



Adis Ahmetovic
Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestages

Pressemitteilung

Fourth speech of Adis Ahmetovic, MdB, in the German Bundestag – „For a European perspective in peace and prosperity for the region and its people“

Berlin, 22.06.2022

Adis Ahmetovic, MdB
Mitglied im Auswärtigen Ausschuss
Platz der Republik 1
11011 Berlin
Telefon: +49 30 227-73194
adis.ahmetovic@bundestag.de

Wahlkreisbüro:
Im Kreuzkampe 1
30655 Hannover
Telefon: +49 511 699 805
adis.ahmetovic.wk@bundestag.de

Pressekontakt:
Jasmin Schönberger
adis.ahmetovic.ma07@bundestag.de
Telefon: 0176-22882667

<https://adis-ahmetovic.de/>

Fourth Speech by Adis Ahmetovic, MdB, in the German Bundestag on June 22, 2022 on TOP 5 - Motion by the Federal Government on the "Continuation of the Participation of Armed German Forces in the International Security Presence in Kosovo (KFOR)".

- The spoken word applies -

Dear Madam President,
dear ladies and gentlemen,

"The Western Balkans belong to Europe. All its countries must also belong to the European Union in the future." With this clarity, our Chancellor Olaf Scholz has set out the German government's new strategic goal with regard to its policy on the Western Balkans.

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is exactly the right approach in view of the change of era that has been proclaimed: this is the only way to guarantee long-term stability, peace and prosperity not only in the region, but on our entire European continent. We are convinced of this!

And this includes actively supporting a young democracy like Kosovo in the EU integration process and continuing on the path to greater security and stability. The extension of the KFOR mandate is an important and correct signal in this regard.

Let me say a few words about this foreign mission:

This month marks the anniversary of the KFOR mission in Kosovo, we are entering our 23rd year. For many years, the deployment of German soldiers for peace and stability in Kosovo has been largely silent and below the radar of many people.

On the one hand, this can be seen as positive: the NATO-led KFOR mission has stabilized the situation in Kosovo and, in view of a relatively calm situation, there are currently about 70 German forces on the ground in Pristina. This long period of peace is a great success.



After all, things looked very different in Kosovo in 1999, when the deployment was decided on the basis of a UN mandate: Out of a population of around two million, 850,000 civilians had to flee, and another 600,000 people were displaced within the country. Germany alone deployed 6,000 forces to the region at the time.

It is also thanks to the soldiers of our Bundeswehr that a stable and secure environment has been created in Kosovo over the years and that many people have been able to return home.

And for this, ladies and gentlemen, our soldiers deserve our thanks for their tireless efforts!

But we must not be deceived by this supposed peace and the current calm situation.

Due to the steady deterioration of relations between Serbia and Kosovo in recent years, the increasing tension, as shown most recently by the attacks on patrols of the Kosovar border police, must be taken seriously.

In light of this potential for escalation, it is therefore important that KFOR forces continue to be deployed in a desescalating and mediating capacity and can intervene quickly if the security situation deteriorates.

At the same time, we must also look beyond our own horizons and recognize that, in view of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine and the increasing Russian attempts to destabilize the region, a sustainable stabilization of the Western Balkans and stronger ties with the EU are of great geostrategic interest for our continent.

The KFOR mission is and will remain a stabilizing force in the region and for Kosovo. It is an important foundation stone for citizens to live in peace and security.

Only on this basis can democracy and the rule of law be built and further developed. Only in this way can we continue the EU-led dialogue with full force and press ahead with accelerated EU integration of the Western Balkan states.

For us, this means concretely:

- We support the application for membership in the Council of Europe.
- We want to campaign for the recognition of Kosovo by the remaining five EU member states in addition to all the others.
- Another decisive factor is progress in the normalization process between Serbia and Kosovo! The dialogue between Belgrade



and Pristina and the reconciliation efforts must gain momentum and an agreement between the two countries must be reached.

- And we will work hard to continue to consistently demand the long overdue visa liberalization for Kosovars.

This is the plan of the new Federal Government - and we will work consistently on it, ladies and gentlemen.

But until a lasting solution is achieved, it is crucial to continue the KFOR mission as an anchor of stability in the region.

At the latest since the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine, the KFOR mandate has gained in central importance for European security in this particularly tense environment.

That is why we, as the SPD parliamentary group, support the extension of the mandate and are calling for its approval:

For a European perspective in peace and prosperity for the region and its people!

Thank you for your attention!