



PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE  
UN SRSG FOR KOSOVO, MR. JOACHIM RÜCKER

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the Permanent Council,  
Vienna, November 1 2007

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation joins others in welcoming the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Mr. Joachim Rücker to the Permanent Council. We thank him for his comprehensive and informative report on the situation in Kosovo and the overview of the Mission's activities.

Mr. Chairman,

The future status of Kosovo is one of the most significant issues currently facing the OSCE-region and must be resolved soon. Further delays in resolving Kosovo's status could negatively affect peace and undermine democratic reforms in Kosovo.

Norway would again like to stress the need for turning every stone in the search for a compromise between Belgrade and Prishtina. We welcome the work undertaken by the Contact Group. Nevertheless, we would again like to stress that the parties have the main responsibility for showing the necessary flexibility and inventiveness to find a workable solution. We urge the parties to put in greater efforts to find such a solution.

Mr. Chairman,

It is indeed vital to secure a continued strong presence from the international community in Kosovo, no matter what will be the outcome of the UN-mandated troika process. It is Norway's view that the OSCE is doing an important job in Kosovo. Our Mission in Kosovo plays a crucial role in advancing the common goal of promoting a peaceful, democratic and

multi-ethnic Kosovo, based on the rule of law, internationally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms. Our efforts in this regard must continue. We therefore support the draft Permanent Council Decision to extend the Mission to Kosovo's mandate to 31 December 2008.

Moreover, the OSCE should continue its efforts to create stronger and more competent institutions able to deliver services to the entire population. Building and strengthening capacity in communities provides an invaluable step towards creating a sustainable multi-ethnic society in Kosovo and assisting the reintegration of minority communities. This is not only important for the minority communities, but for all inhabitants of Kosovo.

Furthermore, our aim must be to ensure that all the people of Kosovo are able to safeguard their own security and decide the direction of their own political development. This requires that we help to create conditions that are conducive to long-term economic growth and institutional reform. At the same time, it requires that the people and their leaders show a will to reconciliation and make it clear that they will not resort to violence. In our view the OSCE can contribute in both aspects.

Mr. Chairman,

Assembly and municipal elections in Kosovo are only a few days away. We call upon all parties to conduct the elections in a free and fair manner, and encourage Serbia to support the participation of local Serb representatives. It is with concern we have taken note of continuous warnings of financial sanctions and reported individual threats against Kosovo Serbs who run, organize or vote in these elections. It is Norway's view that Kosovo Serb participation in the elections is vital to ensure the idea of a multi-ethnic Kosovo. Self-isolation will not bring any benefit, but only exacerbate the challenges facing all those who are committed to a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo.

In closing Mr. Chairman, Norway takes the opportunity to commend Special Representative Joachim Rucker on the dedication and professionalism he and his staff show in their daily work, and wish them all the best for the challenging times ahead.

Thank you.