



• ASSEMBLY SUPPORT INITIATIVE
NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2005, NO 18

Mid-2005: Time for Review

*UN Secretary-General appointed
Norwegian Ambassador Kai Eide
as his "Special Envoy for the
Comprehensive Review of
Kosovo"*



Madeleine Albright addressed Assembly of Kosovo

Editorial



Debating for democracy

During recent months the Assembly of Kosovo was criticized, from within and by some in the international community, for its schedule of meetings. However, during last two months, the Assembly took up the challenge and conducted more debates on key questions in Kosovo society. Special sessions took place, with debates on the Standards process, local governance reform, the economy, security and missing persons. The debates were well facilitated and open to everyone who wanted to speak. Many of our Kosovo friends are pleased to note that the Assembly is becoming the place of public debate.

Now is the time for further fine-tuning, to better prepare the substance of debates and to ensure that each debate gets proper follow-up for its conclusions or recommendations. In addition, Committees can prepare reports on specific topics with policy recommendations adopted by the plenary session. Committees can prepare public hearings on the implementation of legislation leading to specific analysis and suggestions on which the Ministries need to respond. Ministers who don't show up at Committee or plenary session could get a warning from the Assembly. That is how it goes in any parliamentary democracy.

This ASI Newsletter includes information on recent developments in Kosovo and Kosovo's democratic institutions as well as on specific support activities to the Assembly. We also mention the South-East European parliamentary roundtable held in Kosovo for the first time in early June. It was of historic significance, also relevant to the Standards process. While the Standards comprehensive assessment is on the way and Mr. Kai Eide tours Kosovo, expectations are rising at the moment to the possible formula of the start of future status talks. In this ASI Newsletter we include overview on the recent developments. We hope you find it useful. Feedback is always welcomed.

Franklin De Vrieze, ASI co-ordinator.

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Pictures in this Newsletter: Gazeta Express pg. 1, 3 (Ferdin Limani) / pg. 7, 14, 16, 17, 20 (Atdhe Mulla) / OSCE pg. 4, 5, 8, 10, 15, 18 / UNMIK pg. 6 / NATO pg. 9 / Public Information Office of the OPM pg. 12.

Madeleine Albright addressed Assembly of Kosovo

Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright addressed the Assembly of Kosovo in a special plenary session on 5 July in her capacity as chairperson of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). During her visit to Kosovo, from 4 to 7 July, Mrs. Albright conducted meetings with institutional leaders, opposition representatives, civil society and female parliamentarians. Following are extracts from her speech to the Assembly.

During these past six years, you have shown the world that the people of Kosovo are builders; not only world-famous builders of houses and public structures, but builders of new and democratic institutions. You have formed political parties and held elections. You have developed independent media and established a judicial system. You worked constructively with the international community. And you have moved closer to the long-awaited day when Kosovo's final status will be determined.

The credit for those accomplishments belongs to all the people of Kosovo, to Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Gorani, Egyptian, Turk, Bosniak and other, who have helped to build a better society. You have many reasons for pride. And those accomplishments make your friends proud; I should know because I am one, and always will be. You also know I am frank. As a friend I have a responsibility to tell you what I think about the tasks that remain uncompleted and to caution you about the challenges ahead.

You face, first of all, the challenge of creating a healthy economy that generates good jobs and gives people confidence that they will be able to build a future for themselves here in their ancestral home. Kosovo has the youngest population and also the highest unemployment rate in Europe. I wonder especially about the young women. Will they be given an equal chance to excel in the classroom, to succeed in the workplace, and to pursue their dreams in whatever field



of endeavor they might choose – to become businesspeople or doctors, journalists or computer programmers, even future presidents and prime ministers of Kosovo?

Kosovo faces a second challenge and that is to build a society governed by the rule of law. It's no secret that corruption and crime are problems here, as they are in many other parts of the world. It is tempting to deny it because no society wants a reputation for corruption. But the problem cannot be addressed unless it is openly recognized and confronted. And it cannot be solved unless police and judicial authorities are independent and non-partisan; above suspicion; and committed to investigating crimes thoroughly regardless of the rank or position of those accused; regardless of whether they come from the government or the opposition. The rule of law comes when the public

demands it. The people of Kosovo deserve no less.

Your third challenge is the most basic. And that is to build a united society in which people from every ethnic group can participate and contribute. When I was here six years ago, I said that there were some people who wanted Kosovo to fail. These were cynics who predicted that the majority in Kosovo would make it impossible for others to live normal lives. They were sure that the new Kosovo would be an intolerant and violent place and that minorities would be discriminated against and made to feel unwelcome. I predicted then that you would prove those critics wrong.

The work of this Central Assembly will play a vital role in that effort and in shaping Kosovo's future. And those of you who are members will be in the starring roles, debating, discussing, even

arguing passionately about the specific actions and policies your government should take and ultimately compromise. Because when you act, you will act not simply for yourself and the interests of your own party; you will act for all those you represent and for the interests of all Kosovo. The members of this Assembly have been given a great trust.

The responsibilities of those in the governing coalition are many. But those who are in the opposition also have a responsibility. As a member of the Democratic Party in the United States, believe me, I know what it is like to be in the opposition. I hate to lose, but I have also learned that times change and so do the minds of voters. New leaders come forward. And some of those now in opposition will one day find themselves leading the government. That is why those in opposition have a responsibility not simply to criticize, but also to put forward their own ideas. And it is why both the majority and the opposition have an interest in honouring the rights of the other.

In the months immediately ahead, the international community will be looking closely at your progress in forging a government that serves the people, at the depth of your commitment to democracy, and at your success in creating a Kosovo that is open and safe for all. These are high standards and the scrutiny you face will be intrusive and critical. Your future is up to you, as it should be.



Pristina hosts the South- East Europe parliamentary roundtable

“Can we reach a consensus on the fact that the Minister of Finance should resign, after he decided on his own initiative to change the budget, without informing his colleagues in the government or the parliament? And we, MP’s of the ruling parties, how are we going to defend our Minister? Will the government call for early elections?”
Excerpt of intense and sometimes emotional discussions and negotiations between MP’s from South-East Europe, Pristina, 9-11 June 2005.

Peter Van Houtte and Franklin De Vrieze, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

When the President of the Assembly of Kosovo gave his welcoming remarks at the Victory Hotel in Pristina on June 10, 2005, the sense of historic significance could not be missed. In front of Prof. Nexhat Daci were sitting members from 12 parliaments from South-East Europe. It was the first time ever that delegations from all over the region gathered in Pristina to discuss common problems, to meet their Kosovo counterparts and to familiarize themselves with the ongoing developments

in Kosovo. It was also the first time ever that representatives of all national and regional Assemblies attended a joint event.

The main topic of the roundtable was the relationship between parliaments and governments and the organization of an effective parliamentary oversight on the government. In Kosovo, but also in most of the other parliaments in the region, this means that there is need for more parliamentary debates on key societal questions, more frequent ple-

nary sessions where Ministers explain their policies, answer questions and report on how laws and parliamentary recommendations are being implemented.

Through co-organizing this roundtable together with the OSCE, the Assembly of Kosovo has made it known to neighbouring parliaments that the Assembly is a partner, that the Members of the Assembly are fellow-MP’s and – as neighbours - should be included in regional parliamentary events.

