



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
MISSION IN KOSOVO

Ambassador Werner Wnendt's address to the Permanent Council

OSCE Permanent Council
Vienna, 26 July 2007

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- Since my last report to the Permanent Council on 1 March, the political landscape in Kosovo continued to be dominated by the diplomatic process underway to define Kosovo's status. On 26 March the UN Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council the Report of his Special Envoy (SE), and the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement, together with the recommendation of "independence, supervised by the international community". The Kosovo Assembly adopted a declaration on 5 April supporting Ahtisaari's proposal.
 - Since then attention in Kosovo has remained focused on the major consultations between international stakeholders. The rise in expectations was fed by statements from Kosovo's President and Prime Minister and optimistic predictions by senior international representatives. However, with no apparent breakthrough in sight, the confidence of Kosovo Albanians in the international community looks set to rapidly diminish. Kosovo Albanian leaders have been faced with the necessity of managing expectations about the conclusion of the status process, publicly acknowledging the prospect of a delay.
 - After the failure of the sixth draft of a SC-Resolution on 20 July, Prime Minister Agim Ceku and Veton Surroi from the opposition ORA party, called for the adoption of a declaration of independence by the Assembly of Kosovo before the end of the year. However, on 23 July in a meeting with the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, Kosovo officials reaffirmed that they would not unilaterally declare independence and will continue to co-operate with the US and the EU to bring the status process to a close.

- The situation in Kosovo during this time remained remarkably quiet. The youth activist organisation Vetëvendosje, increasingly appeared to lack organization and profile. At the same time, the War Veterans have increased their rhetoric, warning about the possibility of a general mobilisation if a postponement of Status continues.
- Kosovo Serbs remain wary about what Kosovo's new status will bring to them. The lack of progress within the UN Security Council has increased their confidence that independence for Kosovo is not a *fait accompli*. The Assembly of the "Association of Serb Municipalities and Settlements in Kosovo" adopted on 22 June a declaration rejecting unequivocally Kosovo's independence. Since its adoption, many Kosovo Serbs have signed the declaration.
- With the end of the mandate of the Assembly in Pristina and the Municipal Assemblies, elections should be held before the end of 2007 in order to reconstitute Kosovo's elected bodies in accordance with the applicable law. On 18 July, the Unity Team (UT) recommended to hold elections as foreseen and at the same time warned against any attempt to use elections as a pretext for further delay of the status decision. The decision on elections will be taken by the SRSG after further consultations with the UT and political parties.
- Should elections take place before the end of 2007, and under the existing constitutional framework, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo will have a more active role to play in organising them than was to be expected if the elections were held after the status settlement under a new constitution. This may mean that the OSCE as an Organization can not at the same time play the leading role in monitoring the elections.
- During this challenging period, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo has continued to contribute to the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and public safety, democratic institutions and good governance in line with its mandate. Some of these activities have been described in the written report of the Mission.
- The OSCE Mission in Kosovo's field presence with five Regional Centres and 33 Municipal Teams (MTs) continued promoting the development of minority protection mechanisms, returns and accountable municipal administration. MTs carried out a number of specific exercises such

as the monitoring of minority communities humanitarian transportation, mapping of Kosovo Serb communities and identifying trends in popular perceptions of decentralization.

- The work on transition and future arrangements of the international community in Kosovo, as well as the preparatory work on implementing the Ahtisaari package, continued during the reporting period. The transition structure, which includes the political leadership and the government along with current and future international stakeholders, is aimed at a smooth and planned transfer of competencies from UNMIK to successor institutions.
- OMIK interacts with the Preparatory Teams for the International Civilian Office and for the ESDP Rule of Law. Both teams take fully into account the current and future activities of OMIK. There is no duplication between the plans of the future ESDP Mission and the activities of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.
- OMIK also further intensified its co-operation with KFOR, in particular at the local level, where the work of KFOR's Local Monitoring Teams and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's Municipal Teams complement each other. With regard to the return process and the protection of religious and cultural sites, OMIK maintained a close dialogue with other relevant international institutions such as UNDP, UNHCR and the Council of Europe.
- The Mission is planning a continuation of its core activities. The possible implementation of any status settlement will not change the Mission's long-term objective, but might require refocusing a number of the Mission's activities, in particular with regards to decentralization, community rights, security and public safety as well as the protection of religious and cultural heritage. It would also result in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's field presence becoming the only significant civilian field presence in Kosovo, with increased responsibilities for monitoring and reporting.
- The Mission must be prepared to apply the principles of continuity and flexibility that are supported by the PC, should there be a development regarding the status settlement. This position has been reflected in previous reports to the PC and in the Mission 2008 Programme Outline. Sustainability of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's activities, expertise, institutional

memory and consistent presence in central and local institutions are essential in the midst of change.