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PRESS RELEASE

Statement by the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Investigative Task Force (SITF) on investigative findings

- *SITF has found compelling evidence to file an indictment against certain former senior officials of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).*
- *Investigative findings are largely consistent with the Council of Europe (CoE) report of 2011.*
- *Indictments will be filed once an judicial mechanism is established to host a fully independent, impartial, transparent and secure trial.*

Chief Prosecutor of the European Union Special Investigative Task Force (SITF), Ambassador Clint Williamson, made a statement on 29 July 2014 in Brussels to announce the investigative findings of the SITF. Ambassador Williamson said that the investigation conducted by the SITF had progressed to the point where he was prepared to announce findings and that these were largely consistent with the Council of Europe report of 2011 by Senator Dick Marty. The SITF found compelling evidence against certain former senior officials of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and an indictment against these individuals for serious violations of international humanitarian law, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, was justified.

Chief Prosecutor Williamson underlined that the victims of these crimes were mainly Serbs, Roma, and other minorities, but also Kosovo Albanians who were labeled either to be collaborators with the Serbs or, more commonly, to have been political opponents of the KLA leadership. The SITF has found compelling evidence that certain individuals in the senior leadership of the former KLA used elements of that organization to perpetrate violence in order to obtain political power and personal wealth for themselves. Chief Prosecutor underlined that it is as individuals that they must bear responsibility for their crimes.

Chief Prosecutor Williamson stated that the SITF could file an indictment against these individuals once an appropriate judicial mechanism is established to host a fully independent, impartial and transparent trial that ensures the highest standards of security for witnesses and for criminal proceedings. In this regard, Chief Prosecutor Williamson thanked the European Union, its Member States and international partners for the ongoing efforts in setting up such a court.

Background

The Special Investigative Task Force (SITF) was set-up in 2011 to conduct an independent criminal investigation into the very serious allegations contained in the Council of Europe (CoE) report of January 2011 by Senator Dick Marty entitled: “Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo”. The mandate of the SITF is to investigate and, if warranted, prosecute individuals for crimes alleged in the report.

The SITF consists of international staff only and, in order to further reinforce the independence and confidentiality of the process, the team is based in Brussels, Belgium.

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