Until now this was not always the case. With support of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe the foundations for a new approach have been laid: regional parliamentary events including representatives of all elected assemblies in the region.

During the roundtable, formal and informal instruments were discussed as well as the different roles of both opposition and majority in relation to executive oversight. The parliamentarians agreed that effective control

over the government is particular important for critical sectors like budget and security. At a time when preparations for the creation of a new Ministry of Police are underway, the early development of an effective parliamentary oversight is a basic condition for the creation of a police at the service of all citizens. Effective control over the budget spending

is another key task of the parliament. In the Assembly of Kosovo a mid-year financial spending debate is still to be organized.

In order to strengthen the role of the parliaments all over the region, it appeared that there is a need for specific interactive training programmes, and for an enhanced networking and cooperation within the whole region,

both on a multilateral and bilateral level. It was agreed that the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Stability Pact for South-East Europe will facilitate regional technical working groups on committee level. The OSCE will focus on the organization of an effective oversight on budget and the security sector and support to the further development of

an effective regional network. To this aim, the OSCE will develop an online regional parliamentary database, including specific information on the parliaments in the region, the different services, committees and MP's.

The Representatives agreed to organise a follow-up conference in 2006, hosted by one of participating Parliaments.



Recent developments in Kosovo's institutions



Start of the Kosovo Forum

The inaugural meeting of the Kosovo Forum, the consultative body composed of the leaders of the main Kosovo Albanian political parties, took place on 7 June. In attendance were the SRSG, President Rugova, Prime Minister Kosumi, ORA leader Veton Surroi, Hajredin Kuci of the PDK and Kole Berisha of the LDK. Following the meeting, the SRSG told the press that the participants had agreed that the Forum will not seek to replace the PISG, but rather to build a common approach from Kosovo Albanian leaders to the Comprehensive Review of Standards and the Status Process. On 30 June the second meeting of the Kosovo Forum was held. The Forum agreed to establish a Secretariat that would look closely at preparation for the status process. The Forum also expressed its support, both at the technical and political level, for continued dialogue with Belgrade.

Assembly debates Reform of Local Government

On 19 May the Assembly of Kosovo deliberated on the Working Programme on the Reform of Local Government, adopted by the Government on 24 February. Prime Minister Bajram Kosumi stated that decentralisation, which envisions the implementation of pilot projects, brings solutions to minority communities and helps to integrate these communities by dismantling parallel structures. The PM also declared that the Government's programme would serve as a basis for discussions during Status negotiations. PDK leader Hashim Thaci opposed the Government's plan and argued that implementation of pilot projects was not in the spirit of the Framework Document, adopted by the previous government. He expressed his concern that it would lead to a territorial division of Kosovo. ORA leader Veton Surroi considered that it was necessary to first establish a new constitutional and legislative framework before implementing pilot projects. He also criticised the decentralisation plan for failing to take account of the budgetary implications of the establishment of Pilot Municipal Units. The Government pledged that the Assembly would be regularly informed on progress, both in plenary meetings and through an ad-hoc Commission on Local Government reform to be established.

Start of comprehensive review of Standards

On 27 May, the UN Secretary General's report to the UN Security Council gave the green light for the comprehensive review of Standards to start. On 4 June, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide as Special Envoy to carry out the Comprehensive Standards Review. On 13 June Eide arrived in Kosovo. Mr. Eide stated upon his arrival that his work would focus not only on assessing Standards implementation, but would also focus on the political aspects of the situation in Kosovo. The review is to be conducted independently of UNMIK. Mr. Eide is expected to submit the final report during September 2005.

Head of OSCE discusses functioning of Assembly with Assembly President

On 30 May Ambassador Werner Wnendt, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, met Kosovo Assembly President Nexhat Daci. Among other issues, Ambassador Wnendt and President Daci discussed the functioning of the Assembly and the recent adoption of a new set of Rules of Procedure. Ambassador Wnendt reconfirmed OSCE's commitment to providing advisory and capacity building support to the Assembly, and to facilitating co-operation with parliaments in the region and other parts of Europe. President Daci thanked Ambassador Wnendt for OSCE's past support, and for the offer of further assistance in the future. Referring to the Mission's Assembly monitoring role, President Daci said he will not accept being reprimanded, but open, positive recommendations and suggestions are welcome.

Assembly debates Standards implementation

At the 23 June plenary session, PM Bajram Kosumi made a presentation on the implementation of Standards, which was discussed several hours. Assembly members expressed their support for the Standards process, but ruling coalition members' evaluation of the progress made in standards implementation was considerably higher than that of opposition members, who repeatedly referred to corruption in the Government and procedural violations in the Assembly. At the continuation of the plenary session on 24 June, the Assembly approved at second reading the Draft Law on Technical Requirements for Products and the Draft Law on Agricultural Lands. The Assembly approved at first reading seven additional laws, including the Draft Law on Language Use, during which discussion a number of Assembly Members objected to the provisions granting Serbian a higher status than that of other minority community languages in Kosovo.

Assembly President calls for promulgation of laws not to be delayed

On July 5th, Assembly President Nexhat Daci called on SRSG Soren Jessen-Petersen not to delay the promulgation of laws passed by the Assembly. President Daci made these comments after his meeting with Jessen-Petersen. Their discussion centered on the dynamics and timeliness of UNMIK's approval of laws passed by the Assembly. Both Daci and Jessen-Petersen said that better coordination between the Parliament and the UNMIK Legal Office is in the interest of both sides. Laws that are passed by the Parliament cannot be implemented without the endorsement of the UNMIK Legal Office. Some laws are delayed because they do not fully comply with the Constitutional Framework, or because they touch upon some of UN's "reserved powers," or because some appeals by Kosovo-Serb Assembly Members are still pending.

Assembly continues regular public hearings

As part of the legislative process, Assembly Committees are requesting expert opinion and feed-back of constituencies through organizing public hearings on regular basis. During the last two months the following public hearings were organized.

Public Hearing on the Law on Agriculture Land was held on 9 May 2005. Public Hearing on the Draft Law on Adult Education and Training was held on 11 May. Public Hearing on the Draft Law Administrative Procedure was held on 13 May. Public Hearing on the Draft Law on Procedures for Granting Concessions was held on 13 May 2005. Public Hearing on the Draft Law on Religious Freedom and Legal Status of Religious Communities was held on 15 June. Public Hearing on the Draft Law on Central Heating was held on 27 June.



Government delegation visits Vienna and Brussels

From 26 to 30 June 2005 a delegation of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government of Kosovo visited Vienna and Brussels. During various meetings, ministers discussed priority standards, decentralization, minority rights and returns, dialogue with Belgrade, functioning democratic institutions, the security situation and final status. In Vienna, the PISG delegation met representatives of the current and incoming Chairmanships of the OSCE, the EU Troika, the US and Russian delegations to the OSCE. In Brussels, the delegation met the Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn and the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The visit additionally enabled the PISG officials to exchange views on the tasks ahead in light of the confirmed European perspective for Kosovo, be it at a sensitive time within the

EU as well. The visit was organized by the OSCE in co-operation with the European Commission and UNMIK-Pillar IV.

