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## PRESS RELEASE

# New transfer of expertise between North Macedonia and Styria

**Yesterday, a delegation from Tetovo visited Saubermacher in Feldkirchen bei Graz, the city of Graz itself and regional ministers Werner Amon and Simone Schmiedtbauer at the Landhaus in Graz. This visit was an important networking step to mark future close collaboration with North Macedonia, most specifically on circular economy capability with Saubermacher.**

**Intensifying collaboration, creating synergies and sharing expertise:** the partnership between Styria and North Macedonia has an important role to play in expanding and consolidating intra-European relationships. The visit by mayor Bilal Kasami and other members of Tetovo's city government are an important milestone. The new partnership agreement between Styria and North Macedonia was signed last October by North Macedonian Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani and regional minister Werner Amon and lays the foundation stone for close collaboration in areas that include education, science, environmental protection and business over the coming five years.

The visit to Graz by the North Macedonian guests also offered opportunity for networking at the political level with regional ministers Werner Amon and Simone Schmiedtbauer as well as vice mayor Judith Schwentner. "In view of the global political situation, European collaboration, including with states from the Western Balkans, is now more important than ever. I am delighted that there are so many opportunities for collaboration between Styria and North Macedonia. Collaboration between Saubermacher and the city of Tetovo just goes to show what synergies can be created across national boundaries," explains Werner Amon, regional minister for Europe, international affairs, education and personnel.

"On my visit to Graz, I today had the opportunity to visit Saubermacher so that I could see for myself just what expertise the company has and can utilise for waste disposal in our city. We were able to speak to chairman of the Saubermacher supervisory board Hans Roth, managing director of SERVUS Franck Dicker and other representatives about the work that is planned in Tetovo. The objective was to deepen collaboration and to define the responsibilities between the local authority and Saubermacher. We also paid a joint visit to the recycling centre in Graz and hope, and believe, that we will see something similar in Tetovo in the near future," says mayor Bilal Kasami about his positive impressions during his visit.

**Achieving more together.** There will be close collaboration on resource and waste management starting in February 2024. Environmental pioneer Saubermacher will be sharing its expertise with the second largest city in North Macedonia as part of a public-private partnership (PPP). Preparations for the operational start are currently ongoing. The joint objective is to establish qualitatively separate collection of municipal waste, including packaging, and to raise residents' awareness of the importance of proper waste separation.

Regional minister Simone Schmiedtbauer, who has responsibility for resource management in Styria, is eager to praise the collaboration with North Macedonia, a region of the Western Balkans that is particularly important for Styria: "In Styria, we have positioned ourselves as pioneers in waste separation, the circular economy and sustainability. Close collaboration with North Macedonia opens up a wide range of opportunities for us to cooperate, especially when it comes to the circular economy. The exchange with the mayor of Tetovo was extremely constructive and I am confident of further opportunities for collaboration. Especially gratifying is the support from Saubermacher, a leading Styrian company, which, with its unique expertise in resource management, can utilise close collaboration to contribute to the development of North Macedonia's second largest city." For Hans Roth, founder of Saubermacher, international networking is of great concern for both ecological and sustainability reasons: "I am confident that our PPP model, which we now operate in 20 cities across Central Europe, combines the best of both worlds. It also gives us an opportunity to learn from one another. I am very happy to be able to pursue our Zero Waste vision in this region too, something that is very close to my heart, and to act as an example for other cities

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in Southeastern Europe. This way, we can work together to create greater satisfaction for the residents of Tetovo and take an important step towards better climate and environmental protection so that we can reach the the desired European standard."

## Photos



Photo (from left to right): Andreas Opelt, COO at Saubermacher; Simone Schmiedtbauer, regional minister for living; Bilal Kasami, mayor of Tetovo; Werner Amon, regional minister for Europe, international affairs, education and personnel. Photograph rights: Saubermacher/Scheriau.



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Photo (from left to right): Daut Memishi, managing director of waste disposal company OAENEUM in Tetovo; Andreas Opelt, COO Saubermacher; Simone Schmiedtbauer, regional minister; Bilall Kasami, mayor of Tetovo; Werner Amon, regional minister; Besar Durmishi, chairman of the Tetovo city council; Robert Cajic, managing director of Saubermacher Slovenia; Basri Mehmedalija, chief of staff to the mayor of Tetovo. Photograph rights: Saubermacher/Scheriau.