



United States Mission to the OSCE

Reply to Spain on Report by Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Jean-Claude Schlumberger

As delivered by U.S. Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 8, 2016

Mr. Chair, just two brief points.

First, I think it's useful that we are having a discussion at the Permanent Council – we often call for the PC to be used to have a discussion including about difficult issues.

I wanted to make two comments. One to our distinguished colleague from Spain: I understand the concern about having precedents, and yet I think that each case needs to be looked at as an individual issue. And I find it really counterproductive for the interests that I understand of Spain's for Spain to weigh in on this issue.

Second, I think it's important that we draw a distinction. The United States supports both engaging with Kosovar officials in order to make our collective operational efforts on the ground more effective, as well as the day in which Kosovo will have a seat around this table. But those are two separate or different issues. And I think one could take the position that in order to maximize the effectiveness of our shared investments in terms of resources and secondments, etc. – to maximize the effectiveness of that mission on the ground it's important that we hear directly from the partners of that mission on the ground, who are the local officials, the Kosovar government officials who are engaging with that mission every day, and who we all say we want that mission to support in implementing agreements, in making progress on democratic gains, etc. So I think we should recognize there is a practical issue here. Obviously there is also a political one, but there is a practical issue here that we all have an interest in.

Thank you.