The week before, on 20 June 2005, a multi-party delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo, under leadership of Assembly president Daci, visited the European Parliament. The Assembly delegation was invited by Ms. Doris Pack, head of the SEE delegation in the European Parliament. It was the third year in a row that the Assembly of Kosovo was invited to Brussels for consultations and to strengthen inter-parliamentary relations.

Law on Independent Media Commission promulgated

On 11 July 2005, UN Special Representative, Soren Jessen-Petersen, signed the law on the Independent Media Commission [IMC]. On this occasion, Ambassador Werner Wnendt, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, stated that "the establishment of the Independent Media Commission as the regulatory body for electronic media is an essential step on the path to free, independent and professional electronic media." The SRSG signed the law which was passed earlier this year by the Assembly of Kosovo, with a number of revisions in line with best European practices. One important revision will ensure that the independence and authority of the IMC are distinct from the regulatory authority of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. Other changes are meant to enhance the clarity of Law and the functions of the IMC. The Temporary Media Commissioner will now enter a transition phase as it is replaced by the IMC. The IMC will retain all responsibilities for the licensing and regulation of broadcast media in Kosovo. "The future of the IMC in fulfilling its responsibilities as an independent institution has been secured," said Ambassador Wnendt. "The hand-over of media regulation to a local institution by the end of this year can now start." The Media Appeals Board will continue to hear appeal cases filed by the print media until there is a mechanism of self-regulation such as the Press Council.

Future Directions of Local Governance Reform in Kosovo in light of the Balkan experience

The experience of the Balkan countries in implementing local self-government reform and encouraging sharing of lessons learnt were in the limelight of the international conference "Local Governance Reform in Kosovo – Experience from South Eastern Europe", held in Pristina on June 6-7, 2005. The conference was organized by the OSCE Mission, the Ministry of Local Government Administration, the Association of Municipalities of Kosovo, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The event was divided into three panels: 1) Democratic institutions and procedures; 2) Multi-ethnic communities in local government; and 3) Local economic development. In their presentations, international guests elaborated on the processes of local self-government reform, the issues of property transfer to the municipalities, introduction of a regional tier of government in their respective countries. During the conference local experiences of good practices from several municipalities of Kosovo were presented too. A conference report will be available shortly.

On the Brink of History

Scott Bates, National Democratic Institute



precipitated the violence that so many Balkan “experts” had predicted, but instead stirred peaceful civil protest. Most important of all, the government continued to function. This result is a testament to the wisdom of the Kosovar people and the strength of the political institutions. Both developments are prerequisites for moving forward to final status negotiations and lasting stability. While Kosovo must still meet the test of the “standards” that have been placed before it, perhaps the most important test was passed already in the spring of 2005.

I met with many bright young Kosovars who are working in the Office of the Prime Minister, the government, the Assembly and NGO’s like NDI. They are already assuming leadership roles and the future of Kosovo indeed looks bright if these committed public servants stay in the process. Their confidence has grown tremendously in the years since my arrival and this is, I believe, a very positive development.

I noticed a greatly diminished international presence since my departure in 2002, and this too is, I believe, a positive long term development. A partnership between Kosovars and internationals is necessary to ensure a smooth path to a multi-ethnic democracy within Europe continues to be built. It is also important however that Kosovo change from an international dependency to a self sustaining member of the Euro-Atlantic community. I have always believed that success for internationals means working yourself out of a job and judging

from the looks of things, this is happening.

After conversations with many friends from all political parties and persuasions, it became clear to me that while the international community worked on developing a common position on Kosovo’s future, the people of Kosovo have been slowly and methodically preparing for the day that is about to arrive.

For Kosovars, it may seem like the road to final status has taken forever. I am sure I would feel the same way if my future had been put on hold. But from my perspective, which is like looking at two snapshots in time, 2002 and 2005, I see great cause for optimism.

Yes there are always challenges and daily events lend an air of crisis to the political situation. But at the end of the day, the fundamentals of Kosovo’s democratic institutions are sound. The government functions, the Central Assembly moves forward and in a peace that was unimaginable just six short years ago.

This year has the potential to deliver peace, stability and prosperity for all the people of Kosovo, to break with the recent tragic history of the Balkans. I hope with all my heart that my old friends at every level of politics and government in Kosovo decide that this year they will choose to overcome the political battles of the day. I hope they decide to be heroes, to make history.

The future is Kosovo’s to win.

*T*here is a saying that you can’t go home again. Coming back to the Kosovo Central Assembly for the first time in three years, I found that this saying is not true. It was good to be back with so many old friends once again.

When the Kosovo Central Assembly was founded in late 2001, I had the great honor and privilege to be in a position to serve the new Members and the institution of the Assembly as the Country Director for the National Democratic Institute in Pristina. Our mission was clear, to ensure that we did everything in our power to strengthen the Assembly, provide support at the request of Members of the Assembly, and all political parties as well.

To be able to return last month at the invitation of NDI’s Country Director Tom Bridle was a chance of a lifetime. I returned to a Kosovo that I believe is on the brink of history.

I noticed that the departure of Kosovo’s Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, had not



Kosovo discussed by NATO Parliamentary Assembly

From 16-18 June 2005, the 60th Rose-Roth Seminar of NATO Parliamentary Assembly took place in Sveti Stefan, Montenegro. For the first time such a seminar was organized in cooperation with the Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro.

Doina Ghimici, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

“Serbia and Montenegro: Reconciling integration and fragmentation” was the topic which members, associate members and observers to NATO PA gathered to discuss with governmental and non-governmental experts and representatives of the international community. Quite a large number of speakers from the region, and representatives of the main international organizations, gave their official or independent views on the current situation in Serbia and Montenegro, the future of the Union, the prospective of Euro-Atlantic integration and the state of the security/defence sector reform. The entire debate of the last day was devoted to Kosovo.

In the morning session moderated by Petre Roman, representative of the Club de Madrid and former Prime Minister of Romania, two different panels discussed inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo and the role of the international community, respectively. The afternoon session was entitled Kosovo: towards the final status and was moderated by William Montgomery, former US Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro. Following a practice established more than one year ago, OSCE Mission in Kosovo assisted NATO PA Secretariat in the preparation of the sessions on Kosovo and facilitated the invitation and participation of two Assembly Members, Veton Surroi and Enver Hoxhaj, who both spoke in the last panel. The Kosovo government was represented by Lufti Haziri, Minister of Local Self-Government, and the civil society by Albin Kurti, KAN

leader. They both spoke in the panel on inter-ethnic relations together with Milorad Todorovic, Member of the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro and former Member of the Assembly of Kosovo and Nenad Djurdjevic of Princeton Project on Ethnic Relations. About the current and future role of the international community in Kosovo, NATO parliamentarians were briefed by Francesco Bastagli, DSRSG/Head of Pillar II, Fernando Gentilini, Personal Representative of the EU High Representative for CFSP and Zsolt Rabai of NATO HQ. The official position of Belgrade regarding Kosovo’s future/final status was presented by Damjan Miskovic, foreign policy advisor to President Tadic and Aleksandar Simic, legal advisor to Prime Minister Kostunica, while

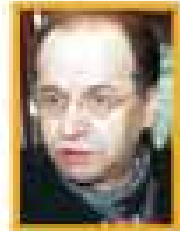
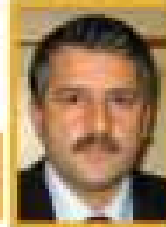
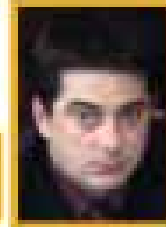
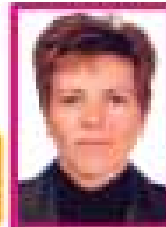
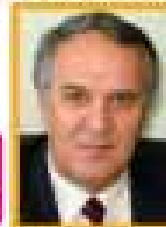
Dusan Janjic, from the Forum for Ethnic Relations, gave his rather independent views that were presented mainly from a legal perspective.

