PRESS RELEASE

*In light of ongoing harassment of women and girls in northern Kosovo and the failure of institutions to respond adequately*

In recent weeks, there has been an increase in citizen reports and media coverage concerning the harassment of women and girls by civilians coming from the direction of South Mitrovica, including incidents involving minors. These events raise serious concerns and further erode the sense of personal and collective security among residents in northern Kosovo.

The frequency and persistence of such incidents point to a profound institutional problem, a failure or unwillingness of the Kosovo Police to provide protection for all citizens. Particularly alarming are testimonies of attempts to downplay these incidents, as well as reports of witness intimidation by police officers.

Citizens have repeatedly called on the Kosovo Police to ensure security for all, but these appeals remain unanswered. The Kosovo Police Inspectorate has shown little visible impact in monitoring or disciplining misconduct in such cases, while mechanisms for civilian oversight of the police remain extremely limited.

Given the gravity of the situation and the evident lack of institutional response, we believe it is crucial for international actors to intensify oversight and accountability mechanisms concerning security structures. In this context, we specifically highlight the mandate of the EULEX mission, which is tasked with monitoring the rule of law in Kosovo, including police operations.

**We therefore call on the EULEX mission, in the spirit of transparency and accountability to citizens, to publicly respond to the following questions:**

1. **Is EULEX currently monitoring and documenting cases of harassment of women and girls in northern Kosovo? If so, is there an assessment of the trends and severity of these incidents?**
2. **What concrete steps does EULEX take when it identifies systemic failures in the Kosovo Police's work regarding the protection of non-majority community members?**
3. **How does EULEX ensure that its findings and recommendations in such cases have institutional impact and lead to changes in police conduct?**
4. **Does EULEX plan to increase the presence and oversight of police units in northern municipalities, given the specific context and frequent citizen reports of harassment and ineffective protection?**

**It is urgently necessary to restore public trust in security institutions. This can only be achieved through the responsible and transparent work of all relevant bodies, including international missions mandated to uphold the rule of law and protect human rights in Kosovo.**

**Signatory Organizations:**

Center for Affirmative Social Actions (CASA)

New Social Initiative (NSI)

Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER)

Center for Advocacy of Democratic Culture (ACDC)

NGO Aktiv