



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Upcoming Municipal Elections in Kosovo**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 31, 2013

The United States urges the Government of Kosovo to ensure that municipal elections in Kosovo on November 3 meet international standards and are free of fraud and intimidation. We welcome the progress Serbia and Kosovo have made in implementing the April 19 Dialogue agreement to normalize relations and call on them to continue working constructively to ensure voters can participate in a democratic process free from intimidation. We commend EU High Representative Catherine Ashton for her leadership in the Dialogue process and staff from the OSCE Secretariat and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) for their hard work in advising the parties and facilitating the election in the northern municipalities. We express our appreciation to those participating States who have contributed extra-budgetary funding to the process and to other OSCE missions in the region that are loaning staff to OMiK during the elections. We continue to support KFOR and EULEX's cooperation with the Kosovo Police in providing a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement.

We urge everyone to commit to a peaceful election that allows all eligible voters to freely elect their representatives. We strongly condemn any threats made or attempted against anyone participating in or facilitating this important election.

We again commend all those who have been involved in the preparations for this election, and we look forward to Sunday's vote. This election represents a real opportunity for those living in northern Kosovo to democratically select their representatives. They, along with all eligible voters in Kosovo, deserve the chance to do so in a free and fair election. It is an important step forward in demonstrating that electoral fraud will not be tolerated, and in ensuring that all of those living in the region have an opportunity to build a better, more prosperous future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.