The seminar offered different actors an excellent opportunity to detail their stances and to identify both reconcilable and non-reconcilable elements of their positions vis-à-vis the future of Kosovo and the modality of defining Kosovo’s future status. Unfortunately, the agreement among the Kosovo Albanian and Serbian sides was basically limited to the acceptance of the international community’s decision that 2005 is the year of progress assessment and progress towards solution, and that substantial decentralisation, in both political and administrative terms, was the only way to secure a safe place for Kosovo

Serbs in a Kosovo that is to attain a new status. Within each of the two sides a certain degree of dissimilarity in perception and interpretation do exist but expectations are quite similar. However, between the two sides, the difference in understanding regarding the status quo and the way forward is vast. At the seminar for the first time official Belgrade provided a few details on their already famous but still enigmatic proposal for “more than autonomy less than independence.” Without offering a clear alternative to Kosovo Albanian demand for independence, Serbs were speaking about their readiness to engage constructively in status talks whenever the talks may begin, and to accept an atypical solution, although their preference would go towards “an extended autonomy with reliable international guarantees.”

It was obvious that from the international community a realistic solution should evolve. At a time when Europe was in the middle of a constitutional crisis, though eager to give reassurance on its commitment towards Western Balkans, NATO parliamentarians were wondering whether the international community will be able to redefine its engagement in Kosovo and to guarantee a solution that would reconcile the unstoppable process towards independence with previous international commitments, offer highest assurance to Kosovo Serbs, make possible the redressing of Kosovo’s abysmal economic and social situation and ensure Kosovo political leadership becomes more mature and responsible.



President: **Ibrahim RUGOVA**Minister
of Local
Government:**Lutfi
HAZIRI**Minister
of Finance and
Economy:**Haki
SHATRI**Minister
of Education, Science
and Technology:**Agim
VELIU**Minister
of Youth, Culture
and Sports:**Astrit
HARAÇIA**Minister
of Transport and
Communications:**Qemajl
AHMETI**Minister
of Public
Services:**Melihat
TËRMKOLU**Deputy Minister
of Local
Government:**Aziz
LILA**Deputy Minister
of Finance and
Economy:**Muharrem
IBRAHIMI**Deputy Minister of
Education, Science and
Technology:**Fevzi
BERISHA**Deputy Minister
of Youth, Culture and
Sports:**Angjelina
KRASNIQI**Deputy Minister
of Transport and
Communication:**Hafiz
KRASNIQI**Deputy Minister
of Public Services:**Mark Zeqiraj
KOMANCI**

Democratic League of Kosovo – LDK

Alliance for the Future of Kosovo – AAK

Albanian Christian Democratic Party
of Kosovo – PSHDK

Democratic Party of Kosovo – PDK

Citizens List – ORA

Serbian Democratic Party of Kosovo
and Metohija (SDS-KiM)

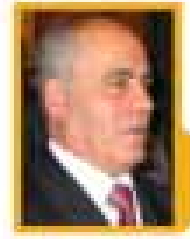
Minority Parties

**Fatmir
SEJDIU****Naim
MALOKU****Xhavit
HALITI**

THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO



Prime Minister: **Bajram KOSUMI**



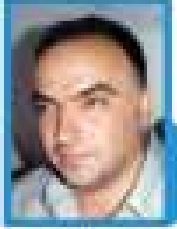
Deputy Prime Minister: **Adem SALIHAIJ**

Minister of Trade and Industry:



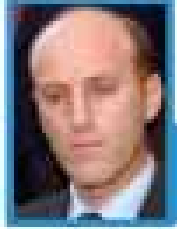
Bujar DUGOLLI

Minister of Energy and Mining:



Et'hem ÇEKU

Minister of Labour and Social Welfare:



Ibrahim SELMANAJ

Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning:



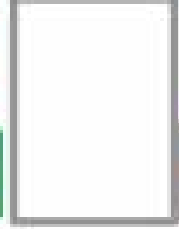
Ardian GJINI

Minister of Health:

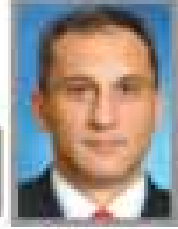


Sadik IDRIZ

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development:



Minister of Returns and Communities:



Slaviša PETKOVIĆ

Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry:



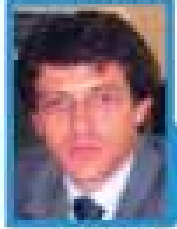
Kadri KRYEZIU

Deputy Minister of Energy and Mining:



Agron DIDA

Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare:



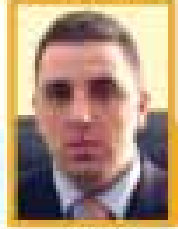
Lulzim LEÇI

Deputy Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning:



Merxhan AVDYLI

Deputy Minister of Health:



Astrit AJETI

Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development:



Tomë HAJDARAJ

Deputy Minister of Returns and Communities:



Ibush BAJRAMI

THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENCY



President of Assembly: **Nexhat DACI**



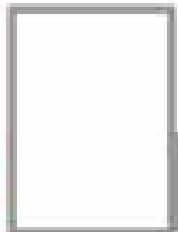
Ramë BUJA



Gazmend MUHAXHERI



Džezair MURAT



Mid-2005: Time for Review

Andriani Mortoglou, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

The time for the mid-year review has arrived. Back in November 2003, the announcement by Marc Grossman, the US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs at the time, that progress in the Standards for Kosovo would be assessed in mid-2005 with a view to launching status talks should this review be positive, initiated a process that was meant to reach its peak this summer. As foreseen, on 4 June 2005 the UN Secretary-General appointed Norwegian Ambassador Kai Eide as his "Special Envoy for the Comprehensive Review of Kosovo". Eide and his support team have already paid their first visit to Pristina and Belgrade, and are now amidst their second visit.

According to the terms of reference of the Envoy, the Comprehensive Review is "in furtherance of the UN's responsibility in Kosovo according to Resolution 1244, which includes facilitating a political process designed to determine Kosovo's future status. The Review will provide a basis for the Secretary-General's political judgment on whether the situation is conducive to the initiation of the future

status process."

