



STATEMENT MADE BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE  
HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION IN KOSOVO,  
AMBASSADOR WERNER WENNDT

As delivered to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 1, 2007

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Norway joins others in welcoming Ambassador Wnendt to the Permanent Council. We thank him for his presentation on the situation in Kosovo and the overview of the Mission's activities.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway supports the UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's comprehensive proposal for the Kosovo status settlement. The proposal provides a solid foundation for developing Kosovo into a stable multi-ethnic society, and it is our view that it will contribute to regional political stability for the longer term.

At the same time, Norway supports the decision to engage the parties in further consultations. We have a sincere hope that this may contribute positively to the process. Furthermore, we strongly urge Belgrade and Pristina to adopt a flexible and constructive approach.

Mr. Chairman,

When President Ahtisaari visited the Permanent Council last week he asked that the Organization keeps its comprehensive presence in Kosovo to support the work of the International Civilian Representative and the European Security and Defence Policy Mission.

It is Norway's view that the OSCE has thus far done an important job in Kosovo and should continue to do so in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

The final agreement must safeguard the interests of the minority. The 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.

A continued systematic programme of competence building and transfer of responsibilities to local institutions is crucial. The OSCE should continue its work to create stronger and more competent institutions able to deliver services to the entire population. Strong focus must also be put on the implementation of standards and decentralisation after status is decided. This is not only important for the minority communities, but for all inhabitants of Kosovo.

We also see a clear value in the OSCE Mission drawing on its extensive field structure to ensure a peaceful implementation of the provisions in the status settlement. President Ahtisaari's proposal contains important provisions and extensive measures to protect the future of all communities living in Kosovo, in particular the Kosovo Serbs. Norway concurs with the importance of this and therefore sees great value in the OSCE continuing its activities as regards the improvement of and monitoring of the respect for human rights in Kosovo.

In closing Mr. Chairman, Norway takes the opportunity to commend the Mission in Kosovo on undertaking an important restructuring, which will enable it to perform its future role in Kosovo effectively. We would also like to commend Ambassador Wnendt 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.