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PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
TO THE INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS  
VIENNA

Statement of the Delegation of Albania on,  
“Municipal Elections in Kosovo”

As delivered by the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Spiro Koçi,  
At the 970<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
07 November 2013

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

Albania commends Kosovo and its people for the successful conduct of November the 3<sup>rd</sup> municipal elections. For the first time after Kosovo's independence these elections were held across the whole territory of the country. This is a remarkable development which was made possible thanks to the 19 April Brussels Agreement between Kosovo and Serbia and the ballot facilitation in the northern municipalities by the OSCE.

We wish to use this opportunity to praise Kosovo's institutions, in particular the Central Election Commission, for the orderly and professional organization of the electoral process. We are pleased to note that voters' turnout was higher compared to previous elections. This clearly indicates that the people of Kosovo trust their institutions and their ability to deliver a fair and credible electoral process. Overall, these elections marked a significant step forward towards the further consolidation of Kosovo's democracy.

Albania strongly condemns the acts of violence and voters' intimidation that tried to disrupt the electoral process in northern Kosovo. The attempts to prevent people from exercising their fundamental right to vote and choose their own representatives were despicable and, at the same time, detrimental to the implementation of the Brussels Agreement. We are confident the relevant authorities will ensure that the perpetrators are brought before justice and tried in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kosovo.

We are also very much encouraged by the good results of yesterday's meeting in Brussels of Baroness Ashton with the Prime Ministers of Kosovo and Serbia as well as by the decision taken by the Central Election Commission of Kosovo regarding the completion of the electoral process in northern Kosovo: a decision which the Director of the OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre just referred to.

By way of conclusion, Mr Chairperson, we would like to reiterate our heartfelt thanks to the OSCE Secretariat, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and their dedicated staff for the diligent work in facilitating the electoral process in the four northern

municipalities. Such an operation, conducted in a challenging environment, reconfirms the OSCE's unique capabilities as a security provider and the value added of its field operations.

I thank you Chairperson.