) Kosovan members of the Kosovo Judicial Council.

Addressing the newly appointed Council members, the SRSG said: “The establishment of an independent, impartial and multi-ethnic judiciary, together with the strengthening of the Rule of Law, is one of fundamental tasks of the UN Interim Administration and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo. Only a fully functioning, independent and multi-ethnic judicial system would have the ability to address the existing security concerns in Kosovo, building public confidence in the justice system and ultimately contribute to the reconciliation process.”

Pursuant to UNMIK Regulation No. 2005/52 of 20 December 2005, the Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC) is established as a professional body under the authority of the SRSG and is the successor of the Kosovo Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (KJPC). In addition to the main competencies previously held by the KJPC – appointments of judges, prosecutors and lay-judges and disciplinary measures against judges, prosecutors and lay-judges in cases of misconduct – the KJC will take over a greater number of responsibilities to include, *inter alia*, court administration.

The Council shall be composed of eleven (11) members, including Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs, of whom seven (7) shall be judges and four (4) shall be non-judges. For a period of one year following the promulgation of the Regulation, two (2) of the judges on the Council shall be international judges.

Until such time as a Regulation is promulgated establishing the entity responsible for advising the SRSG on matters related to the appointment, disciplining and dismissal of prosecutors (“a prosecutorial appointment and disciplinary body”), one of the Kosovo judicial posts shall be held by a Kosovo prosecutor and one of the international judicial posts shall be held by an international prosecutor.

Director of Justice Albert Moskowitz moderated the swearing-in ceremony held at UNMIK Headquarters today. Among those who attended were the Minister of Justice Jonuz Salihaj, President of the Supreme Court of Kosovo Rexhep Haxhimusa and representatives of foreign Liaison Offices and USAID in Pristina.

The inaugural meeting of the Kosovo Judicial Council is scheduled for 5 April 2006.