



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

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT OF THE SECURITY SECTOR

**Remarks of Ambassador Werner Wnendt,
Head of OSCE Mission in Kosovo,
18 November 2005**

Dear Professor Daci and Members of the Assembly of Kosovo,

I would like to begin by thanking you for your participation in this roundtable – welcome. Let me also express my gratitude to the Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) for making this event possible.

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to address you at such an important time. Indeed, Kosovo is at a crossroads. As the status talks are about to start, their outcome will also decisively influence the future structure of Kosovo's security sector.

Irrespective of the outcome of the talks, Kosovo's security structure must be transparent, democratic, accountable and under civilian control. To ensure this, UNMIK recently launched the Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) in close co-operation with DCAF.

Human security does not only depend on the strength of security forces, but it is also directly related to the protection of human rights, the effective promotion of the rule of law, economic development and good governance. Therefore the Internal Security Sector Review process aims to design the future security architecture of Kosovo through broad consultation and involvement of all actors within society.

Above all, it is Kosovo's people that have a stake in Kosovo's political stability, prosperity and security. Consequently, the people's concerns and interests must be the basis for the development of the security sector.

The ISSR had the first of a series of Consultative Group meetings on November 10. This allows for the direct participation of different key actors, including civil society groups, the PISG, UNMIK, community leaders and political parties.

To extend the local ownership of the process, consultations will also be held on the municipal level. Yet it is also essential that you, the peoples' representatives, not only participate in the ISSR process, but moreover ensure a continuous, long-term oversight of the security sector in Kosovo.

Parliamentary oversight of the security sector is a new challenge for the Assembly of Kosovo. It will be an undertaking that will strengthen Kosovo's governance and ensure accountability. It illustrates that security is provided for the people and controlled by the people, to the benefit of the society as a whole.

The security system cannot be the sole prerogative of the executive power but can and should be regulated by the legislature. Therefore, Members of the Assembly of Kosovo have to include security oversight in their core activities, whether during their constituency work, the legislative process, or in the framework of the budgetary cycle. This alone will permit the establishment and maintenance of a legitimate, transparent and accountable security sector.

To achieve this, the Assembly of Kosovo will require a high degree of institutional commitment and capacity. The quality of legislative oversight greatly depends on the competence and knowledge of the Assembly members. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has sought to support and strengthen the Assembly of Kosovo since its establishment in numerous different areas.

Most recently we have helped to build the capacity of the Assembly's Secretariat, reinforced the rules of procedures and supported the work of the committees. The improved procedures can help strengthen the ability of the Assembly members to hold ministers accountable for security policy.

In addition, the OSCE has, since its establishment, taken a special interest in reforming and building up the security sector. For example we provided extensive support in setting up, developing and training the Police Service and in strengthening the rule of law.

Today's roundtable marks the first of a series of OSCE-sponsored activities aimed at enhancing the oversight capacity of the Assembly. I am confident that together with DCAF's extensive regional understanding and knowledge of best practices, we can provide the necessary assistance to support the Assembly's efforts.

Finally, let me conclude by underlining once more that the Assembly plays a key role in promoting the human security of the people of Kosovo. It is only by establishing an effective civilian control over the security sector that the long term stability and prosperity of Kosovo and the region can be guaranteed.

Thank you very much – I look forward to our continued co-operation.