

The Head of the European Union Office and EU Special Representative to Kosovo, Samuel Žbogar

Prime Minister, Speaker, ministers and mayors,

colleagues ambassadors, distinguished guests,

Rarely does a New Year bring so many novelties and challenges into our everyday life as 2015 will do.

Kosovo has a new Assembly, a new coalition and consequently a new government.

The European Union also has a new Parliament, new Commission, and consequently new High Representative Mogherini and a new Commissionaire Hahn.

New situation and new people are often causes for a change.

First, a promise of change. Then, a hope for the change. And finally, the change itself. But while changing, it is extremely important not to leave behind or even forget what has been good from the past.

I know that with many of the political issues in which we all have been engaged in 2014, it is sometimes easy to overlook the positives. But there were many: The SAA was initialized, the visa process continued, dialogue implementation commenced, elections, which some thought impossible were conducted and were fair and transparent and Eulex mandate was adjusted and extended.

Some things of course still need to change: economic and social reforms, the fight against corruption, illegal migrations, security threats linked with foreign fighters, and a new round of dialogue talks will commence again soon.

All those changes and New Year's wishes become much more understandable and tangible if we see them from the perspective of a young Kosovo citizen who, in search for new knowledge, work, security, happiness and prospects, asks himself or herself: which university can I go to? Which job can I have? Where can I take my child when he gets sick?

As long as some of the answers to those questions are seen only abroad, without even a hope to find the right answers at home, we all have many tasks ahead of us this year, before we can congratulate each other at the end of 2015.

Because creating jobs, promoting education and prioritizing health are core ingredients of successful governance and a guarantor of a satisfied citizen. And precisely a satisfied citizen should be our common priority.

While the established rule of law with functioning independent judiciary, zero tolerance against corruption, as well as normalized relations with neighborhood and within Kosovo are the background against which these priorities can get implemented.

People everywhere and Kosovo is no different want to provide their families with a better life. They need a renewed sense of hope. PM Mustafa and his government have an extreme challenge in front of them: they need to demonstrate strong and mature leadership, providing strength and direction so people in Kosovo will begin to see their lives improve, which in turn will show that their future remains in Kosovo.

There is no time to loose. Kosovo citizens need efficient government. They need a critical and constructive opposition, as well as a supervisory role of the media and its civil society.

Dear friends,

the Paris tragedy of January 7 should not be an indication of the year ahead. Having not only families and citizens of Paris, but all good hearted citizens of Europe and the world in mind, my New Year's wishes are simple: to respect the others' values; to find common threads through sincere dialogue; and to be able to transform them into everyday actions – in order to create tangible, long-lasting sustainable results.

May 2015 be the year of such clear words and visible actions, of short speeches and long-lasting results!

May it be healthy in the beginning – and throughout, Happy New Year to you all!