



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

**SPEECH TO THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**Remarks of Ambassador Werner Wnendt,  
Head of OSCE Mission in Kosovo,  
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Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentleman

Since I last addressed the Permanent Council on 1 September 2005, we have entered a crucial period in Kosovo. The decision by the United Nations Security Council on October 24<sup>th</sup> to initiate Future Status negotiations, and the subsequent appointment of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as the Special Envoy to lead those talks, have created a new political momentum in Kosovo.

A negotiation team comprised of Kosovo's political leaders has been established in Prishtinë/Priština, which has in turn created a political group to assist it in its work and develop position papers on key issues. The team was at first somewhat fractured and lacking in purpose, but more recently there has been a greater sense of unity and impetus. For its part the political group appears to be working effectively, having in the past days produced a detailed position paper on decentralization, an issue that probably will be discussed at meetings in Vienna next week.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo, while not directly involved in the negotiation process, stands ready to facilitate that process. Furthermore, through our continuing efforts to ensure the protection of minority rights and the development

of democratically accountable governance, we will do much to create an environment in Kosovo more conducive to a sustainable settlement.

The International Community has reaffirmed to the PISG the need for a continued focus on Standards implementation throughout this process. Indeed, the Status Envoy has stated that the duration of talks will to a certain extent depend on the pace and degree of Standards implementation. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo fully supports this position, and will continue to play a key role in helping to co-ordinate Standards implementation and facilitating PISG efforts to reinvigorate the process.

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Within the framework of this quickly developing political context, the Mission's goal in 2006 is to support the development of multi-ethnic democratic institutions and society in Kosovo by building the capacity to ensure impartial, transparent and accountable governance that works for all communities. By the end of 2006, this goal will be achieved through a co-ordinated proactive monitoring mechanism. This works towards achieving the following two strategic objectives:

First, to oversee and assist the PISG development, implementation and effective application of legislation, policies and procedures to ensure accountability.

Second, to build and maintain the system of "checks and balances". This will be done by monitoring PISG oversight mechanisms to ensure adherence to the legislative framework, policies and procedures.

The fulfilment of these Strategic Objectives is followed by each of our four functional departments. More specifically, our work for 2006 will be guided by three overarching goals, shared by all pillars of the UN Interim Administration:

1. Encouraging the creation of conditions on the ground in Kosovo that are conducive to a successful conclusion of status talks;
2. Continuing to work for the establishment and consolidation of sustainable foundations for a stable and democratic society in Kosovo;

3. Preparing the ground for adequate and appropriate future international arrangements that would supervise compliance with status settlement provisions and would ensure Kosovo's continued progress towards European integration.

I would like to mention here only a few of the ways that the Mission strives to achieve these objectives.

In the past months we have continued to contribute to the protection of the *human rights of minority communities*, focusing on judicial proceedings. This has included property rights which continue to be of utmost concern. In recent months, the Mission assisted in developing an action plan on informal settlements and built up capacity for its implementation at the local level. Non-discrimination is an additional focus as is the effective and comprehensive implementation and promotion of the Anti-Discrimination Law. The Mission intends to deploy Human Rights Advisory Teams in both the Prime Ministers Office and six PISG Ministries (including the newly-created Ministries of Justice and Interior) to ensure that Human Rights continue to be a central aspect of Kosovo's policy development and implementation.

In the last three months, the Mission has issued a report on the implementation of Kosovo Assembly Laws which included recommendations on legislation, policy, and procedures and how to improve implementation of laws. It also provided a Senior Advisor to the PISG Assembly President to actively support the internal functioning of his Office and facilitate legislative interaction of the Assembly with the executive branch and with UNMIK's Office of Legal Affairs.

The Mission also continues to strengthen the Central Elections Commission, as the main body responsible for the conduct of elections in Kosovo. The Election Forum, an advisory body of the Commission continued to work on recommendations on the legal framework for elections.

Further efforts have been made to foster dialogue between and within communities on issues of common concern, for example through negotiations seminar organized in November. In these, the Mission offered a comprehensive negotiation skills support program to political leaders, aiming to enhance their understanding of negotiation processes; in total some 55 leaders attended from all communities.

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To streamline and strengthen the monitoring of PISG respect for human rights and good governance standards, the Mission re-organized and strengthened its field presence. We are also currently reviewing reporting and accountability structures, to ensure that targeted reports on compliance are prepared, and appropriate remedial action is taken where necessary. The Mission is in the process of setting up Teams in each municipality of Kosovo and is working on a memorandum on co-operation with UNMIK's Department of Civil Administration in order to strengthen collaboration at this level.

The role for the international community in Kosovo will continue after a political settlement is reached through the status talks. The OSCE needs to be prepared for that eventuality.

UN-led discussions on future arrangements are on-going. An informal Steering Board and four Working Groups were established in Kosovo last October. The OSCE Mission is fully engaged in this inclusive process. It is certainly producing the desired results, and provided a solid foundation for our 2006 planning. That said, future planning is and *must* be based on a number of general principles:

- A strong human and minority rights monitoring capacity will need to be retained, for the long-run and in *all* sectors;
- The commitment by OSCE to maintain an extensive field presence and engage in robust monitoring of local institutions throughout 2006, and even beyond.

- Sustained involvement in Rule of Law areas to ensure continuity and expertise.

In each of these areas, to ensure a smooth transition it is very possible that additional commitments (including financial) might be required not only in the timeframe from a political settlement to the end of 1244,; but also in a post-1244 phase.

In conclusion, the Mission, as part of UNMIK, has a role to play in Kosovo. We will continue to participate in the discussions about the future structure of the International Presence. At the same time, the Mission also needs to allow for continuity in its work in an independent role.