



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MIROSLAVA BEHAM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SERBIA TO THE OSCE,
IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF ALBANIA,
H.E. EDMOND HAXHINASTO,
AT THE 883rd (SPECIAL) MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 October 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the Serbian delegation I would like to join others in welcoming Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Albania, H.E. Edmond Haxhinasto, and thank him for his address.

We listened to the Minister's statement with interest, recognizing numerous priorities shared by Serbia and Albania likewise. Among them the most important are without doubt the European integration process and the advancement of regional cooperation. Both processes are indispensable prerequisites for safeguarding and enhancing peace, stability and security in the Western Balkans in a comprehensive way and based on fundamental democratic principles and values. In the endeavours to strengthen our societies and our region, Serbia and Albania share the experience of the valuable assistance of the OSCE and its field presences. These and other commonalities make our two countries, together with our neighbours, natural partners in the strife for a better life and future of our peoples and the region of the Western Balkans.

Such common ground is a good prerequisite for fostering mutual trust and confidence in order to overcome existing divisions. For, it is no secret, Mr. Chairperson, that Serbia and Albania have also diverging views on at least one issue, and this is Kosovo. Serbia's position on Kosovo and its UDI is well-known, and I am not going to reiterate it here and now. Let me just emphasize in view of recent developments that Serbia continues to firmly believe that dialogue is the only feasible way to solve controversial issues. And dialogue means to sit down and talk to each other in good faith and with respect, to develop a climate of trust and understanding and to find mutually acceptable compromise solutions. This is a democratic understanding of the nature of a dialogue. Unilateral actions aimed at creating new realities on the ground are as detrimental to this spirit as are imposed solutions, not to speak of the use of force or violence.

It always was and continues to be Serbia's firm resolve to engage in the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue in good faith in order to find the best possible solutions to

open issues. However, a strong political will is needed on both sides, as well as an understanding that no solution is acceptable to which Belgrade or Pristina can not agree. Only consensual solutions can have a positive impact on the people in Kosovo and can create trust and confidence between Serbs and Albanians living there. And this should be, I believe we all agree, the ultimate goal of a process aimed at overcoming divisions.

In concluding, Mr. Chairperson, allow me to wish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Haxhinasto the best for his endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.