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PressRelease

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SRSB Sends Criminal Law to Prime Minister for Review by Government and Assembly

PRISTINA – SRSB Michael Steiner today sent the Provisional Criminal Code and the Provisional Criminal Procedure Code to Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi for review by the Government and the Assembly.

In a letter to Mr. Rexhepi, Mr. Steiner said, “This has been a major undertaking...keenly awaited by the Kosovans. I would be grateful if you could arrange for the Government and the Assembly to review the texts.”

The letter said that issues relating to security and criminal law are within the SRSB’s reserved powers and the two Codes would accordingly be promulgated by the SRSB as UNMIK regulations. But Mr. Steiner emphasised “the Kosovo institutions should be fully engaged in this major legal initiative which will constitute a significant contribution to the administration of justice in Kosovo.”

Once the comments and observations of the Government and the Assembly are communicated to UNMIK, the two Codes will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary, and promulgated by the SRSB promptly thereafter.

Preparation of the two Codes has been a major exercise, involving Kosovo legal experts on the Joint Advisory Council on Legislative Matter, which began on the initiative of the former SRSB Bernard Kouchner. Under the aegis of UNMIK’s Office of the Legal Advisor, legal experts from the Council of Europe, OSCE, the American Bar Association for Central and Eastern European Law, UNICEF and other agencies have played an important role in drafting these Codes. Extensive consultations have taken place with the Kosovo legal community. Judges, prosecutors, lawyers and academics and members of the international community have also reviewed the draft texts and provided comments. Consultations have also taken place within UNMIK, including Pillar I, and with the Office of the Legal Affairs at the UN Headquarters.