Despite its close link to the Standards process, the Review will not be confined by the scope of the Standards for Kosovo and will certainly go beyond a mere re-assessment of the Standards and their priorities. Instead of focusing on the "technical" aspects of the Standards, the Review will aim at analyzing the overall political situation in Kosovo, while also looking at trends and future prospects for continued and sustainable progress in implementing Standards. It is expected that key issues examined will include the democratic performance of both central and local authorities, whether people from all communities are safe to move around, whether displaced persons can return to their homes, whether property rights are enforced, and whether reform of local government is moving forward. Already during his first visit to Kosovo, Eide encouraged the PISG to swiftly make tangible progress in local government reform, signaling the centrality the decentralization process is likely to be given in his review.

One important message that

the International Community is keen to convey to the PISG and the people of Kosovo is that the outcome of the comprehensive review is by no means a foregone conclusion. Eide has been authorized to conduct an objective assessment, independently of UNMIK and based on his own findings, and not to be guided in his assessment by a pre-determined outcome. That is why he will travel with his team around Kosovo talking to a broad and diverse pool of people representing different interests, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex realities in Kosovo. The Envoy is also expected to visit the region and the Contact Group capitals. He will then report to the UN Secretary General - possibly sometime in September - his findings and recommendations on the way ahead, notably whether status talks should begin and if so, what are the modalities that should be followed in the process.

Standards for before, during and after status

The leadership of the PISG has reasons to be optimistic that the Review will recommend

the beginning of status talks, although the outcome is not predetermined. Such optimism has two origins: first, recent efforts in Standards implementation have managed to impress the International Community. The Security Council meeting on Kosovo of 27 May signaled a broad acknowledgement that progress has been made on the Standards - notwithstanding the nuances in the positions expressed by the Security Council members about how much success in Standards implementation is enough - and unanimously accepted the initiation of the Comprehensive Review. And secondly, there seems to be a policy shift in some capitals - notably in the US, as expressed by current Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns in his statement to the Congress on 18 May - towards "Standards and Status,"¹ thereby lowering expectations of achievements necessary to precede the initiation of status talks.

In his speech to the Security Council on 27 May, the SRSG Søren Jessen-Petersen argued that it was not only in the interest of Pristina to settle the issue of Kosovo's status, but also of Belgrade and the entire region, as it would contribute to its stability. He also proposed that with status resolution "and therefore an end to the uncertainty, we will see much more significant results on issues such as returns, freedom of movement, and the economy. Status resolution will also have clear regional benefits, including for regional dialogue and trade... Leaving it pending will delay regional integration and adversely affect the interests of all..."

However, this message cannot





be read as encouraging PISG complacency to wait before making further progress in the areas targeted by the Standards. Status cannot be seen a panacea to the problems facing Kosovo. Instead, progress on the Standards remains central in moving forward the political processes in Kosovo, not because they have been an integral part of the policy “Standards before Status”, but because of their substantive role in encouraging multi-ethnicity, dialogue, democratic values, without which no status settlement could be easily be reached or take root in Kosovo. As progress on the Standards during and after talks will provide the foundations for the sustainability of a political settlement, neither the Review nor the start of status talks -whenever it takes place - would mean the end of Standards implementation.

So, Standards implementation should continue. This was argued by Prime Minister Kosumi in his speech opening the Kosovo Assembly debate of 23 June on the Standards, linking it to Kosovo’s prospects for European integration. And the Kosovo Assembly responded by acknowledging the progress made so far, but also asking the Government for more Standards, more efforts and more progress. Of course, the role of the Kosovo Assembly is not only to “scrutinize” Government achievements, but also to assist, support, guide and implement the Standards itself. In that sense, the Assembly carries its own responsibility in ensuring that the Standards remain as a top priority on Kosovo’s agenda.

¹It is worth noting that Kai Eide himself had recommended this shift of policy in his 2004 report that followed the March violence.

Controversial Kosovo-Serb minister

Following the interview with Oliver Ivanovic in the seventeenth edition of ASI Newsletter, the current edition includes a portrait of Slavisa Peetkovic, Minister for Communities and Returns.

Zoran Culafic, a freelance journalist from Belgrade

Slavisa Petkovic was confirmed as Minister for Communities and Returns in the cabinet of then Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj on 26 January 2005. Since then, Serb politicians, both in Kosovo and Belgrade, continue to refuse recognizing him as a relevant political figure. Moreover, Petkovic is practically ignored by almost all senior Serb officials. They emphasize that he garnered only 269 votes in the 2004 Election, to only become afterwards an exclusive representative of Serbs in Kosovo. In fact, Petkovic is perceived by these circles as a figure without any political significance who serves only his self-interests, and as a make-up for Kosovo Albanians and the international community as proof that Kosovo is a multiethnic society. So far, there is no indication that any senior Belgrade politicians contacted Petkovic, or would do so in near future, in order to facilitate and accelerate the return process of internally displaced people, the issue that Belgrade claims is of utmost importance for the Serb community in Kosovo.

On June 25, 2005 Petkovic founded the Serbian Democratic Party of Kosovo and Metohija (SDS-KiM), as a political successor of his Civic Initiative Serbia that brought him to his present position.

Born in Urosevac/Ferizaj in 1966, Petkovic graduated from secondary school and had no political experience prior to the October 2004. Hashim Thaci's Democratic Party of Kosovo voted in the Assembly of Kosovo against his appointment, accusing him publicly that he participated in a Serbian paramilitary unit during the 1998-99 conflict in Kosovo. The



Belgrade daily 'Kurir' claims to possess some evidence that Petkovic was a prominent member of notorious Serbian Secret Police Special Operations Unit (JSO) that was disbanded only after the assassination of then Prime Minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjic, while several senior commanders stand trial today in Belgrade court charged with a number of murders and serious crimes. Petkovic himself confirmed publicly a month after his appointment on UNMIK On-Air that he "fought in three wars as a police officer" during the 90's, but did not elaborate further.

However, his first public statements (prior to the October 2004 election) were highly praised both by international community and Kosovo Albanians as a new and encouraging language that was rarely heard in the past from the Serbian side. Considering that fact as a good ground for initiation of a new approach toward Kosovo, a number of senior international officials strongly emphasized that Belgrade should not ignore but rather talk to the only Serb in the Kosovo Government about the return of the Serbs and other political issues.

"It's us and not somebody from

Belgrade who lives here; therefore we must take responsibility for our own future. We people from Kosovo and Metohija should no longer allow Belgrade to tailor our destiny by its policy. We should no longer allow Belgrade parties to order us to choose their party cadres as our representatives in Kosovo and Metohija." This was one of the first statements of Minister Petkovic who argues that he can manage to resolve the Kosovo Serb issue with Kosovo Albanian leaders and does not need any involvement of Belgrade.

While it is too early to elaborate if Petkovic will succeed in making any significant difference in Kosovo's highly polarized political landscape, it is obvious that he could act as an ignition point for speeding up of another parliamentary Serb political group, headed by Oliver Ivanovic, to join Kosovo's institutions without any further delay. Petkovic publicly threatened that he would attempt to take the eight seats reserved for Ivanovic's Serb List for Kosovo and Metohija if Ivanovic continued to refuse to actively take up his mandates in Assembly.

At the same time, and more importantly, Petkovic is viewed by

some analysts and international political circles as a possible breaking point that could support some signals of a new Belgrade policy voiced explicitly recently by Dusan Batakovic, a Kosovo issues advisor to President of Serbia Boris Tadic.

