



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

Speech for the Second Election Forum Meeting

by Ambassador Werner Wnendt

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I am honoured to join you and welcome you to the Second Election Forum meeting. As Chairperson of the Central Election Commission, I wanted to take the opportunity to make an introductory speech on behalf of this Commission.

The CEC decided to create an Election Forum in accordance with UNMIK Regulation 2004/9 on the Establishment of the CEC.

The choice of an Electoral system is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. In almost all cases the choice of a particular electoral system has a profound effect on the future political life of the electorate. The Forum is meant to help the CEC establish a renewed and viable electoral framework in Kosovo.

How can we reach that goal?

A Forum is by definition an agora, a place where citizens gather in order to discuss in a productive manner how to deal with issues of importance to the society.

In order to find a good solution for an electoral system in Kosovo it is important that you work together. You have to elaborate an electoral system in which every community in Kosovo can identify themselves with. Constructive discussion and debate is also a part of your work. I hope that all parties, communities and civic organisations will use the opportunity to express their opinion on the electoral system.

Consideration of party interests is almost always a factor in the choice of electoral frameworks. However, calculations of short-term political interests can obscure the longer-term consequences on a particular electoral system. Bearing this in mind, I would like to appeal to the members of the Election Forum to think at every stage of the democratic process in Kosovo and how you can personally contribute to strengthen Kosovo's democratic structures.

I am sure that the work of the Election Forum will be a substantial contribution to the stability and democracy in Kosovo. The OSCE stands ready to support its work all the way.

Thank you and good luck.