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Pietro Spera appointed as Ombudsperson of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers

Mr Pietro Spera, a national of Italy, has been appointed as Ombudsperson for the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office. Mr Spera has almost 30 years of professional experience in the field of law as a judge, with a special focus on protection of rights in judicial proceedings. Among others, he served as an international judge in the War Crimes and Organized Crime Chamber in Bosnia and Herzegovina and he worked in Afghanistan, where he led several projects to strengthen the rule of law in the national court system.

On his appointment Ombudsperson Spera stated:

"I am honoured and privileged to have been appointed as the Ombudsperson of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and look forward to the challenge of implementing the human rights mandate I have been entrusted with."

The Ombudsperson has an essential role in monitoring, defending and protecting fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in the Constitution of Kosovo for those persons interacting with the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office. At the same time, the Ombudsperson may not interfere in judicial proceedings before the Specialist Chambers, except in instances of unreasonable delay. In addition, the Ombudsperson may make recommendations to the President of the Specialist Chambers or to the Specialist Prosecutor on matters falling within their functions.

In congratulating Ombudsperson Spera on his appointment, the President of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, Judge Ekaterina Trendafilova, stated:

"Today is an important day for the Specialist Chambers. The appointment of Mr Spera as Ombudsperson marks another milestone for our institution. The unique mandate and role of the Ombudsperson makes him a guarantor of the fundamental rights of anyone interacting with the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office, thereby ensuring the compliance with the highest standards of human rights."

More information on the Ombudsperson is available on the <u>KSC/SPO website</u>.

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For more information on the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, visit: www.scp-ks.org