Batakovic strongly advocated an end of political boycott that was in place since the March 2004 violence in Kosovo, and such possible emergence of a new Belgrade policy was recognized officially in Batakovic's public statement

"In Kosovo, barring lesser exceptions, pro-active, strategically well thought-up and fine-tuned Serb policy has not been put in place or pursued for the last 15 years. Now the moment is ripe to put in place a dynamic policy by dint of new, realistic and tenable initiatives," Batakovic said.

Although Belgrade will probably never acknowledge publicly the positive role of Minister Petkovic, his emergence on the political scene could be regarded as a positive move, also seen in connection with the evident change of the Serbian political language dealing with Kosovo issue.

While this positive momentum should be praised and strongly supported, there are still many unanswered questions as to whether the Kosovo Serb political community will find a common platform to benefit from this momentum rather than deepening its own political crisis which is threatening to severely marginalize them in the most decisive year for Kosovo in modern times. However, the key international actors should adopt more sensitive and constructive approach in order to facilitate more fruitful Serb-Albanian relations.

Interview with Štrpce/Shtërpçë Municipal President Stanko Jakovljević

“A role model municipality that is left aside by the central institutions”

Mr. President, can you tell us something about co-operation and interaction between Štrpce/Shtërpçë Municipality and the Kosovo Government?

Unfortunately, there is not much positive to say regarding interaction. Why? First of all, Strpce officials, and especially the Strpce Municipal President, are not being invited to Prishtinë/Priština for any kind of consultations and discussions. We are left aside. I have to criticize that. Being a model multi-ethnic municipality, we should have the opportunity to give our feedback and contributions to developments. Another issue is the disrespect for the use of official languages by the Kosovo Government. Namely, whatever documentation we receive from the Central Government, it is being supplied in Albanian language only. We are determined to supply our civil servants and municipal councilors with all the documentation in both Serbian and Albanian languages. Having the documents from PISG in Albanian only significantly increases the workload of our interpreters and slows down the overall performance.

What are the current relations of Štrpce/Shtërpçë Municipality with the neighboring municipalities?

Strpce Municipality borders upon four other municipalities: Urosevac (Ferizaj), Kacanik, Suva Reka and Prizren. With Urosevac (Ferizaj) and its Municipal President, there are certain attempts to establish co-operation, especially over return issues, as we have high number of IDPs from Urosevac (Ferizaj), which are accommodated in Strpce since 1999.

With Kacanik Municipality there are not many contacts. The only institution of this municipality whose representative I have officially met was the Police Station Commander. He assured me that in the territory covered by the Kacanik KPS the security for Kosovo Serbs passing through on their way to Skopje is guaranteed. I believe that will be reality.

As far as Suva Reka and Prizren Municipalities are concerned, we have no contacts with them so far. It is noteworthy that Strpce has accommodated a large number of Kosovo Serb IDPs from Prizren, but there was no significant sign by this Municipality to cooperate with Strpce in regards to return of Kosovo Serbs. It remains to be seen when discussion, especially with Prizren Municipality will start.

What would you emphasize as the best practices in Štrpce/Shtërpçë Municipality that can be shared with other municipalities?

Strpce is a municipality with genuine multi-ethnic institutions, where the Kosovo Albanian minority is able to exercise all the rights: there is representation of Kosovo Albanians in local self-government, Kosovo Police Service, Municipal Court, etc. They have been integrated into the society, and this should represent the example of good practice. I would recommend all other municipalities Kosovo wide to do the same as Strpce did. I am assured that, as far as the minority – majority coexistence is concerned, Kosovo Serbs in other municipalities would not ask for more than we achieved in our territory.

We can also be perceived as an example in regards to freedom of movement. The ski season this winter proved what I am saying now, as no single incident occurred, although frequency of tourists, Kosovo Albanians, was high.

If we talk about the needs of Štrpce/Shtërpçë Municipality, what would you mention as its priorities?

I would say a few words related to economy here. Strpce is a significant municipality for yet another feature: a huge number of its inhabitants had

been employed in surrounding municipalities before the war. Now, all these citizens are unemployed and left without any comprehensive and institutionalized social assistance. Nobody takes care about them. Neither social programs implemented in the privatized companies, nor KTA or International Community secured social assistance for those people. The Republic of Serbia is the only side that allocates some small amounts for them. Their survival in this territory is questioned and it is just a matter of time and opportunity when will these inhabitants leave Strpce for Central Serbia.

We want to revive all the companies in Strpce that are now in the grey zone without any production for years.

How would you describe your co-operation so far with the OSCE Office in Štrpce/Shtërpçë and the overall OSCE Mission and Kosovo?

I have very good cooperation with OSCE as organization, and of course I am in closest contact with the Office in Štrpce/Shtërpçë. I consult the OSCE colleagues whenever I have a concern related to the self-governance. I am especially thankful to OSCE Office Štrpce/Shtërpçë for all the efforts they put in helping us set up all the standing committees. They are also assisting us in forming the village network and inclusion of rural structures for the sake of improvement of communication with citizens.

Interview by: Milosava Banašević



In pace with standards

Isuf Demaj, Secretary to the Assembly of Kosovo

The administration of the Assembly of Kosovo, throughout the last years, has achieved considerable progress. This was mainly due to the uncompromised internal engagements and activities on raising and consolidating the capacities of the Assembly. To date, through the 'Project for Support of the Assembly' of European Agency for Reconstruction, the Assembly has been supported in its process of building its capacities. This support, above all, was evident in the enlargement of the organizational structure of the Assembly by rationalizing competencies and responsibilities in the Assembly, its administration and its presidency.

Nonetheless, significant improvements were made as a result of the support on unified implementation of the rules of procedure and further enhancement of the rules on staff. In addition, training of administrative staff has led to an increase of the number of services that the administration offers to plenary sessions and committee meetings, with special emphasis on processing and harmonizing the legislation with proper criteria. Just recently, we are experiencing a support on further development of relations with other Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) and measures for augmenting the interaction between the Assembly and civil society.

In the scope of the project 'Support to Parliamentary Electronic Archive in Kosovo' (SPEAK), the Assembly administration has benefited in storing the official data and official gazette. The project has accomplished its goals through the creation of the



system for storing and electronic archiving of data for administration of Assembly and plenary.

Institutional development

In the prism of enhancement of the section for legal and procedural support for Assembly committees, legal and procedural support is one of the main activities that the administration of Assembly offers to committees, the presidency, plenary sessions and parliamentary groups. During the last mandate, the capacities of the staff to support committees were under the required level by the deputies and committees. For this reason, the Assembly in co-operation with partners of Assembly Support Initiative – ASI, have carried out concrete actions for raising the professional capacities of the employees that support the work of all bodies of Assembly.

Raising the skills of staff through workshops organized by partners, ASI and the 'Project for Support of the Assembly', has had a positive impact on the quality of judicial and pro-

cedural advices offered by staff and the professional expertise for deputies and committees.

Challenges and priorities

The continued challenge that the Assembly administration faces is the creation of correct basic principles of work. These principles include the principle of respecting legality, the principle of impartiality during work, the principle of fair presentation in civil servants – especially in monitoring and implementation of procedures that aim at enforcement of non-discriminatory policies in regard to personnel – and the principle of professionalism during the work of administration of the Assembly. Meeting the abovementioned principles at the same time makes possible the attainment of set priorities for an efficient and transparent administration.

