

Statement
Troika Meeting with Belgrade and Pristina
New York, 28 September 2007

The U.S./EU/Russia negotiating Troika met in New York City on September 28 with leaders of Kosovo and Serbia to discuss Kosovo's future status. The Belgrade delegation was led by President Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica. The Pristina delegation was led by President Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister Agim Ceku.

The Troika initially facilitated two hours of direct dialogue between the parties. This was the third face-to-face meeting of leaders since the Kosovo future status process began in 2005 and the first such meeting held under Troika auspices. After the direct dialogue, the Troika met separately with each side to explore further the parties' positions.

The atmosphere of these meetings was cooperative. Belgrade presented its vision of substantial autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia's borders. Pristina presented its vision of friendship and cooperation between two independent states and full implementation of the minority rights protections recommended by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. The Troika encouraged the parties to present their proposals in a way that would appeal to the other side.

The parties agreed on the "New York declaration" reaffirming their willingness to engage seriously and refrain from making statements that could undermine the security situation in Kosovo. The text of this declaration is attached.

The Troika will next meet with the parties in Brussels on October 14. The Contact Group will report back to the UN Secretary General about the Troika's efforts by 10 December. The Troika reaffirmed its commitment to use the remaining time to explore every avenue of possible compromise between the parties in order to reach negotiated agreement.

Attached: New York Declaration, September 28, 2007

New York Declaration

September 28, 2007

At their meeting with the Troika on 28 September in New York City, both delegations welcomed the first direct talks between the parties held under Troika auspices. The parties reiterated their commitment to engage seriously in these talks. The Troika reminded the parties of the Secretary-General's statement of 1 August that the status quo is not sustainable.

The two delegations were informed of the statement of the Contact Group at its Ministerial Meeting in New York City on 27 September. Ministers reiterated, inter alia that an early resolution of Kosovo's status is crucial to the stability and security of the Western Balkans and Europe as a whole. Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to seek a negotiated settlement endorsed by the UNSC. Contact Group Guiding principles should continue to set the framework for status process, based on UNSC Resolution 1244. Ministers also urged both sides to approach the remaining negotiations with creativity, boldness and in a spirit of compromise. They urged the parties to take seriously the opportunity created by the Troika process to secure a negotiated settlement. They also reminded the parties that the onus was on each of them to develop realistic proposals and that neither party could unilaterally block the process from advancing. Ministers underlined that any future status settlement should focus on developing the special nature of the relations between the two sides, especially in their historical, economic, cultural and human dimensions.

Acknowledging that violence, provocation and intimidation would constitute a grave risk for the Troika process as well as for the stability and security of the region, both parties reaffirmed their commitment, as expressed in the Vienna document of 30 August, to refrain from any activities or statements that might jeopardize the security situation.

Both parties understand that the Contact Group will report to the UN Secretary General by 10 December, 2007. In this regard, they welcomed the Troika's intention to intensify its work programme with a view to reaching agreement before the Troika's mandate concludes.

Accepted by both delegations at the first Troika-led direct meeting in New York City on 28 September and confirmed in the presence of all members of the Troika.