



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report of the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Michael Davenport

As delivered by Ambassador Michael Carpenter
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 5, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ambassador Davenport, welcome back to the Permanent Council. The United States strongly supports the work of the Mission and appreciates our close collaboration to support Kosovo's development as a secure, democratic, and inclusive member of the European community of nations.

We applaud the Mission's continuing engagement across the core elements of your mandate, including democratization, security and public safety, and human and community rights. We agree institution-building is an important priority. This work is even more important today given Russia's war against Ukraine, which underscores the need to defend the values upon which the OSCE is based and that the Mission seeks to advance through its mandate and work.

The local elections in October and November 2021 were a significant achievement in that they were the first, as you noted, full municipal election cycle carried out by the Kosovo Central Election Commission without OSCE assistance. Significantly, these elections produced many first-time officials, a testament to the vibrancy of Kosovo's democracy. We encourage the continued prioritization of your team's efforts on democratization, along with good governance and gender equality in local government. We also commend the Mission's willingness to once again support eligible Kosovo Serbs' participation in Serbia's elections.

Ambassador Davenport, we agree that continued engagement with Kosovo institutions through training, assistance, and support for planned reforms is essential to promoting international standards and best practices. We note your report's description of the Mission's ongoing activities on human rights, security, and public safety, which are critical aspects of creating an inclusive and participatory environment for all of Kosovo's citizens.

We closely monitored the incidents targeting police in the north and condemned the attacks, which should be thoroughly investigated. These attacks occurred as the sovereign authorities responsible for maintaining peace and security were carrying out their official duties. We cautioned against speculation that would increase tensions and will condemn any efforts to impede this essential work.

The United States seeks peace, justice, and prosperity in a Kosovo that is fully integrated into the international community and part of a free, resilient, and thriving Europe. Only by hearing directly from host country officials, in conjunction with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, can we fully understand the dynamics on the ground and determine how to best address them. We therefore welcome this practice and encourage it be continued in the future. We believe it is unfortunate that Kosovo is not a member of this body and is therefore unable to speak for itself. We look forward to the day when Kosovo is an OSCE participating State and that can happen.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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