An additional challenge is the budget of the Assembly of Kosovo, which for 2005 is around 7 million euros, a sum that is distributed to deputies, the Assembly administration and the Assembly president.

The total number of employed staff in the administration of the Assembly is 139, out of which 60 have fourth level education, 6 have third level education and 73 have secondary education. The ethnic structure is as follows: 119 Kosovo Albanians, 10 Kosovo Serbs, 7 Kosovo Turks and 3 from other communities. As for the gender structure, 79 staff are male and 60 female.

Of the yearly budget, 42% was spent through July 2005. For the next year, it is foreseen that the budget for Assembly of Kosovo will increase 40 percent in comparison with 2005, aggregating a sum of around 10 million euro.

An important challenge for administration of the Assembly is the maintenance of its building, for which it often meets with considerable difficulties. This was mainly due to the fact that the building is overloaded as within its walls are situated the staff of the President of Kosovo, staff of Prime Minister and Ministry of Transport and Post-telecommunications.

In the spirit of professionalism and co-operation with presidency of Assembly, parliamentary groups and Ministry Public Services, the administration has accomplished desirable results. The intent for the future is that the administration offers a catalogue of services that would be of appropriate quality and quantity. These are the standards that the administration of the Assembly is working on and aiming to fulfil.

Support to the Assembly of Kosovo

Enhancing quality and multi-lingual consistency of draft legislation

This Project has over the last two months continued to give legal and linguistic support to Committees, enhance the institutional capacities and maintain the website of Assembly of Kosovo. The Legal Standardization/Revision Unit continued to support six Committees. The Unit supported the Committee on Health, Work and Social Welfare for the finalization of the amendments on the draft law on Health Insurance. In the scope of the institutional capacity building, a report was prepared on the advantages and compliance with international and European standards of the Rules of Procedure. Furthermore, upon the request from Assembly; the legal expert has prepared a new draft law on Conditions of Employment for the Personnel of the Assembly of Kosovo and the draft regulation on the organisation and functioning of the Assembly. In addition, the website of Assembly of Kosovo has been maintained and updated regularly. These activities included changing format of certain sections of the website, rearrangement of Homepage layout and translation of content. The Project is being financed by the OSCE and implemented by the Institut International de Paris La Defense.

Assembly starts using electronic voting system

During the session of 24 June 2005, the Assembly of Kosovo finally started using the electronic voting system. A large series of amendments to the draft laws under discussion were voted electronically without any problem. After a check of the system two weeks earlier, it appeared that the system was fully functional and the technical staff was sufficiently trained and highly motivated to start using the system. The caucus leaders were informed about the status of the system. After a meeting with OSCE Head of Mission, the President of the Assembly decided to start using the system immediately. A representative of the OSCE joined the technical staff during the preparations of the votes and during the session, in order to monitor the use of the system. A detailed report with recommendations on the further fine-tuning of the system will be published shortly.



SPEAK to hand-over to the Assembly in August 2005

The Project 'Support for Parliamentary Electronic Archive in Kosovo' (SPEAK) is in the stage of hand-over, foreseen for August 2005. An electronic system for document management (SEMD) will be handed over to the Assembly together with the permanent license, technical support until October 2006, professional software for scanning and optical recognition (OCR and ICR) of symbols and appropriate technical equipment. The project was realized with the financial support of European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) and Norwegian Government and support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Inter-parliamentary Union. Also, an Information Center for Parliamentary Governance was established by Assembly of Kosovo and National and University Library of Kosovo that would enhance interaction between citizens and Assembly Members. In this center, every citizen interested about parliamentary governance can find needed information for parliamentary life in Kosovo, as well as information regarding other parliaments. During all this period the Center promoted deliberations on prevailing topics from parliamentary life, with satisfactory participation of Members of the Assembly, as well as of citizens. (Information by Ali Caka, UNDP/IPU)

Education Committee of the Assembly supported in drafting education strategy

In the second week of June 2005, Mr. Reijo Aholainen, education expert from Finland, started to support the Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Youth, Culture and Sports of the Assembly of Kosovo. The education expert has been hired by OSCE upon the request of the Committee. He will assist in drafting an education strategy and a working plan to strengthen the role of the parliamentary Committee in the area of education. During the upcoming four months the Committee will be given expert advice on several education related draft laws, overseeing implementation of promulgated education legislation and developing a multi-year education strategy. The Project will be concluded by a conference towards the end of September 2005 where the Committee on Education, Science, Technology, Youth, Culture and Sports will present its multi-year strategy and working plan.

Capacity building retreat for interns of the parliamentary groups

On June 1-2, the OSCE organized a retreat for the interns of the LDK, PDK, AAK, ORA and 6+ parliamentary groups, in the framework of the Internship Programme in the Assembly

of Kosovo. The aim of the retreat was to prepare the interns for meeting the organizational and administrative responsibilities delegated to them by heads of the Parliamentary Groups and equip interns with practical writing, research and organization skills that will help them throughout the course of their internship. The first day of the retreat was focused in raising the common understanding of the interns on the role of the parliamentary groups in the light of the approval of the new rules of procedure of Assembly of Kosovo and the legislative process. The second day introduced templates of writing skills, office management and research skills that interns can use during their work. Based on the needs and requirements of the parliamentary groups, OSCE might organize supplementary assistance to interns.

Reprint of Glossary of Parliamentary and Legal Terms

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has made a reprint of the earlier published Glossary of Parliamentary and Legal Terms. The first 1,000 copies of the three lingual glossaries were distributed throughout legal offices and translation cells of the PISG. Due to the huge interest of local institutions and experts, OSCE made an additional 500 copies of the Glossary. Institutions and experts that would like to get a copy of the Glossary can contact OSCE Mission in Kosovo, via <labinot.hoxha@osce.org>

Publication of Rules of Procedures of Assembly of Kosovo

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo in co-operation with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung has completed a publication in four languages English/Albanian/Serbian/Turkish on Rules of Procedure of Assembly of Kosovo. The content of the publication includes the new Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of Kosovo, relevant extracts from the Government Rules of Procedure and Constitutional Framework to Assembly of Kosovo.

Assembly Support Initiative (ASI) planning for 2005/2006

The main organizations participating in the Assembly Support Initiative (ASI) met for a two-day retreat, on 28-29 May, to discuss prevailing problems in the functioning of the Assembly, the progress and current obstacles in project implementation, as well as to establish priorities and review perspectives for a stronger cooperation within the ASI framework. Representatives from OSCE, NDI, UNDP/IPU, the EAR-Consortium and the US Office attended the retreat. More specifically, ASI organizations have discussed the upcoming support to the Assembly Secretariat, conduct of the plenary sessions, Assembly Presidency, parliamentary groups and Parliamentary Committees. Forthcoming major policy issues were considered in so far as they relate to the Assembly such as the expected transfer of more competencies, the decentralization process, strengthening internal accountability mechanisms of the

PISG and the preparations for the dialogue process. The problem of the relatively weak political engagement of minorities within the parliamentary procedures was also discussed.

