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Press Release

Commander KFOR, General Erhard Bühler: The European Future of Kosovo is the message of the 24th of March

Commander KFOR, General Erhard Bühler, stated in Pristina on 24th of March 2011 that a peaceful and prosperous European future of Kosovo and the Western Balkans is the message of the 24th of March:

“It is important to commemorate all the victims of the tragic war twelve years ago. However the most important message of this day is that all the people of all ethnicities, religions and origin and all international institutions have to work hard in order to path the way into a positive, peaceful and prosperous future in Europe.

The 24th of March is a day which reminds us of the terrible tragedy of an armed conflict which could not be avoided by political means after a series of equally dreadful wars on the Balkans during the 90ies of the last century. Therefore it surely is a day of commemoration of all victims, of all the dead of this tragic war, of suppression of people, of inhuman atrocities against innocent men, women and children of all ethnicities, of all religions and all origin. It has to be a day of rejection of violence and intolerance. It should be a day of reconciliation and commemorative silence.

However, the 24th of March should also be a day to look ahead into the future of Kosovo, of the Western Balkans. This future can only be a European future, a peaceful and prosperous integration in the community of European democracies where human rights and the rule of law are respected. To achieve this goal it is indispensable to continue to work hard



on the reconciliation of ethnicities, a peaceful living together, on tolerance and on mutual trust.

KFOR has contributed to provide a solid framework for such a development since twelve years. There is a lot of progress to be seen, we are witnesses of the beginning of promising political talks between Pristina and Belgrade under the umbrella of the European Union. I am very optimistic that this will hold on and that people here will harvest the fruits of reconciliation and mutual trust.

And I assure you that KFOR will do its very best to support this progress for a peaceful future.”