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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

Statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Albania to the
International Organizations in Vienna, Ambassador Spiro Koçi

In response to the statement of the delegation of the United States of America

854th meeting of the Permanent Council

17 March 2011

We would like to thank the delegation of the United States of America for raising issues of particular importance to the current political debate in Albania. Mr. Ambassador we have taken careful note of your statement and we shall bring it to the attention of our authorities in Tirana. Your messages are very much welcome and consistent with the calls of the international community and the OSCE Presence in Albania.

The Government of Albania attaches the utmost importance and supports a thorough and comprehensive investigation into the violent events occurred in Tirana on 21 January 2011.

We would like to underline that the commitment of the Government of Albania to uphold and strengthen the independence of the judiciary is strong and unequivocal. This is also a key priority of the Government's reform agenda.

As for the municipal elections of 8 May, the Albanian Government is making every effort to guarantee a free, fair and transparent electoral process, in line with our OSCE commitments and other international standards.

We would like to recall that the upcoming municipal electoral process in Albania builds upon a solid electoral infrastructure, consisting of electronic voter lists, electronic identification documents and an all-encompassing legislative framework. We are confident that they will boost the transparency of the process.

To monitor the standards of these elections the Government has invited the ODIHR to deploy a fully-fledged Election Observation Mission. We understand that the preparations have already reached an advanced phase and the Core Team is expected to deploy by the end of March. The head of the Election Observation Mission is

expected to hold meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, as well as other key political figures. The Long Term Observers will be in Tirana as of 3 April 2011.

On this occasion, we once again call upon the participating States to second 400 short term observers, as recommended by the ODIHR's Needs Assessment Mission which visited Albania in late January.

I thank you for the attention.