OSCE prepares support to the Committee on the Rights and Interests of Communities

In early July OSCE held a meeting with the chairperson and the deputy chairpersons of the Committee on the Rights and Interests of Communities of the Assembly of Kosovo. The purpose of the meeting was to identify problems in the work of the Committee and ways in which the Mission can support it in fulfilling its responsibility to oversee the executive and legislative processes as they relate to the rights and interests of communities. The chairperson and deputy chairpersons reported that, due to strong internal divisions among members, a lack of legal capacities and the failure of the PISG to respond to their initiatives, the Committee has not yet been able to credibly represent the interests of communities. OSCE is looking into possible mechanisms that would support the committee's legislative capacities and its role in executive oversight.



A Census for Kosovo

The purpose of a census is to collect and process demographic, social and economic data in order to take a "snapshot" of all people residing in a territory at a specific point in time.

Katja Salsbäck, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

The PISG, supported by UNMIK, has begun preparations for a population and housing census that aims to gather data on the size, structure and geographic distribution of Kosovo's population. As there is no accurate up-to-date data on the population, the Kosovo institutions have often had to rely on guesswork in formulating policy. By updating 25 year-old information, the Kosovo census will rectify this situation and provide a basis for sound policies covering a range of issues, including poverty reduction, economic growth, improved health, and education.

The census is planned for April 2006, but, due to the extensive preparations required, the final decision on the timing of the census has not yet been made. Although important details of the politically sensitive operation have yet to be determined, it is clear that the PISG, as well as NGOs and the international community, desperately needs reliable data on Kosovo's population. The UN recommends that censuses be organised every ten years; in Kosovo the last comprehensive census took place in 1981 – which is 25 years before the one planned next year. The Statistical Office of then Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia organised a census in 1991, but the results are incomplete since most Kosovo Albanians did not take part.

The Law on the Housing and Population Census in Kosovo, adopted by the Assembly on 11 July 2003, and promulgated by the SRSG on 13 December 2004,

gives the Central Commission of the Census the task of overseeing and coordinating the planned census. The Kosovo Assembly on 23 March 2005 endorsed the Commission and gave the Minister of Public Services, Melihate Termkolli, the chairmanship. A main function of the Commission is to supervise the work of the Statistical Office of Kosovo, which is an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Public Services and tasked with executing the census operation. The Statistical Office is currently preparing the census, and will also be responsible for counting, analysis, and dissemination of results.

Counting all people and dwellings in a territory, and residents temporarily absent, is a phenomenal logistical undertaking that requires advanced technical capacity. In Kosovo, the government and UNMIK also have to grapple with complex political issues, such as which groups to include among those who have been away from Kosovo for a long period of time, for example IDPs in Serbia and Montenegro, refugees, and the Diaspora. Kosovo's Census Regulation No 2004/53 states that the definition of "resident population" for census purposes should be decided in coordination with the SRSG. According to international standards a census does not generally include individuals who have been absent from a territory for more than 12 months. Exceptions can be made and special arrangements and counts can be organized, but if the census significantly deviates from standards results may not



be internationally recognised. In the case of Kosovo, it is likely that special counts of individuals who are abroad involuntarily or voluntarily will be organised in close connection with the census operation.

The issue of inclusion is related to the definition and aim of a census. A population census is neither a civil registration, nor is it usually related to citizenship. Rather, it is the process of collecting and processing demographic, social and economic data for development planning; it can be seen as taking a snapshot of all people residing in a territory at a specific point in time.

The Census Law imposes an obligation on people in Kosovo to respond to the census questions, which may cover topics such as age, residence, education, occupation, language, and ethnicity – the last question being voluntary. The Law guarantees the complete protection of personal information of respondents, and data can only be used for statistical purposes.

The census will cost several million euros. Most of the funding is expected to come from donors, but the Kosovo Consolidated Budget will also provide a significant contribution. A donor conference to raise the funds is expected. The census budget will cover the entire exercise from creating reliable maps, training staff, and mobilizing the public, to the counting operation and subsequent data analysis and publication. Thousands of people in Kosovo will be employed as part of the exercise, especially to do the counting of the entire population.

It is yet too early to say whether outstanding practical and political issues will be resolved in time for the Kosovo census to take place as planned in April 2006, or whether the count will have to be postponed. Regardless, it is clear that a successful census in Kosovo would contribute greatly to more well-founded policies by the local authorities.



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Calendar of events

Date / Place / Organizer / Title / Participants / Issues

September 11-13 (tbc) /
Cetinje/Montenegro /
Parliament of Montenegro & Parliament of Serbia and Montenegro /
7th Cetinje Parliamentary Forum - Meeting of the Committees on Finance and Budgeting /
Heads and members of the Committees on Finance and Budgeting /
- Budgeting process in the Parliament - Supreme Audit procedures and reports in the parliament - Parliamentary budgeting /

September 18-23 /
Vienna/Austria /
International Monetary Fund & Joint Vienna Institute /
Macroeconomic Policy Seminar for Parliamentarians from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro /
Parliamentarians involved in financial and economic issues /
- Role and functions of the IMF - Country Financial Programmes - Recent Economic Developments and Outlook for the Balkan Region - Fiscal Transparency and Tax Reform - Financial System and Banking Reform - Monetary and Exchange rate Policy - Governance-Combating the Financing of Terrorism and Money Laundering - Promoting Investment and the Importance of Structural Reforms /

October 6-8 /
Milocer/Montenegro /
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly /
Annual Meeting /
Delegations of the SEE Parliaments to the PA of the OSCE /

October 17/18 (tbc) /
Skopje/Macedonia /
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe/Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population /
Workshop on Migration and Refugees /
MPs from SEE and PACE (including from Southern Caucasus) involved in issues of asylum and migration
- Displaced and missing persons, refugees /

November 3-6 /
Dubrovnik/Croatia /
Friedrich Ebert Foundation /
Parliamentary Conference: The European Economic and Social Model. The contribution of parliaments for social justice and economic development /
MPs involved in EU economic and social affairs /
- European Economic and Social Model - Economic and employment policy - Social and fiscal policy - Policies for a social Europe /

November 7-10 (tbc) /
Belgrade/Serbia /
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe/Committee on Culture, Science and Education /
Workshop focussed on the Education and Citizenship 2005 – campaign /
Involvement of parliaments in the activities to:
- Strengthen democratic societies by fostering and perpetuating a vibrant democratic culture - Create a sense of belonging and commitment to democratic society - Raise awareness of shared fundamental values /

November 15/16 /
Prague/Czech Republic /
Stability Pact on SEE /
Meeting of the Regional Table and Working Table Meetings /
Parliamentarians from SEE /

November 27-29 (tbc) /
Cetinje/Montenegro /
Parliament of Montenegro & Parliament of Serbia and Montenegro /
8th Cetinje Parliamentary Forum - Meeting of the Committees on Legislation /
Heads and Members of the Committees on Legislation /
- Legislative procedure - Rules of procedure /

December 8-9 /
Thessaloniki/Greece /
King Baudouin Foundation & European Commission /
Seminar for Parliamentarians from SEE on trafficking in human beings, illegal migration, labour migration, asylum and matters related to visa issues /
3 MPs from each parliament involved in this issue /
- Latest acquis and development, EU's measures in the area of asylum and migration /