

## **EU Implementation Plan of the Agreement on the Mitrovica Bridge, 5 August 2016**

Brussels, 05/08/2016 - Following the extensive discussions on 2 August, Minister for the Dialogue Edita Tahiri and Chief Negotiator Marko Djuric agreed today on the last remaining details to implement the 25 August 2015 Belgrade – Pristina Dialogue agreement on the Mitrovica Bridge. The EU facilitated this.

Now that full implementation is in sight, the Mitrovica Bridge will become the symbol of normalisation of relations between the Kosovo Serb, Kosovo Albanian and other communities. The revitalisation of the bridge, as well as King Petar Street, will greatly contribute to facilitating contacts between all people of Mitrovica North and South and will thus contribute to exchanges and understanding.

It was agreed that the outstanding construction permit will be issued and that the revitalisation of the Mitrovica Bridge and its surroundings will commence on 14 August 2016. The Mitrovica Bridge will be opened for pedestrians and for vehicles in both directions in line with the recommendations of the technical assessment and the architectural design both sides agreed in June 2015.

The construction work on the bridge will be carried out by accessing the construction site through the southern access road. The bridge will be opened for all traffic on 20 January 2017.

In line with the same timetable, the municipality of Mitrovica North will revitalise its main street – King Petar Street - into a pedestrian zone. The street will be opened for pedestrians on 20 January 2017. The works will start and finish on the same day as the ones on and around the bridge.

A working group will regularly monitor and review together with both mayors the prevailing political and security conditions in the municipalities during and after the revitalisation process. A first meeting of that group will take place on 9 September 2016. Kosovo Police, EULEX and KFOR in line with their respective mandates will ensure a safe and secure environment. They will consult on appropriate security measures, including with the two mayors.

On the question of the implementation of article 5 of the agreement on the Mitrovica Bridge, the relevant ministries and the two municipalities shall find a solution by 14 October 2016.

The EU welcomes the outcome of today's discussions and urges both parties to continue to make progress on all other outstanding implementation work, in particular on Telecoms, the Association/Community of Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo and Energy.